

## **Redacted responses to our consultation on business regulation**

July 2025

We have redacted data in line with our consultation policy.

This document only contains responses that we have consent to publish, so the numbering of responses will not follow the normal ordering of numbers.

R1

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R2

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

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"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

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"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

If optometrists are on a bonus scheme for number of patients seen and/or for dispensing glasses then patients must be made aware of this.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R3

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Dispensing optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"a) Strongly agree"

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"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

To protect the Optical Practice against any unwarranted allegations from patients or non-patients. For GOC to be aware of the day-to-day running of practices in real life & not be sheltered in their ivory towers in London.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

On what circumstances would this be applicable?

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
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"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
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"b) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

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"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Prevent a lot of litigation by sifting complaints

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R4

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

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"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

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"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
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"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

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- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R5

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers and hence majority of directors of a body corporate are equally liable

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers and a designated responsible person

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Freedom to exercise their responsibilities

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers and individuals responsible

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Direct responsibility

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Provided they are directly working in the business, multiple businesses shouldn't be prohibited

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Regulation should be the same for all providers and the appointed head of optical practice

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Barring any discriminatory terms regarding age etc

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Point of contact available to the public and other interested bodies

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Acknowledge their responsibilities

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Based on severity and past penalties. Smaller turnover practices are still potentially as dangerous to the public.

Appeal of penalty amount separate from appeal of decision.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Important for non NHS practices that have otherwise no oversight

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is a minimum standard. Many other internal redress protocols are better

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Most decisions would be upheld by the business, but ultimately the courts have final jurisdiction

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Single point of redress confirms consistency

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Potential redress against vexatious claims?

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

**(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Regulation should be the same for all providers including any that supply/deliver services to this country.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R6

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R7

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Single handed practices where senior partner is on register

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Excess work load for the above mentioned small business optometry owner

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If there is one then they should be....

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

They need to know the business

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Draconian

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Fair

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

It's an unfair burden on small practices.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R8

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If we have to be regulated, so should they - simple

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

As above

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

e are all in the same boat -

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think we are beyond the areas where this makes any difference - Optics is a retail business for most.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Single practice owners with single clinic

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R9

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) No"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

None. The GOC are power hungry and this proposal is nothing more than a money extraction ploy despite offering nothing in return except unnecessary bureaucracy.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Maybe the GOC could put some effort into tackling online prescribing in the UK without a valid prescription rather than giving bricks and mortar opticians more fees despite them working to every regulation whilst online prescribing operates like the Wild West.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Other

It shouldn't be. It should be scrapped

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

Low income businesses

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

The fact that these proposals are to encourage more opticians to undertake more primary care work is laughable when the nhs sight test fee is still abominably low. Perhaps rather than extracting money from businesses the GOC could do something useful and lobby for a fair gos1 sight test fee and regulate UK online prescribing and supply in alignment with Uk practices.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R15

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) No"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R16

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) No"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R17

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Not sure"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Fee is too high for a single optometrist practice like mine. Especially when so many businesses in the industry avoid paying it. However I don't think the answer is necessarily more regulation on businesses but targeting online suppliers who circumvent the existing rules that the rest of us play by

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R19

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Dispensing optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R20

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).** If they are carrying out the same restricted functions that other optical businesses are carrying out, there is no reason why they should be exempt from the same regulations; in particular this would apply to GP practices which are specifically businesses - unlike NHS Trusts/Hospitals which largely are not.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If commercial, then there is no distinction between them and any other optical business; regulations should be the same

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If the individuals providing the services themselves are regulated, there is less need for this provided the charity function is well maintained by the independent regulator (which may not be the case)

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

They are already regulated and the type of regulation would need to be different from business regulation, but they should still be regulated

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Unless the discretionary power is laid out under very specific conditions which can't be changed or amended (in which case it is not really discretionary), this would be give rise to huge conflicts of interests where it is in someone's interests to either exempt or retain any particular business interest from regulation

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is a necessary requirement because it ensures there is professional capability within the organisation; the issue however is how the director can be appointed - companies having one director nominated under multiple business is not right; the director should be able to legitimately exercise control over the business

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In principle I don't disagree with this but there are issues over where a business is not in a position to, and will not be providing, any training - so this is not necessary

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is not necessary as long as it can be shown that the individual has genuine ability to effect change and manage compliance

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Depends on the scope of their role and how they can carry this out

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Too prescriptive and open to interpretation - any requirements must be objective

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Uncomfortable about the GOC coming to visit businesses given the often apparent mission-creep with other GOC activities - e.g. CPD record review which now has a totally different form to when the cycle was first announced. Are there going to be situations where the GOC can turn up at a business unannounced? Or require certain visits at short notice which the business has to then prepare for?

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ultimately a business should be able to determine which financial scheme it takes part in - even if it is clearly good and prudent to be in a certain scheme, there should not be a requirement

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Don't like where this could go, seems too draconian

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

A pay per use model would potentially make vexatious complaints more costly for a business that has done nothing wrong

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

Better regulation would be beneficial for all

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R21

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

MyEyes (Opticians) Limited

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Even playing field.

If they carry out the service they should be subject to the same rules.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Same as Q1

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

as Q1

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

as Q1

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Simply that your core is to protect the eye health of the nation and anyone / body or individual that offers services that deliver care for eyes should come under GOC regulation. Failure is failure by the GOC.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The directors need to understand that the company registered needs to confirm to the regulation. Failure to comply should result in regulatory action. A company director is responsible for the actions of the company they represent.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

No

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Companies Supplying to customers/patients.

ie - Internet Contact Lens and Spectacle suppliers.

It should be clear where they are located and if they ship from the UK they are subject to UK GOC rules.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R23

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Robinson Optometrists Ltd

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I know of several optometrists and dispensing opticians who wish to take a step back from the coal face and employ others to take on this role. It is very difficult for them to do so with the present structure. These people have dedicated their lives to the practice and would still like to be directors. It may result in them selling out to a larger organisation resulting in a practice with a different very different identity (whether for better or worse). I feel very strongly that this measure should be brought in as a matter of urgency.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As long as it doesn't create the kind of obscene pressure witnessed in schools for OFSTED inspections.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R24

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Hospitals and GPs create a lot of issues due to the lack of understanding about what we do and how we operate, like telling patients they can just pop in and get there pressures checked without anything else being checked, some of these patients we have. Never seen before. Another example is most days we get people turn up for Cues appointments and the GP has told them it will be free, some of these patients symptoms aren't eligible for Cues i.e contact lens complications or longstanding issues. Some regulation would help support such issues and allow pxs to respect optical registrants more

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

One common issue is hospital clinics issuing prescriptions without a recall or with an inappropriate recall such as a standard 2 years for an under 16 even though they are on a 3 month recall at hospital. It makes it difficult as patients and hospitals expect us sometimes to dispense these, even though we feel they are unfit for purpose.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Definitely should, a lot of the time we are providing care alongside say a low vision clinic who are a charity at current they can give conflicting advice that doesn't align with GOC regulation, this can undermine us in the patients eyes

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I feel where valid prescriptions are being issued this should be regulated. Having worked in a practice near a university for a long time we often see prescriptions from there, sometimes the patients needs haven't been fully accounted for and the patient is unhappy with the outcome and they come to us for an opinion, it leaves us in a grey area or the patient out of pocket

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I feel to further the way that opticians are viewed we need to even the playing field and regulate all sales. Sometimes patients just think we are being awkward as we are unable to give them something they say they can get from a beauty shop i.e plano lenses, or just a blue filter with no test

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I understand this is to make it inclusive but also may put some heads of optical under unnecessary pressure to not follow regulation. The main stakeholder should have direct consequences to the GOC

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Only if we go ahead with majority of directors not being registrants but I feel like registrant directors is ideal as they are ultimately accountable

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If not the director, definitely need a registrant accountable

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Without this if not employed by the business it could lend itself to bribery and corruption. I feel the business needs to be directly accountable Think ideally registrant directors and only head of optical if this is not the case

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Think ideally registrant directors and only head of optical if this is not the case

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Think ideally registrant directors and only head of optical if this is not the case

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Think ideally registrant directors and only head of optical if this is not the case. Don't see the need for them to be labelled if they are a registrant, it should be out of the public domain, otherwise we are just opening them up to be contactable from anyone

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Think ideally registrant directors and only head of optical if this is not the case. Don't see the need for them to be labelled if they are a registrant, it should be out of the public domain, otherwise we are just opening them up to be contactable from anyone

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Uncapped could ruin a business but also not just financial penalties we should be considering. If linked to turnover smaller businesses may just turn a blind eye to regulations

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Practices already registered have a lot of protocols and governance along with accountable registrants and thinks like NHS visits, don't see how the GOC should have a right to come to the business, they will already have evidence provided by the practice I.e records

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Feels like strong arming businesses, if we have complied with all duties then OCCS should see this and if not then we should be answerable to GOC only for investigation.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

One provider helps with consistency and ease of access for the public

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Need to be careful about plano specs as well as plano contact lenses as many businesses sell plano transitions or plano blue light filters which patients believe they can drive in which can induce prism or cause eyestrain, have had many people attend due to such issues

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R25

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

**b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

**(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Online retailers selling products in the uk should be regulated

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R26

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Heyes Opticians Ltd

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Linking the penalty to turnover ensures a relatively equal penalty for all.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We need an independent arbitration service for all

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

**b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Everyone providing optical services within the UK should be registered with the GOC. This includes everyone supplying optical appliances (Spectacles and contact lenses)

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R27

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
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**If yes, please explain how.**

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- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Businesses should not impose conversion rates (Eye tests to Sales ratio) on optometrists as this is not in patient / consumer best interest. Optometrists should not be under sales pressures. The GOC should make specific direction to businesses.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R28

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

F.Y. Eye Global Consulting

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Education provider

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

From experience, many of those functions are not the realm of GP practices and hospitals and they belong in optometry practice. This would also reduce the pressure on secondary care and primary care GP services.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

These ultimately serve the public and, so, should be regulated like all other ophthalmic outlets

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R29

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Overseas illegal contact lens suppliers that get away with it atm

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R30

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Contact lens optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

providers of restricted functions should have to abide by the regulation for that restricted function regardless of the environment

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

see 1st reasoning

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

I'm not 100%clear if this will bring all supplier of contact lenses under the scope of thew regulations. If it doesn't, it should.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R31

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R32

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Other

Company director

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

It would ensure equality in regards to patient safety surrounding regulations and requirements.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R33

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Dispensing optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R35

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R38

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R39

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Therapeutic prescribing optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

may be a problem for non-professional business owners

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

would allow minor complaints to be resolved and reduce pressure on the regulator

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R41

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Dispensing optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

To be under a set of agreed exemptions

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R42

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R43

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Contact lens optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

Out of date an anacronism

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

No thanks

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R45

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Student optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GPs are still involved with healthcare around the eyes, so it is important the GOC regulate this and their rapport with optometrists remains strong, in order to provide the best care for our patients.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

anything that may impact patient health and/or safety should be regulated.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

charities need to be held up to standards as well, even if their free/voluntary. poor healthcare service experiences from anywhere could deter the general public from getting their eyes checked, due to the possible risks.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

as a student, i respect the need for the GOC to regulate our practices and to ensure we are safe/ready for pre-reg training.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

can't think of a business that should be exempt from regulation.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

not sure what this means

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

yes, so if any issues occur/questions need to be asked, the team member can be directed to them to help them get the best assistance.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

not sure where the proposals are?

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

training should be led by the most experienced individual (AKA the head of optical practice)

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

provides reassurance that they are trustworthy

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

must have worked in the business to see how things are and get an idea of what works and what doesn't.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

can't manage more than one place THOROUGHLY. too much on one person.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

GOC rules should apply for everyone, but there could be additional rules for heads to make sure they know they can't get away with misuse of power.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

anyone applying could scew their behaviour to fit the desired traits, even if they are not necessarily fit for the role yet. possibly just for a pay rise in this tough economy.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

patients should be aware who to contact if needed.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

we all play different roles and they are all equally important, but it's good to know who head is in case anything needs reporting.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

not sure what receives a penalty, but a fine of even £50,000 would shut down a business in this economy and cause a lot of stress in the individual/their family. as healthcare workers, we should care for their health too and not put so much stress on someone for a mistake that has already been made. rather we should aim to correct their mistake and maybe issue a lighter warning to ensure the mistake isn't repeated.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

only makes sense that regulators regulate optical practices.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

no idea what this means

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

no idea what this means

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

no idea what this means

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

not sure what this means

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

contact lens/glasses sales online by unregulated websites (incorrect PD/dispenses done by patient themselves + uses harmful materials - undermines work of optometrists/DOs/OAs and destroys patient trust with eyecare/wear),

not a business regulation, but i believe that student optometrists should receive an NHS bursary to fund their equipment purchases for pre-reg. this should at the bare minimum cover retinoscope and ophthalmoscope, especially in this economy where lots of full-time students can barely afford their maintenance/find a job that respects their studies. we are healthcare professionals, yet we get treated as lesser by the NHS service we work for. optometrists are especially valuable with an ageing population and our increase in ability/qualification that allow us to prescribe/treat things people would usually go to the doctors for. in this sense, we help to ease the NHS GPs by taking on the patients that should rightfully come to us - specialists in eye care. if changes are not made to make optometrists feel valued, especially with it only being a Masters course now, most people will just choose other healthcare courses that are more respected and this could cause a decline in the optometrists of the future and we constantly need new students to be trained to keep this service running. we are vital in helping people see on a day to day basis and we use the NHS GOS system/£25 an hour appointment times, so we should be treated as equals with our healthcare peers that receive grants for their equipment (GPs also buy retinoscopes/ophthalmoscopes, but their grant covers this and they barely use it compared to us optometrists that need it daily. this is an issue i and many students i know feel passionate about and i urge you to contact me via email for further input, as i am willing to push for positive change.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R46

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R48

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R49

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R51

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R52

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Contact lens optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Mixed regulation for cross functioning professionals is never ideal. Only regulating certain areas of service supply is illogical.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

How can the place a function is carried affect why it is regulated or not - again illogical.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Just because an entity is a charity can not exempt it from regulation.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Same regulation for all regardless of place or status.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Struggle to understand why a business should be exempted.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Feels overly restrictive in 2024 - but there should be a requirement for some registrant directors.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Where restricted functions are undertaken, a specific person with responsibility is important.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ensures thorough knowledge of restrictive functions.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Where would liability/responsibility lie otherwise.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

A limit to number of business's would seem sensible.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Ensures proportional fairness.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Many registrants are more than capable of keeping their own houses in order - making anything compulsory risks registrants abdicating responsibility.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Only to the extent that current consumer & regulatory powers permit.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Serial offenders should carry a greater cost - gives an incentive to improve.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

Would appear to offer better protection across the board.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R53

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The wording and answers for this questions are unclear.

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

The wording and answers for this questions are unclear

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The wording and answers for this questions are unclear

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R54

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If it is proportionate for other businesses to register, then these entities (which carry out protected functions) should also register. Whilst I disagree completely with the whole proposal (which will have minimal impact on patient safety), if it's going to be introduced then it needs to be across the board.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If it is proportionate for other businesses to register, then these entities (which carry out protected functions) should also register. Whilst I disagree completely with the whole proposal (which will have minimal impact on patient safety), if it's going to be introduced then it needs to be across the board.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If it is proportionate for other businesses to register, then these entities (which carry out protected functions) should also register. Whilst I disagree completely with the whole proposal (which will have minimal impact on patient safety), if it's going to be introduced then it needs to be across the board.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

GOC has failed completely to adequately regulate its current business registrants. There can be no faith that you are equipped to make singular decisions like this. Again, the whole proposal is nonsensical but if it's going to be implemented then it needs to be a level playing field for all.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We already know that commercial pressures weigh heavily. If you look at a recent GOC case involving short testing times - the registrant faced FTP proceedings but this business did not. The business (which was registered) was responsible for booking the patients in to those short time slots. You took no action.

A removal of director requirements can only result in more commercial pressures. The comment in the consultation document around investment and consolidation is very telling. Your proposals are always aimed at easing the commercial approach and reducing the viability of smaller practices to survive.

Take a look at what has happened with veterinary practices - virtually no independent vets left, many practices owned by private equity - people complaining about being priced out, government investigation incoming.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Practices with GOS contracts are already required to have governance leads, Caldecott guardians, freedom to speak up guardians, DSP leads. This role is an unnecessary duplication p.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

You have failed to regulate the training placement environment for some years now, Why would having a HOP make a difference.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Disagree with the proposal, but if it's Co I g in it must be an optometrist (and not a DO or lay)

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Disagree with the proposal overall but if it's coming in then needs to be employed by the business

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

More bureaucracy

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

You have had many chances over recent years to instigate proceedings against business registrants - most notably when organisations were breaching Covid rules and more recently around shortened testing times. With this decision making in mind why should you have the power to raise the fine level. As an organisation you want to increase the power available to you, adding to business costs whilst having completely failed to use your existing powers.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Practice visits already take place for GOS providers. They are a "tick box" exercise that has no impact in day to day working. Many of the optometrists working on GOC matters are not regularly testing sight and are therefore not best placed to judge regarding the workings of business practices

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If we are talking about private spectacle purchases: this is not regulated fu cation and the GIC should not be seeking to increase its reach by imposing further conditions.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) No"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

The consultation survey is extremely limited in scope.

All the questions assume that business registration is automatically being brought in. This may well be the case, but what's the point in the consultation, if there's no overarching question "do you agree with the fundamental proposal around business registration?"

As a result, the survey/consultation is flawed.

The GOC has not used its existing powers (with regard to business registrants) to any meaningful effect.

Commercial pressures, short testing times, pre-reg students under pressure and not supervised adequately- are all well known.

But you have done nothing - the feeling in the ground is that the GOC is an organisation now widely populated by vested (commercial) interests or back room conversations which results in a lack of action against the "big players".

Other than the financial incentive (for the GOC), what other evidence is there that the patients are coming to harm with the current approach? Is it published? And if there is no evidence of harm, why is a profession (that should be evidence based) going to be subject to greater regulation?

These proposals will disproportionately affect smaller businesses. Both the additional costs associated with registration and the increased time burden will have negative impacts.

Smaller businesses tend to serve more urban fringe/ rural areas which can have poor public transport and more patients with mobility issues.

Patients in these areas need their smaller optometry practices to survive, so that then access care close to home and face delays in detection/ treatment.

The number of independently owned smaller practices is dwindling, Increasing costs for these practice can only hasten their demise.

I may have missed it, but I don't see closer of small practices as defined as a risk in your documents.

Have you even considered it?

Lastly the (new) government is seeking to increase productivity, not decrease it with more bureaucracy...

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R56

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optical patient

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

All practitioners should be subject to a uniform system of regulation

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

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- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R57

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We need members of the profession to be involved in affairs concerning optometrists.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"a) Strongly agree"

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**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

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"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R58

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

It should be healthcare first, business second. They cannot run solely as a business like a small grocery store let's say, they will always have a ceiling of earnings and money comes from providing healthcare for more and more patients

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Every organisation should be regulated by a body to ensure equal and sufficient care across the UK

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The GOC should not have too much power either, it should not be dictatory

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This should be non negotiable. You must be qualified to supply anything optical, even ready readers you could argue discourage sight tests and could potentially lead to sight loss

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It should be with the input of optical and medical professionals and not just the GOC itself

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I'm not sure this is necessary

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

How else can it be regular properly?

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Why restrict options?

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

Solely Welsh speakers only are surely very rare now

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R59

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Not sure"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Each store should have their own

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R60

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Linking to turnover would make punishments proportional

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R61

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**"b) No"**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

**Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private**

R63

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Commercial units are similar to high street opticians, and location of this should not matter.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Protecting patients with regulations should cover not-for-profit organisations in the same way as profit making businesses - the standard should not be lower.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Agree however it should be considered as to what situations an exemption would be provided, as the default position should be that all businesses should be registered.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Our business of 20 optical practices would like to be registered with the GOC but is currently unable to because of this requirement; it is now an outdated and excessive requirement.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This would ensure standards as maintained according to the GOC Standards for Optical Businesses.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Agree with regards to training placements with a regulated element e.g. pre registration placements or CLiP

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

HOP needs to have knowledge of what is required by being regulated

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It should be someone who has knowledge and access to the business as a whole

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Yes, the HOP could have a conflict of interest by acting for multiple businesses

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Uncapped however proportional to the offence - we should not be encouraging optical practices to go out of business due to a financial penalty

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This would make the OCCS more adversarial as mentioned - businesses follow Consumer Rights so there is no need for the OCCS to provide binding decisions.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R64

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Contact lens optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R65

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Other

Owner of community optometrist practice & Dispensing Optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

In my experience, GPs know very very little about eyes, but they do have the confidence to make decisions about things that they aren't completely confident on (without realising the implications of their lack of knowledge) so exempting them from the guardrails that are supposed to protect patients from that seems dangerous.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Being proximate to health professionals doesn't make you a health professional, so they absolutely should be working under the same rules and regulations that protect the public.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Risks to patients don't lessen if there's a good intention behind it.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Students are the people most likely to make mistakes due to a lack of knowledge. Having them regulated would mean they have a set of regulations and principles to refer to to guide them.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Whilst I can't foresee such a situation myself, binding your hands before a crisis means it becomes MUCH harder to move at speed in it. For example, during Covid, we needed to change rules quickly to adapt to the new information, and we don't want the GOC to move glacially in an emergency, so having the discretion would give them the option, IF they ever need to use it.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ultimately, the business owners should be responsible for this. Letting businesses nominate one single "head" (who can be an employee pressured into it, to protect a shady business owner) puts the responsibility onto somebody that doesn't benefit from the risks that business ownership comes with. I think it should simply be, the owners of each practice ARE the heads of optical practice.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Whilst I agree with making people Heads of Practice (more than one if more than one owner, equally liable), I worry that making THEM responsible for reporting

breaches means that the other registrants that may witness poor conduct won't feel like its "their" job to report it anymore, because its the HOP's job. And having that all on one person's head means its only one person that the business owner's need to keep on side (or threaten) to stop poor conduct being reported.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Putting one person in charge of training - without letting it be multiple people - puts a LOT on one person's plate, whereas splitting it into multiple HOP's would let them share the load.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It feels reasonable to have the person in charge be somebody that has to follow the GOC's regulations, but I don't 'strongly' agree, as I can understand why some practices might be better run by somebody that isn't just testing all the time.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Making it an employee means making it somebody who's livelihood depends on keeping the business owner's sweet, which MASSIVELY discourages reporting poor conduct.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Heads of Practice that are already doing it for one practice would be better suited to do it for another too, instead of taking up the time of multiple people to do the same kind of work in one organisation.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I understand the need for accountability to the public, but I think that that's what the GOC exists for. Having a single name listed online for any disgruntled customer to hound has the potential to become very nasty, without much benefit to the safety of the public.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Having a maximum cap means giant companies (with insurance) can just pay fines to make problems go away, as if its a cost of doing business. On the flip side, unlimited fines has the risk of destroying companies, and also - by being so unspecific - it has the risk of not being taken seriously as a real threat over a business, because its so intangible. If it is linked directly to turnover (something that is in the business owner's minds day-in, day-out, it becomes a lot easier to do the

maths on how this would hurt their bottom line, and therefore becomes a much better tool for enforcement.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It's wild that this isn't already a thing. Visiting a practice and judging for themselves would be much, much better than solely relying on witness statements.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current system (eg, with the OCCS) is good for giving patients somewhere independent to complain, without negatively impacting those businesses in any major way. If the OCCS was given powers to FORCE refunds/payouts/apologies, etc, it undermines the business's independence, and could have them apologising for things they don't want to apologise for. As blunt as it sounds, businesses should be allowed to give poor customer service, and then patients can vote with their feet.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

People providing plano contact lenses online should be legally accountable for the infections and risks that come with that provision. Similarly, online glasses sellers should have rules surrounding their financial input for things like remakes. Right now, by not having stores people can walk into, they take all the benefit of the sales of glasses, but don't do any concern handling or retests. Bad for patients, bad for community optometrists.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R66

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Therapeutic prescribing optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Such facilities should already be regulated through the NHS or through healthcare regulation to provide mainly bandage (plano), prosthetic or therapeutic/specialist contact lenses. However if the facilities are providing contact lenses or spectacles that could be provided in a community setting then perhaps they should fall under the same regulations.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Such businesses are commercial entities and should come under the same regulations as other optical businesses.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ultimately they are still caring for eyes and providing medical devices and so should also be covered by regulation to protect the public and have equity and parity across the sector.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ultimately they are still caring for eyes and providing medical devices and so should also be covered by regulation to protect the public and have equity and parity across the sector.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As the regulatory body that provision would be reasonable as long as it is not abused and the decision is made according to set principles

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think your point about the risk of commercial overtaking clinical provision is sound and this decision would further the potential for this particularly in larger organisations. Keeping a majority (equal to or greater than 50%) I feel is a safer position for organisations which primarily should exist to provide eyecare not to sell products.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think the concept of HOP is flawed and gives opportunity for large organisations to reduce the numbers of registrants within their management structure and put all the clinical pressure and responsibility onto one individual. Managerial clinical decisions would be better made by a group than one individual and this could be manipulated and exploited in any number of ways.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

See above, I believe this gives opportunity for large organisations to reduce governance and manipulate one individual to reduce costs and drive profit

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe this HOP position would be a poisoned chalice and is likely to be too great a burden for one individual particularly in a larger organisation

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If they exist at all; the HOP concept is flawed and I believe a bad proposition

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If they exist at all; the HOP concept is flawed and I believe a bad proposition. If this does carry forward then absolutely the HOP must be an employee or owner directly involved in the day to day running of the business or else this position will be tendered to third parties and diminish the governance even further

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe this HOP position would be a poisoned chalice and is likely to be too great a burden for one individual particularly in a larger organisation

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As I have said I believe the HOP concept to be a poor one. If they are put in place then they should be held to the same regulatory standards as other registrants. The current standards are rigorous enough I believe

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If you do proceed with the HOP proposal I suppose having a set of guidelines would be helpful but it should be left to the organisations to determine who they feel is best suited to the role

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is fair if the HOP proposal is implemented but I believe this is a bad idea as I have already said

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is fair if the HOP proposal is implemented but I believe this is a bad idea as I have already said

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

It is only fair to fine an organisation based upon its turnover which means that all businesses would be equally punished in terms of impact on resource and equally discouraged from future breaches of regulation

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think this is reasonable but be mindful that all practices in Scotland are already under NHS regulation and have practice visits. You could employ local GOC inspectors who would be more familiar with the local contractual terms and practice styles

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think the OCCS performs well as an independent body. More could be done to publicise their presence to consumers but forcing businesses to sign up to a redress scheme puts them at risk from opportunistic members of the public

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

That should be for the GOC to decide rather than OCCS

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I feel the OCCS is suitable and works well in its current form

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As long as the larger providers pay per practice the same as smaller organisations and do not have a discounted fee just because they have a larger market share. The system must be fair and equitable across all sizes of business

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

As the owner of a small business I am concerned at the implications in terms of cost for this at a time when costs are rising. I am already a registrant and work under the NHS Terms of Service so am governed by two regulators already. My business does

not need another level of scrutiny when there are other providers who may well do such as domiciliary or dispensing without an optometrist.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R67

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R69

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Pearce & Blackmore Opticians

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I am a non registrant owner and I am crucial to my business. I run the whole practice, make all the business and financial decisions, deal with complaints etc. I have responsibility over everything EXCEPT clinical issues. Everything within the testing room is the responsibility of my business partner who is an optometrist. Whilst I would never take any clinical responsibility for the patients (and having been in optics for well over 20 years, I know when to get advice, seek help and defer to the clinician in situations that arise on shop floor) I am an incredibly adept business owner with decades of optical experience in almost every role in a practice - from receptionist at the start of my career, to OA, lab tech, and management. Yet in order for my practice to remain compliant, I either can't be a director of my own business - or I need a non executive, registrant director to tip the directorship scale. It's unfair since my practice would not survive without me and it's outdated. However, in order to ensure quality and safety of patients, when new businesses are formulated, registered businesses will need to be very clear on what the expectations are. Registrants will need to be told in no uncertain terms that they are taking responsibility for every clinical decision made in their practice. Over time, some guidance should come out for non registrant directors on what is required of us in order that our practices are compliant. I would possibly also recommend some simple training/accreditation process for non clinical directors. Even if that is as simple as a video on rules and regulations with a quiz at the end and virtual certificate of completion before that person can register as 50% or more owner/director. Also, it still needs to be that 50% need to be registrants. Don't dilute it too much. No non registrant should own an optical business without a clinician director/partner, and don't put one registrant in the position of needing to argue about responsibilities when they are outnumbered by non registrants.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

They should be made ultimately responsible for every clinical decision/action, but nothing more.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I agree with the theory but the name should be changed. Was a non registrant practice owner present at meetings when this name was proposed? I feel like all affected groups should have been represented at ideas level really because I would be offended if someone else was listed as the 'Head of Optical Practice' here. I am the head of my optical practice. It should be 'Head of Clinical Practice' 'Registrant Lead' 'Head of Registrant Responsibility' or 'Clinical Director' etc. Don't do something wonderful for the profession like this and then completely disregard the non registrants who make these practices work.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Should not be an employee. Should be an owner/director. Someone also with responsibility at companies house etc. Otherwise you are putting employees in a horrible position of having clinical responsibility for the practice but not being able to put any changes in place within the business. Leading to the said, she said situations when a complaint is made or the company is found to be non-compliant. Don't put your registrants in that position.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Multiple branches of one company would be fine, not several businesses. Clear conflicts of interest can always happen in similar business models.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Would need to do a separate consultation I guess but I completely understand that this would be a new direction and would be subject to changes here and there whilst issues come up.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As long as they were listed with a title more like 'Person with overall clinical responsibility' or 'Head of Optical Practice'. Would also be great if the actual head of the practice (as in the Managing Director) could be listed.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

No point imposing a penalty of a million if my practice will go bankrupt at £60k. Disreputable businesses will just laugh and say 'well my Ltd company will never have to pay'. Link it to turnover so it still feels huge but is a sum someone will need to pay.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

My practice for example would have nothing to hide. I also think you should be able to visit for example, online contact lens and spectacle suppliers to check that they are ensuring to see a prescription etc. That will protect the public.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I'm a private business, without a head office. I have worked in practices before when the practice did nothing wrong but because the complaint was escalated to head office, they would always rule in the patient's favour so as to curry favour with the patient and hopefully not have them bad mouth the company on social media. I would be worried about this. However, if this is purely for clinical issues such as supplying an incorrect rx, a mismanaged eye condition etc then yes I would say a patient should have the chance to escalate a complaint to someone.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A pay per use model whereby the business pays for any complaint made against them that is considered by the scheme

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Would make businesses more wary of causing a patient complaint. As long as if the complaint is dismissed at the early stage (for instance if the complaint is obviously frivolous or unreasonable) that the practice does not have to pay.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

I would guess that if you allow the responsible person to be simply an employee (which I think would be a mistake) then business owners/employers would maybe struggle to appoint a new one for maternity cover etc? So they may not want to select women for the role in the first place?

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R70

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Dispensing optician

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Risk of inconsistent standards across sectors.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Ensures consistent patient safety and care standards for commercial optical services.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Addresses risks to vulnerable populations served by these entities.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Creates consistent regulatory expectations regardless of the provider type.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Introduces potential inconsistencies in enforcement and raises questions about fairness.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Allows for greater flexibility in business structures, enabling non-clinical expertise in leadership roles.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Small businesses may struggle to meet this requirement, especially if no registrant is available to take on the role.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ensures that training environments are adequate and meet regulatory expectations.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ensures the individual responsible for compliance has the necessary clinical and regulatory expertise.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ensures accountability since the HOP would be directly integrated into the business and its operations.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ensures the HOP can fully dedicate their time and attention to a single business, reducing risks of oversight or negligence.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Allows the GOC to address specific issues related to HOP responsibilities without changing broader registrant standards.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Provides clear guidance for businesses on selecting qualified and capable individuals as HOPs.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Risks deterring individuals from taking on the role due to public visibility and scrutiny.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

May deter individuals from taking on the role due to public annotation.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Risk of penalties being perceived as punitive rather than corrective.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Enhances public safety by providing direct oversight of business practices.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

May increase the financial burden on smaller operators.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Reduces delays and escalations in addressing consumer complaints.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Balances fairness with practicality, ensuring the scheme is adequately funded.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R71

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R73

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Student optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

This forces business to comply with regulation and therefore improves patient care.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think that the GOC should visit every 2 years like OFSTED as this means if anything got missed and was unsafe that this would be better mitigated. Especially with the use of the new AI/Tech i.e. [REDACTED] which gets rid of any subjective checks done by optometrists which may harm patient care.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think in some circumstances where the business was at complete fault then this is good, however in some circumstances it may over-favour consumers which could put businesses at a disadvantage. A more neutral representation i.e. a GOC representative getting involved in the OCCS could be more useful.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

With the GOC representative there to allow a more neutral representation.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Good but the OCCS should have more regulation and more oversight i.e. ready readers which are not good for people as they can make them avoid eye tests. And there should be a GOC Representative present as this would allow for oversight as there is not much of an oversight over the OCCS

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

There are no mentions over this field. Universities are not good at supporting students with disabilities i.e. Universities have used language for example to a deaf person "giving them reasonable adjustment would put others at a disadvantage". It is considerably better at pre-reg level, as I am experiencing, and at optometrist level.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

**(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and  
(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Disability- there needs to be better catering for disabilities as people often use cycloplegia and this could traumatise children. Second better understanding is needed as silent 'needs' of employees are being ignored.

Ready Readers- they cause harm to patients as unregulated business are handing optical appliances which can cause harm as they may help 'mask' the symptoms of pathology.

Optical Appliances - Dispense/Collection of restricted functions should not be done by untrained Optical Assistants on 'behalf' of an Optometrist for them to then check it off. This can cause harm to the patient in the interim. Second a minor screw repair of children's glasses should still mandate an Optometrist check and this should be made clear. Third, Disabilities should be a part of the restricted functions as some may not be sight impaired but have severe needs and so need that extra care.

The use of equipment during Refraction- the need for Optometrists to still check and validate prescriptions as there is new tech i.e. [REDACTED] which are handled by an untrained optical assistant who only have a basic understanding of refraction, as I have seen in one of the pilot stores for thos scheme, and some optometrists don't check as they have full confidence in it even though it is new and every patient is different. The regulation is not clear on this and this is why it is happening."

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R74

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical business (but not a GOC business registrant)

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

As an independent practice with one optometrist, I am already registered with the GOC as an individual. We must meet the requirements of our NHS practice inspections and contracts as we are based in Scotland. I suggest that those providing private service only should be registered as a body corporate.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Only where they provide private restricted functions, not contracted with the NHS.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We attempted to register as a corporate body in 2023, as a family run independent practice where the directors include myself (registered optometrist) and my husband who controls account/payroll/practice management and decision making. We were unable to as we had no way round the legislation. We could not reduce to only myself as director as my husband carried out tasks which required business control beyond that of a business secretary, and we did not feel it was right to bring in an outside director who is registered, solely for the purpose of GOC body corporate registration. We are set up as a limited company instead of sole trader as we have young children, we did not feel it right to put our home at risk by not limiting the company if something were to go wrong financially, especially early in our business life. Therefore, we have been unable to register as a body corporate, and unable to use the title Optometrist in our name since then.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Does the head of optical practice have to be a GOC registrant?

Will this required an individual to be registered twice along with the body corporate registration? I find this unclear.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I agree a HOP is sensible, but some companies may wish to share this responsibility, and I would not like to see it become restrictive to one person. Every business is different and I would like to see that they do what works for them in terms of number of HOP.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It should be a director

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Is this not what is already covered in GOC standards when registered? It sounds like it getting more complex and separated. I feel that if a HOP is required, then their role is to ensure that the business adheres to the GOC standards/code of conduct.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think this is possibly more relevant in larger businesses.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

The fine should be related to the seriousness of the incident and size of the company. A fine of the same size will have a very different impact on a large multimillion pound company compared to a small independent one.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As a practice in Scotland, we are already subject to regular NHS inspections, it helps ensure standards are met, and helps ensure public/patient safety.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R75

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

none

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Much needed I think, to spot check compliance

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Internet supply of contact lenses, plano/coloured contact lenses by unregistered business

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R76

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

they do not perform this function as a full time

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

if commercial in eyes only

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

charities do not need more control

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

university's already self regulate/teach

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

n/a

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

you are now asking for stricter registration but not for corporate bodies?? this means more unscrupulous practice and not in the public interest

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

however the optometrist and dispensing optician should still be governed by the GOC and the head of practice should not take the onus of problems

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

training is a must

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

it doesn't work if not, does it??

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

there has to be a link between the business and the head? If not unscrupulous practice will take place

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I don't understand if a head is not registered

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

the more you penalise a practice the more the GOC becomes rich; keep to 50K

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

inspection is already there by the NHS contract

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

there should be no link between the cases seen by the OCCS and other bodies of the GOC (should be independent of the GOC)

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

if the GOC proposes is proposing no limit on cases of misconduct than I don't agree

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

current scheme works....is there statistics it doesn't?

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

small fee from each business

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

over regulation means I am quitting (e.g. [REDACTED] is a burdensome stress on nursing homes and dentists and many dentists don't like the red, yellow, green on every small thing that is in a dental surgery)

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R77

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

They should work to the same standards as other businesses

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It then becomes a subjective decision made by individuals rather than a consistent measure for all

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Lay people can hold a GOS contract as an individual, partnership or limited company regardless of whether they are a GOC registrant.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Businesses under lay ownership will be encouraged/have to keep to the same standards as other businesses. Having a head of optical practice will help them understand the responsibilities of a GOC registrant

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Head of optical practice should work with the business owner to achieve this. They should bear equal responsibility

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This may be difficult for a small practice under lay ownership. Employing someone comes with NI and employment rights. Maybe having someone contracted to the business to supply services might work better

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If it is an employed position, it could become complicated to have several "proper" employers rather than just hold a contract for services on a self-employed basis.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This could be a step too far in finding such people for small lay owned businesses as registrants may not want to subject themselves to a higher(?) set of standards.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This would enable consistency across all practices

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Who would keep the information up to date?

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If there is no prospect of having a visit from GOC, standards will slip. These visits should be supportive ones

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

this enables consistency and fairness for the public

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

A business should not have to pay for an unjustified complaint

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

How would it work if a single-handed business owner took maternity leave?

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R78

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Bexley Bromley and Greenwich LOC

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Needs to be a level playing fields for all practitioners providing these services.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

As above

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Again, needs to be a level playing field and protection of the public is still important.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Can't think of a reasonable example.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As long as there continues to be significant proportion of registrant directors although not a majority we would fine this acceptable eg 50/50

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Not against the idea but would depend on the size of the practice.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This needs to be a senior management level position and not just a role for a individual branch manager who has no company wide decision making responsibilities.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Again should be a senior level position for a registrant with decision making responsibilities. This cannot be a registrant who is overseeing individuals but is a

role with responsibility for the business structure and processes. Need to have protected time away from clinics to complete this role.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

May be ideal to have an independent consultant providing this service who can manage the conflict of interest especially in a whistleblowing case.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above, an independent consultant could oversee many practices and be in a position to share best practice frameworks.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Difficult to judge as would need further clarification to answer in detail.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Specific rules and guidance are essential

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In the name of transparency would be useful.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The individual may not want this shared with the public.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Linked to the specific practice, if appropriate. If its an entire company policy it should be linked to company turnover.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

But should not be used as a "fishing expedition".

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not believe this is required. The industry is regulated enough and business' are able to resolve issues themselves. We have concerns that this would become an additional layer of bureaucracy that is not necessary and would also become a very expensive service that ultimately the registrants are paying for.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Would be too confusing otherwise

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Needs to be fair

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) Not sure"

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Online contact lens sales

Responsibility for resolving issues with spectacle purchases made at a different company to where the sight test is performed must be confirmed by the GOC. It must be made clear that the provider of the products are responsible.

On a broader note, we feel that business' should be able to ask patients to pay for an appointment for a sight test prior to performing the examination (contrary to current Opticians Act). We would support the continued review of the Opticians Act.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R79

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Education provider

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GP practices are separate from hospitals as some incorporate an optometry practice - if this is the case the optometry practice if carrying out commercial restricted functions should be regulated by the GOC. Optometry practices working in a commercial manner should all fall under GOC regs.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GP practices are separate from hospitals as some incorporate an optometry practice - if this is the case the optometry practice if carrying out commercial restricted functions should be regulated by the GOC. Optometry practices working in a commercial manner should all fall under GOC regs.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

if they have a commercial aspect, perform restricted functions and produce profit they should be regulated.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

if the requirement for majority registrants as directors is removed, then yes.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

to maintain clinical standards

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Without this there is a risk of a token figurehead

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

To help ensure strong clinical leadership

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

A fixed maximum will be eroded by inflation and a link to turnover can be manipulated by clever accounting

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The )current provider OCCS is adequate, has experience and evidence of performing in a reasonable manner.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

A combination of the above two models

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

We have some concern about the unpublished fee levels, particularly in relation to University clinics and Not for Profits

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private



R80

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

It needs to be clear who is providing the services in GP practices and Hospital, it could be a commercial organisation contracted to provide services, in which case it should be exempt. However, if a sight test or restricted function is performed by a Hospital (unlikely a GP practice) as part of the clinical care package, then the Trust or provider should not be subject to be GOC business regulation, as they will have other governance requirements instead e.g CQC.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

These are no different to any other optical businesses, but to get a NHS GOS contract, they need to offer their services to all, not just patients of the Trust or GP.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Charities are no different to any other optical provider, they have contracts to provide NHS sight testing etc, and the governance with a head of optical practice for them needs to be the same.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

University clinics will see all categories of patients, albeit that the students will be under supervision, this is no different to a high street practice and requires the same level of governance and oversight.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It should only apply to all optical businesses providing restricted functions direct to the public and patients in the UK, not for example, companies set up for tax purposes for locum optometrists.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It is not necessary if there is a Head of Optical Services, however, I do not think the term Optical Services is fit for purpose. as nearly all the risks are around Optometry Services, if the business provides Sight testing then it needs to be an Optometrist as Head of Optometry Services. A DO would not have the required skill set to assume clinical responsibility for these services.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This needs to apply to all optical business providing restricted functions in the UK, including those with remote sight testing options based abroad and providing services to the UK population .

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This role needs to be at a practice level, as businesses could be several practices or 100s of practices. As an example, some optical businesses only have one GOS contract for England for multiple practice sites. Other businesses have GOS contracts for individual sites.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Absolutely, some supervising registrants may not have control of what is provided for students in optical businesses, so the responsibility needs to be higher up.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Many of the risks are clinically related, and therefore, it should be a registrant appropriate to the functions provided.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The individual requires authority within the business to make changes and ensure clinical safety, this cannot happen if this is not made a senior responsible role within the organisation.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

There needs to be one HOP for each business, otherwise, there are no clear lines of responsibility.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Certainly, for the GOC to have inability powers should these be required in the future.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It is up to businesses to appoint their HOPs, and these should be registrants.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The role and who does it, needs to be visible on the register. the public also needs to be informed about the role, so when there is an issue, they know superficially who to contact. This will need to be kept up to date by the optical businesses.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Again, for the same reasons as IP, so the public are aware. it might be that training courses and qualifications will develop as a result of the changes, as the the skills and responsibilities could be wide ranging e.g., IT, use of electronic patient records, referrals, and especially if separating sight testing by time, person and place is permitted.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

The penalty needs to be proportional to business size to carry any weight

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In some FtP cases, it is not always possible from the records or the complainant whether there have been contributory factors such as poor IT, or processes, and visiting a business practice as a means of seeking assurance, could have a deterrent effect for all to get right, even if this power is used sparingly.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It needs to be a statutory requirement to be fair to all, and at the moment, OCCS does not cover non GOC business registrants.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

OCCS tends to be lower level complaints, not to the level of FtP, therefore, keep to the current system, first through mediation resolving complaints at the first tier where possible. Otherwise, it will create another FtP backlog.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

OCCS has worked well and should be an exemplar to other regulators. Do not change it. However, GOC might need to increase activity within the contract.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Continue with the same, for the reasons stated in the consultation document.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

Comment - These are individual characteristics, optical businesses are not individuals.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R81

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optometry Wales

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

We agree with this statement as long as the referenced services are led by a GMC registrant such as an Ophthalmologist or OMP. GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) are regulated by the relevant organisations.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

As in our response to Q1, if the commercial unit is led by a GMC registrant and is regulated by the professional body/authority then duplicated governance by the GOC would not be required. If the commercial unit is led by a registrant that is not regulated by a professional body/authority, then GOC regulation would be required.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Charities providing restricted functions should be regulated on the same basis as other providers, no organisation should be treated differently to others.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

University eye clinics providing restricted functions should be regulated on the same basis as other providers, no organisation should be treated differently to others.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If the GOC reforms are progressed, we would wish to see that all organisations providing restricted functions are regulated by the GOC, unless led by a GMC registrant that is regulated by a regulator organisation.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that the need for a head of optical practice to be a GOC registrant needs further consideration as could potentially disadvantage owners of smaller practices.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that this should be kept as a decision made by the practice as we feel there could be unintended consequences around recruitment/job descriptions caused if the GOC were to be prescriptive on this point.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that this should be kept as a decision made by the practice as we feel there could be unintended consequences around recruitment/job descriptions caused if the GOC were to be prescriptive on this point.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that this should be kept as a decision made by the practice as we feel there could be unintended consequences around recruitment/job descriptions caused if the GOC were to be prescriptive on this point.

For example, some practices struggle to employ an optometrist and use the services of locum optometrists.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that this should be kept as a decision made by the practice as we feel there could be unintended consequences around recruitment/job descriptions caused if the GOC were to be prescriptive on this point.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that it would be less confusing for the public if heads of optical practices were to listed against the practice entry rather than the registrant entry.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

We do not believe that uncapped financial penalties would be appropriate as we do not see the benefit to the public and runs the risk of discouraging practices from supporting regulating reform. We do not believe that linking the financial penalty to turnover is appropriate - an optical practice may have a healthy turnover and be making a financial loss, and again this runs the risk of discouraging practices from supporting regulatory reform.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not understand why the GOC is seeking to introduce this power and on what evidence this is based. We would appreciate further discussion to better understand why this is being proposed.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Consumer product complaints are best resolved by the practice in the first instance or by OCCS if this is not achieved.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current system is evidenced to work very well. We have not seen any evidence to suggest that any further processes are required.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current model works well.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The proposed requirements around Head of Optical Practice e.g being employed, could negatively impact those who work part time (due to caring or parental responsibilities) and in a locum role.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R82

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

The College of Optometrists

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

There could potentially be benefits to the GOC regulating GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent), such as comprehensive GOC coverage and uniformity, patient reassurance and protection.

However, these providers are already regulated by the CQC. As optometrists providing restricted functions in these settings will be regulated as individuals (and other healthcare professionals by their regulator) we think it could be disproportionate and unrealistic for the GOC to seek to regulate these settings as well.

Furthermore, consideration needs to be given to the increased cost and burden of extra regulation on GP practices and hospitals, the evidence for such regulation being required, and the impact of this on wider patient care and services.

There could also be unintended consequences of regulating GP practices and hospitals, such as duplication of regulation, and the potential conflicts arising where contradictions and misalignments between different regulators occur. This could lead to complicated and unnecessary challenges.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

"Whilst we believe it could potentially be disproportionate for the GOC to regulate GP practices and hospitals (see response to Q1), it would be beneficial - to ensure

consistency and uniformity - that units providing commercial functions are regulated, particularly as some independent providers operate out of GP practices. This occurs for example where a room is hired in a GP practice by an optical business, in which restricted functions may be carried out. It would be important that these entities are regulated, as they are most likely not subject to the CQC regulation of the wider practice/hospital.

However, we would wish to see a clearer definition of what the GOC considers a 'commercial unit' before commenting further."

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We broadly agree with the principle that charities providing restricted functions should be regulated, in order to give users of their services confidence and protection. There is no compelling reason why standards for the users of these services should be, or be perceived to be, any lower than for any other provider.

We note as per Annex 2, that there are currently only four registered charities that provide specified restricted functions, three of which are already under GOC regulation, and we see no reason why all shouldn't be. Should more charities begin to provide such functions in the future, we believe they should be considered on a case-by-case basis, but would anticipate that they should fall under the scope of GOC business regulation.

Feedback from the College's Policy Advisory Panel and Board, strongly recommends that the GOC should consider a fee exemption or a reduced fee model for charities, given that they are not primarily operating a for-profit model. A fee could be a deterrent to new charities emerging to offer vital services to vulnerable groups and could reduce the ability of any charity reaching and benefitting the widest possible cohort of patients.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This is a potentially complicated area of regulation.

Whilst welcome in principle, university eye clinics exist as part of an educational setting and are not necessarily separate businesses to the University. They exist to

support undergraduate teaching courses, while also providing restricted functions to patients, and are already subject to education-related GOC regulation to accredit courses. We would need reassurance that there will be clear distinction between both aspects of regulation e.g. education panel visits and business inspections, and that there wouldn't be over-lap and duplication.

We think that to ensure consistency and patient protection and reassurance, and to protect students and staff, regulation of university eye clinics would be positive, and we would be in favour of a light-touch approach.

Our Policy Advisory Panel have also suggested that consideration may need to be given to a reduced fee model for university eye clinics, as they are not-for-profit and university budgets should be focussed on ensuring optimal education provision.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe the GOC should establish from the start which entities fall under their regulatory remit, and which don't. However, it may be useful for the GOC to have this option available to them to be used only in exceptional circumstances.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If this proposal is taken forward and the Head of Optical Practice model (Section B) is not adopted, there would need to be an alternative proposition to ensure overarching clinical accountability for optical businesses.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

"Whilst we are in favour of this proposal in principle (especially to ensure safe and robust systems and processes, transparency and professionalism), the practicalities of appointing a Head of Optical Practice (HOP) could be challenging, and there could be many deterrents to individuals adopting the role.

While in large optical practices there are often multiple optometrists and dispensing opticians, in some practices there may be only one optometrist, or a practice may solely rely on locums to provide restricted functions. As such, there may not be a suitable individual to meet the requirements to assume the role of HOP. In these circumstances (particularly where the workforce may change daily), it is unclear on what basis a HOP would be identified and appointed.

Our Policy Advisory Panel and Board felt strongly that an additional set of standards (and responsibilities set out in legislation – Paragraph 127) and accountability placed upon the HOP, would be a significant deterrent to registrants wishing to take on the role. It was felt that optometrists and dispensing opticians are already, and robustly, held to account as individual registrants, and additional regulation would be unwelcome. The additional administrative requirements of being the HOP, along with potential additional training required (particularly for locums), could be a deterrent and could reduce their capacity for clinical work. Furthermore, an individual adopting the role of HOP would, understandably, expect additional remuneration from their employer, which if not available could also deter registrants from taking on the role.

We are also concerned that, in order to fulfil the requirement to have a HOP, an individual could be ‘forced’ into the role, and may not have the suitable skills, desire or experience to fulfil it effectively.

We would like to see clarity on what powers the GOC would have should no suitable registrant be available for the role of HOP, or if no employee wishes to take up the role in a particular optical business. More detail would also be needed on the systems, policies and culture referred to in this section of the consultation.

If an HOP model is not adopted, an alternative approach to business regulation could be to strengthen the GOC’s enforcement and inspection powers and to ensure that all registrants are responsible, accountable and confident to raise concerns."

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While the responsibilities are reasonable i.e. to ensure that the business:

- complies with the GOC’s standards for business registrants and other regulatory requirements and avoids breaches of those requirements;
- declares relevant information to the GOC, including material breaches of GOC requirements that may need investigation by the GOC; and
- maintains up to date GOC business registration requirements

consideration could be given to the training required to enable registrants to confidently and effectively take on an HOP role if they have not previously had any experience of optical business management. This should include non-clinical leadership and communication with colleagues at all levels.

Our Policy Advisory Panel noted that the HOP should also receive training on how to deal with conflict or disagreements, for example where they disagree with the decisions of a lay senior manager/owner, as well as situations where a HOP and a registrant colleague disagree on a matter.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

"Education and training in optometry is a complex and technical space, for which we cannot give a full answer here, especially without more specific information on the proposal.

Under the Education and Training Requirements (ETR), qualification providers have responsibility for the quality of all learning experiences. There could be a potential role for HOP's to have some responsibility for ensuring commitments to education providers are met and are properly managed, but not necessarily responsibilities around the "adequacy" of arrangements for training placements. In large practices, other colleagues may be better suited to be being responsible for managing the training.

If this proposal is adopted, the individual HOP may need training and support to fulfil this role. This additional level of responsibility (especially if the potential HOP lacks the experience in this increasingly complicated and technical space) could be a hinderance to registrants coming forward for the role.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Should a Head of Optical Practice model be adopted, we believe that they should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where this is not possible e.g. to cover extended periods of HOP leave in a small practice owned by a non-registrant, and provision may need to be made to account for such circumstances.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It would be reasonable that the Head of Optical Practice should be an individual employed by the business. However, there may be circumstances where this may not be possible, such as where no suitable candidate for the HOP is available, where the clinical services are provided by locums, or in circumstances where the HOP is on long-term leave. Provision should be made for this.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In most cases, it would be reasonable that for individual practices or small groups of practices, the Head of Optical Practice should be responsible for that one business. However, for some larger multiples, for operational reasons, it would be reasonable that provision is made for the individual to be responsible for several related businesses/franchises. Guidance may be needed on the potential maximum number of practices the HOP should be responsible for, and what structures should be in place for the delegation of responsibilities on a day-to-day basis.

In addition, where no HOP can be identified for an individual business, there may be no other option than to use a HOP who has a joint role across more than one business.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While the roles and responsibilities of an HOP should be made clear to the post-holder, we do not feel additional regulation is required. However, if the role of a HOP is ever filled by a non-registrant (dependent on acceptance of the related proposal above), the GOC may need to consider additional standards for such individuals.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If a Head of Optical Practice requirement is introduced, it could be helpful that the GOC specify in rules/guidance, the essential characteristics that it considers necessary for the HOP. However, an unintended consequence is that if no employee or locum meets these characteristics, there would be no Head of Optical Practice. We would need to see the proposed essential characteristics first before commenting further.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In order to ensure transparency with the public, and enhance communication between optometry practices and the GOC, this would be a reasonable measure. This would also make it clear to the public and other healthcare professionals who is responsible for ensuring the practice/s meets GOC standards.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

There may be occasions whereby a registrant is the HOP of one practice, but also works in several other practices/businesses (e.g. as a locum) where they are not the HOP. This would cause confusion with the public. As per our response to Q15, a distinct list of businesses with the individual HOP's name included would be a better option.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

We believe the fairest option would be to link the financial penalty to turnover (or possibly profit), and to have a cap (i.e. a hybrid b and c option). An uncapped financial penalty would be an extreme and unnecessary measure.

One option could be to grade the penalty according to the severity of the offence, and to couple this with a dual approach of using other limitations and sanctions such as suspensions.

If a new maximum amount was selected, this should be tapered according to the size of business. We would also like to see what the new maximum amount would be before commenting further.

In all cases, the impact of financial penalties on smaller practices must be considered, particularly where a small practice is one of the few (or only) options for patient access to eye care (e.g. rural areas) and a large fine would prevent them from making the required improvements and therefore remaining operational. While there should be a financial penalty as a deterrent, and safeguards in place to protect the public, the sanctions should not risk the provision of safe patient care in areas of greatest need.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Having the ability to inspect optical practices could enhance the reputation of the GOC's role as regulator, provide additional confidence to patients and the public, and enable the GOC to fully investigate concerns where they arise – if the inspections are carried out effectively, by suitably qualified 'inspectors' and bring about positive change. This would also bring optometry in line with other healthcare professions such as pharmacy. This may be beneficial, as the majority of optical practices are not regulated by the CQC and therefore are not subject to CQC inspections.

In the absence of evidence of need, we would not support the need for regular or routine inspections, but only when a complaint or issue is identified and needs further investigation.

As GOS contract holders are already subject to inspection by national health services, there is a risk that routine inspections could be duplication of work, as well as increased administrative burden and costs for optical practices.

In our survey of members (2022), 69% said the GOC could more effectively regulate businesses if it had powers of inspection (18% were unsure and 12% disagreed). However, a further analysis of their free text responses showed that members would only support inspections in certain circumstances, particularly to investigate illegal practice or sales, to investigate fitness to practise allegations, or in situations where non-registrants were involved.

Furthermore, inspection powers should be used and exercised fairly and appropriately. This will enable universal business regulation rules to be better enforced, and improve both public and optometrist trust in the GOC's role as regulator."

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS) works well as a non-mandatory intermediary, and we see no reason to change the system and make this mandatory. The current GOC triage of complaints works well and should continue.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current scheme works well, and we see no reason to change the system. Legally binding decisions - in the absence of any evidence to the contrary - would be an unnecessary step.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current delivery model and process for identifying a single provider appears fair and effective. We see no reason to change the system.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Other

We agree with paragraph 198 in the consultation document i.e. continue with the current funding arrangements.

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

In appointing a HOP, there is a risk that employers could favour those who are full-time employees, over part-time employees, which could affect those with childcare and other caring responsibilities. This is more likely to disadvantage female registrants – who are less likely to work full-time [GOC Registrant Survey 2024].

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

If the GOC were to specify in rules/guidance, the essential characteristics that it considers necessary for the HOP, this could help enable some younger optometrists to qualify for the role, who otherwise may have been not considered experienced enough solely due to their age.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The above tick box does not allow us to select 'No' twice i.e, 'No' to question 'a' and 'No' to question 'b'. For clarity, we do not think there is any impact of the proposals on the Welsh language.

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

The above tick box does not allow us to select 'No' twice i.e, 'No' to question 'a' and 'No' to question 'b'. For clarity, we do not think there is any impact of the proposals on the Welsh language.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The above tick box does not allow us to select 'No' twice i.e, 'No' to question 'a' and 'No' to question 'b'. For clarity, we do not think there is any impact of the proposals on the Welsh language.

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

The introduction of business regulation also provides an opportunity for the GOC to further tackle the illegal supply of eye care services and optical appliances from both within the UK and abroad.

In recent years, there has been an increase in online prescribing and dispensing of optical appliances. This raises issues concerning potential lack of appropriate supervision for the safe supply of contact lenses without specification verification, and spectacles supplied without ensuring the prescription is valid. This has always been a concern for the sector, and even more so as people's habits related to accessing healthcare online change. We appreciate that the GOC does not have jurisdiction to take action on overseas sales, but we would like the GOC, as a minimum, to raise the issue with the appropriate national regulator/authority and have the powers to end the illegal practice occurring in the UK.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R85

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Association of British Dispensing Opticians

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GP practices and hospitals across the UK are already subject to robust regulation and individual registrants operating in these settings must adhere to GOC standards. Provided the services in question are led by a GMC registrant, patient should still receive the highest standards of care and it would be disproportionate for the GOC to provide additional regulation.

We support the proposal on the condition that patients receive equivalent levels of protection wherever and whenever they access services involving restricted functions. Any entity delivering restricted functions must be held to equally stringent standards, irrespective of the setting in which these functions are delivered.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If this is a standalone commercial operation located within the premises of a GP practice or hospital and thus operates outside the jurisdiction of the GP or hospital regulatory authorities, it should fall under the regulation of the General Optical Council (GOC).

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

For the protection of patients receiving, and registrants delivering, the restricted functions described in paragraph 23, charities should also be subject to GOC regulation.

Otherwise, there would be a gap in regulation as the risks associated with the entity as opposed to individual practitioners would not be adequately addressed.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Without regulation of the GOC, there would be a gap in regulation as the risks associated with the entity as opposed to individual practitioners would not be adequately addressed.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

With the exception of GP practices and hospitals where the provision of restricted functions is led by a GMC registrant, so provided regulation of such entities is carved out of the GOC's remit, we cannot see the need for exemptions.

Introducing exemptions could lead to the potential for inconsistency and perceived inequity in regulatory oversight, leading to varying standards of care and undermining public trust in the regulatory framework.

It would also risk creating a precedent where businesses, knowing what type of exemptions are available, vary their operating model to avoid regulatory oversight. For patient safety and registrant protection, all businesses performing restricted functions should be subject to uniform registration requirements to ensure consistent oversight and accountability.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We recognise and agree with the points the GOC puts forward in Paragraph 92 . Registrant directors do not in themselves necessarily add to patient protection and the current requirement creates an unnecessary administrative burden.

However where registrant directors are not in place we would expect to see a head of optical practice appointed.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We support the principle of appointing a head of optical practice and for most businesses this would be a proportionate requirement. However, we are concerned that for a small owner-led business with a single practice, the requirement to appoint a head of optical practice might be disproportionate to the level of risk involved.

However as per our response to Q6 we would not expect to see a practice without either registrant directors or a head of optical practice and this should be addressed in any future regulation.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice ensure clear accountability for maintaining compliance and high standards of care. They promote strong leadership, consistent adherence to regulations, and better support for registrants in meeting their professional obligations. This role enhances patient safety, aligns with the GOC's reforms for ethical care delivery, and provides specialized oversight to address the unique challenges of optical services.

However, we do have some concerns in that we do recognise this is a new role within the profession and would need to understand in more depth the support and training that would be offered to individuals to fulfil these positions along with an understanding of the liabilities a registrant would be taking on in fulfilling these roles. There will be a role for the wider optical sector to support the role out of heads of optical practices and any training and support that is needed.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Everyone working within an optical practice has a role within supervision and ensuring patient safety. The head of optical practice role should not overlap with the role or responsibilities of a supervisor, but be complementary to it. Given that optical businesses come in many different forms, it would make sense for the head of optical service to have oversight of the system of education and training within a business, but not necessarily to have specific responsibility for the adequacy of placements. The GOC should avoid being too prescriptive in this area.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Whilst we see this role as ideally being registrant-led, we do recognise that the system has to be workable. If the head of optical practice is not a registrant then it should be the business owner (supported ideally by registrant directors) so in the event of any concerns arising the GOC could hold the relevant person to account.

Additionally, there may be certain times when a "non-registrant" business owner may not be employing registrants and there needs to be sufficient flexibility to cover such eventualities.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Ideally, the HOP would be an employed registrant working within the practice on a regular basis so they can fulfil their responsibilities.

However, we need to recognise that people change jobs, go onto maternity/paternity leave, have periods of sickness and absence and the business owner would need to have flexibility in providing cover for the HOP role in these circumstances if they couldn't take the role on themselves. There could be a need, therefore, to allow a contractor to take on the HOP role-ideally a registrant.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While a HOP might ideally be focused on one particular business, there are many different types of optical business and the GOC should therefore allow flexibility about how the role is carried. The overriding need is to focus on the desired outcome of providing the necessary leadership to maintain high standards of care and regulatory compliance in each individual business.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The GOC should clearly outline the responsibilities of a head of optical practice as above and assuming that the person carrying out this role is either a registrant or accountable as a business owner, it should not be necessary to have separate standards for the head of optical practice. The GOC should avoid creating a separate set of standards that is unnecessarily costly and complex to administer.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It should not be necessary for the GOC to produce rules or guidance on the essential characteristics of a head of optical practice, assuming that the person fulfilling this role is a registrant or business owner. This should be left to the business owners to decide based around the information provided by the GOC on the responsibilities of the role.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

To ensure appropriate accountability, it is important that heads of optical practice are listed on the register for businesses.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The register of optical businesses should list the name of the head of optical practice and perhaps indicate whether they are a registrant. It is an excessive burden then to cross reference this onto the registrant list and runs the risk of creating confusion and excessive administration, while adding nothing to patient safety or accountability.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

We would not support the GOC being given powers to impose an uncapped penalty as there is no evidence that the GOC can point to of "any immediate risks to public protection" caused by the current cap and therefore we feel this would be disproportionate. We further recognise that linking a penalty to the turnover of a business might be unfair on businesses that own multiple practices as opposed to businesses that are independent companies while being part of a wider group. Therefore of the options a new maximum penalty – set in a fair and proportionate manner – is our preferred option.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree that there is no evidence to justify a system of regular inspections, which would add substantially to the ongoing costs of compliance and regulation.

In relation to whether the GOC requires a power to visit premises as part of a fitness to practise investigation, it is not clear in what circumstances this would be necessary given that the GOC already has powers to request information and gather witness evidence. We would be concerned about the additional costs on registrants of appointing and training a team of inspectors

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

A mandatory consumer redress scheme would ensure that patients have a clear accessible route to seek the resolution of complaints. Public knowledge of such

schemes would foster trust even further in optical services whilst at the same time driving higher standards of care in optical businesses who would be aware that they would be accountable for their services. A mandated redress scheme would bring consistency across practices and should support registrants in providing clarity and guidance on how to deal with patient concerns alongside helping promote best practice across healthcare.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The present process with OCCS does work well without powers to make legally binding decisions and we would not want to see consumer redress become a lengthy, legalistic and more costly process .

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The present process works well and is understood and supported by the sector and patient feedback is supportive of the scheme.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While it might be superficially attractive to seek to incentivise businesses to avoid complaints by requiring payment per complaint, this would be unfair in a case where a complaint is unwarranted. Furthermore, administering such a system would add an increased amount of administration and cost to the process, and would be likely to prove unworkable. Therefore, we would support continuing with the present funding method.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"b) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

None.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R88

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

No

**Which category of respondent best describes you?**

Optometrist

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Everyone involved in the sale/ supply of optical appliances should be regulated under the GOC to ensure standards of care are maintained across communities.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Similar to above, continuity of care is key and regulation is key.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

My assumption here would be that anyone previously exempt would automatically apply for exemption from GOC registration.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Within any large corporation there is already huge commercial influence in any decisions made regarding a business and rightfully so, without profit optometry practices would cease to exist. However, I would only feel comfortable with a board of non-majority registrants providing there was an Optometrist (not DO) led replacement post that ensured patient care was still at the core of any business decisions. Something like a Chief Optometry Officer, however, I would not be comfortable with this being DO led as there are differing levels of understanding in clinical care and associated patient safety risk between the professions.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe this is critical is business are allowed to move towards a purely commercial led director team. I caveat this view with the steer that Head Of Optical Practice must be an Optometrist and not a Dispensing Optician. Having done the dispensing course prior to optometry and worked with many outstanding DO's throughout my career, I can say with confidence and without bias that there is a significant difference in understanding of patient/ public safety risk in terms of clinical care and management.

I firmly believe that all business require a Head of Optical Practice to ensure commercial decision do not compromise patient safety and accountability in key in ensuring this. I can not see a situation where this would not benefit the wider public.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe there is a risk that the current model enables registrant directors to be there as a token gesture without a full grasp of the expected responsibility associated with the role. However I think it's critical to this proposal that the Head of Optical Practice must be an Optometrist. I do not feel that Dispensing Opticians have the same understanding of patient safety from a clinical perspective compared with an Optometrist.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe the roles and responsibilities associate with this role align with that of a registrant Optometrist.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think to do this job well you need to have a grasp of the nuances that exist within each business as well as the ability to directly engage with employees. I do not feel an external person would be able to have the same impact.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Given the scope of responsibilities that would be associated with this role it doesn't seem right someone could sit at this level for multiple business.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I believe that a significant amount of time and thought should be dedicated to deciding the parameters this role and also to support the person appointed into. Clear steer from the GOC is required here.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

I think the GOC should have a presence in our practices. Understanding the challenges face by business and individual registrant who are very much so working

'in the thick of it' is key to understand how regulation must adapt to support them as much as protect the public.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Business usage of locums are a concern in relation to patient safety. Should we have optoms passing their OSCE and then heading straight out into practice as an independently employed optometrist with no support network? Personally I don't feel it's safe. I feel work needs to be done by the GOC in relation to adverse incidents logged by businesses as it relates to the proportion of these associated to locums vs employed clinicians. I also feel there is a patient safety risk for practices who are unable to employ resident optometrists as locum work is more lucrative. Practices can go years without ever having a resident optometrist - does this create the safest space for our patients in the long run?

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R89

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Education provider

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Our University eye clinic is not a business, but rather a small part of a charitable organisation. It would be disproportional to have similar business registration fees and administrative burden applied to a single clinic compared to multiples with over 2,000 clinics. Hence the undefined fees is concerning [26] and we do not support the proposal that University clinics are not exempted [74] from the proposed regulations.

Hence for organisations such as Universities and Charities, imposing 'business' regulation will impact on staff time and organisational finances, detracting from student education and therefore patient safety, so we are not in support of these proposed changes.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

A “Head of Practice” role is a nice idea, but would be costly and the additional registration risk for that individual would make the role unpopular. The ability to inspect practices comes with huge cost to the practice and places high stress on staff; the GOC has identified that there is no evidence for a need for this [159] so we do not support this idea.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

The ability of the GOC to impose uncapped fines is unjustified (from the evidence they provide) as there is no immediate risk to public protection – this is therefore out of the GOCs remit [33] [146] [149] [150]

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the GOC that the OCCS works well for consumer redress and the current arrangements should not be altered.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

If yes, please explain your reasoning.

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

If yes, please explain how.

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Annex 5 is about fitness to practice, but fails to mention the impact of such actions on the welfare of the individuals accused and their families. This has a direct effect on eye care practitioners' mental health and ability to offer high quality patient care so this omission, the long-time taken to resolve complaints by the GOC and the investigation of incidents which are clearly not related to fitness to practice, is unacceptable and contrary to the GOC's remit [142]

There is not mention in the consultation on how University based audiology, podiatrists and other allied health clinics are regulated which seems to be an oversight.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R90

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Patient representative charity/organisation

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Whilst there is blurring of the lines (people may be seen originally in a private practice and then move to NHS or vice versa but remain under the supervision of the same individual) on balance medical regulation sits elsewhere.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

The public may not understand the nuances of business structure and for their protection it would be better for the default to be regulation by the GOC. Unintended consequence is that it potentially further confuses patients who may initially think their management falls under the GOC regulations when it doesn't.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Provides greater protection for the public

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In a learning environment it is important that from the outset best practice is modelled. They are often seeing vulnerable patients whose care could be compromised.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Given the breadth of different business models, a level of flexibility might be necessary although it might be reasonable to expect a sunset clause.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Limiting scope for excess profit motive can only be a good thing especially as optometry moves towards health awareness rather than optical aid sales.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Despite the risk of an HOP being unavailable, having someone with accountability within a structured framework will provide confidence to consumers. The risk should be managed within the business with alternatives if the HOP were to die/move etc.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Without a direct line from shareholder/owner to HOP there may be less communication and the possibility of inappropriate behaviours being hidden

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

For individual businesses to assess and manage the risk

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Future proof as far as possible

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Accountability

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Accountability and follows similar lines taken by other regulatory bodies

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Accountability and follows similar lines taken by other regulatory bodies

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Any other measure introduces variation or may not keep pace with change

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Gives public confidence and follows the approach of other regulatory bodies

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If it works now, there's no requirement to change

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

We haven't identified any, but have not consulted sufficiently widely to be confident that discrimination doesn't take place

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R91

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA)

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Other

Independent body overseeing the health and care professional regulators

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

The approach the GOC sets out seems sensible in light of the fact that such settings are already registered and regulated by the Care Quality Commission, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, or the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (Northern Ireland).

In line with the principles of Right-touch regulation we believe that all regulation should be risk-based, and that regulators should only intervene where necessary. While the approach set out by the GOC appears to align with these principles, without a fuller understanding of the risks involved or any potential gaps that may arise from this approach we are not in a position to provide a definitive answer. We recommend that the GOC engages with the relevant system regulators across the four nations to understand the full implications of the proposed approach.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Not sure"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Our position, as set out in our response to the GOC's call for evidence on the Opticians Act is that regulation by the GOC should be extended to include all businesses providing restricted functions. This would end the disparity between businesses and ensure they comply with minimum standards. We believe it would make the system fairer and safer.

However, in the case of commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals it would be useful to understand what other regulatory oversight would apply and therefore the current level of unmanaged risk. We welcome the GOC's position of working with the relevant regulators to better understand the need for regulation for this category of optical business.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the GOC's approach of considering both the clinical environment in which care is delivered, and the vulnerability of the patients served, in determining whether regulation is appropriate. We note also the advice the GOC received from the Charity Commission that they do not regulate the clinical services charities provide. The Charity Commission's objectives, as set out in the Charities Act 2011 are not aligned (and would not be expected to be so) with those of the GOC. It would therefore not be appropriate to expect the Charity Commission to manage the regulatory risks involved in providing optical services. The Charity Commission therefore advised the GOC that that dual regulation would be better than gaps in regulation.

The proposal to regulate charities providing restricted functions would therefore appear to be appropriately risk-based. Further, while we do acknowledge the potential downsides of imposing regulation on charities, as a general principle we believe that regulation should be consistent. This includes being consistent between providers. Creating 'loopholes' in terms of which providers are regulated also has the potential to create unintended consequences.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In line with our response to Q3, it would seem appropriate to regulate university eye clinics in order to better manage the risks associated with providing the restricted functions and to ensure consistency of approach with other providers.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The proposal that the GOC should have discretionary powers to exempt providers from having to register may have advantages in terms of future-proofing the legislation. Whilst the consultation sets out a range of provider types that may be exempted, with reference to the relative risks in each case, no overarching criteria for exemption are provided. Were the GOC to move forward with this proposal we would expect to see a clear framework setting out the approach to exemptions and guidance for decision-makers to ensure consistency of approach. Further, the GOC would need to be mindful of how such exemptions would be communicated to the public.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree that the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors should be removed. It risks businesses distorting their structure in order to fit the requirement in a way that may not be beneficial to the business or the public it serves, or necessary to manage risk. We also agree with the GOC's assessment that this requirement may act as a barrier to entry, as well as having a range of other unintended consequences.

However, the concern that this requirement is seeking to address (namely that clinical decision-making may be compromised by commercial considerations) is a real one. As we outlined in our 2022 report Safer care for all there are longstanding concerns that some businesses within the optical sector are prioritising commercial considerations above patient care. This includes using 'hard sell' tactics to persuade customers to sign up for laser eye surgery, up-selling expensive lenses, or failing to give patients their prescription so that they can buy glasses elsewhere.

Concerns about the risk to patients of certain business practices are also highlighted in numerous GOC registrant surveys. For example, the 2024 survey finds that 'some respondents... found the focus of their employer on sales targets and profit posed a significant barrier to safe patient care'. Insufficient time to conduct sight tests, double booking of patients and understaffing were all mentioned as areas of concern.

We have no evidence that the requirement to have a majority of registrant directors guards against these risks. However, we do believe that regulators need to tackle business practices that fail to put patients first, risk undermining confidence in the professions, or fail to allow registrants to exercise their professional judgement. Removing the requirement for a majority of registrant directors should therefore sit alongside other reforms to ensure that patient care is prioritised by optical businesses."

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree that any new system of business regulation must include mechanisms to support compliance. The proposal for all businesses to appoint a Head of Optical Practice is appealing and the case is well set out by the GOC in the consultation document.

It remains our view, as set out in response to the GOC's call for evidence on the Opticians Act, that there should be a review of the powers of all regulators with a role in regulating businesses to establish the most appropriate regulatory model. This would include reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the different models of business regulation in managing risks arising.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"a) Power to impose an uncapped financial penalty "

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

We highlighted the inadequacy of the GOC's maximum financial penalty of £50,000 in our report Safer care for all. The GOC consultation sets out how this maximum figure, set in 1958, would equate to almost one million pounds today had it kept pace with inflation. This figure is clearly insufficient when set against the turnover of most optical businesses. It is unlikely to have a deterrent effect and, as the consultation points out, may be less than the cost of compliance with the GOC's standards.

The possibility of imposing an uncapped fine would ensure that the GOC's legislation remained future-proof. Clearly the details of how the quantum of the fine would be arrived at requires careful consideration; we welcome the GOC's detailed assessment of how this might be done.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As we set out in our response to the GOC's call for evidence on the Opticians Act we believe that the powers of all regulators with a role in regulating businesses should be reviewed. The review should focus on the effectiveness and adequacy of current powers (e.g. inspection powers, powers to require businesses to register, levels of

finances etc), and whether they are sufficient to protect the public and hold businesses to account.

We see potential benefits in the GOC having powers to visit businesses in order to more clearly establish the facts in a particular case. As with all additional regulation however, it would be important to clearly establish the unmanaged risk arising from the current model and whether visiting powers would be the appropriate mechanism to address this. Any proposals to introduce additional regulation, especially where this might impose costs on businesses, would of course need to be carefully considered.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While we agree that there would be benefits to businesses voluntarily participating in the consumer redress scheme, we are not aware of evidence of public protection risks that would justify making participation mandatory. All additional regulatory burdens should be clearly justified in relation to the GOC's overarching objective of public protection and be proportionate to the risks involved. Further, making participation mandatory risks the process becoming more adversarial and, as the GOC has noted 'arguably goes against the essence of mediation as a process with which parties engage voluntarily and constructively to resolve a dispute.'

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We have not seen evidence risk to public protection, which would warrant changing the nature of the consumer redress scheme to make decisions legally binding.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

We have not identified any aspects of the proposals that could discriminate against groups with specific characteristics. We welcome the fact that the GOC has completed and published an impact assessment to sit alongside the consultation.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

We agree with the GOC's assessment as set out in the accompanying Impact Assessment that the proposals may have positive effects on groups with certain characteristics. The proposals may benefit groups with shared characteristics relating to age, disability, sex, and race.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes



R93

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

SeeAbility

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Patient representative charity/organisation

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In principle we support consistency of application so all those delivering restricted functions are registered, but would argue for financial recognition in the fee structure and application of lower fees for charities.

For charities, delivery of care is not generally based on cross subsidisation with private paying patients or sales for delivery of restricted functions. In many cases charities are stepping in to fill in known problems in accessing the 'front door' of sight tests, filling gaps in access to NHS eye care and using charitable funds to effectively provide care to under-served groups including children with learning disabilities, people who are homeless and people with low vision needs. Thus applying the same fee regime to charities will not be sustainable if a charity is already cross subsidising eye care through fundraised income or cannot access contracts that enable full cost recovery, and the pressures of the as yet unidentified fee structure could lead to withdrawal of services.

We understand the GOC is not able to currently confirm what the new business registrant fees will be as part of this package of proposals, but we welcome and

support the consultation stating that GOC could modify costs: “the GOC could charge such providers a lower fee building on our existing low-income fee arrangements for individual registrants”.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Please see the rationale above, as for university eye clinics they are to all intents and purposes doing this work as a ‘public good’ in terms of training, experience and support to offer eye care to groups that may otherwise miss out. Without the costs understood or a proposal to alleviate these it is not possible to say what the impact will be.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In principle it is better to have consistency for patients and public in approach but it would seem understandable to have the legislative power for exemptions, as part of future proofing.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In practice holding NHS contracts and delivery of NHS services obliges businesses to ensure a clinical audit role is performed and reported upon to the contracting authority, so to all intents and purposes many businesses will have individuals (including practice owners) fulfilling this role but GOC regulation of it would provide greater accountability for business practice to meet professional standards. We note there may be additional conduct standards for this role and this would have an

additional financial impact for registrants and businesses that would need to be taken into account.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

An uncapped penalty would seem to be an extreme scenario as a sanction for businesses not adhering to standards and could lead to variable application and legal disputes. Although we have chosen a new maximum amount it would need to be reflective of the level of risk to patient safety. Again this sits within the wider comments we offer on GOC's approach to regulation of ever expanding clinical practice in the sector and outsourcing of NHS services.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As a social care provider we are familiar with both announced and unannounced visits under the CQC inspection regime. It is not clear if the proposal would be for both types of visits but from a patient safety perspective both may be needed in certain circumstances. It is also unclear how GOC would use its powers in respect of domiciliary eye care and this would need to be clarified as the visiting power will need to include how GOC assesses the fitness for operation of mobile restricted functions. Again this builds on our wider commentary on the expansion of clinical practice and outsourcing of NHS services.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Again for consistency for patients/public so they are clear there is this process and it is mandatory.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

By this stage it would seem fair to patients/public that a decision in their favour should be binding, otherwise its potentially a bureaucratic process that could lead to disappointment.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It appears at present that the OCCS arrangements work well. Communication for how the business registration scheme and raising issues of meeting GOC standards as opposed to consumer redress could however be made clearer for patients/public. It is better to have a single provider for simplicity and be clear on the roles for the GOC and the roles for the OCCS.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

However it is funded there will need to be more assurance on costs to businesses so they can plan ahead.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The cost of the proposals has not been identified on individual businesses thus there could be an impact on provision of services to under-served populations if provision of services becomes unsustainable due to increased registration fees or additional personnel. This particularly affects people with disabilities, those on a low income and of different ethnicities who research shows often experience barriers to accessing sight testing and other prescribed services.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

If business regulation is more consistent and standards are raised, there should be a positive impact across the population and for those who report worse experiences than others in accessing eye care services (such as people with disabilities). It may also help alleviate concerns that individual registrants have that despite the professional standards they must adhere to, there are commercial imperatives they are faced with that can sometimes put them in a difficult position. These are noted by the GOC in the consultation as having an impact on patient and clinical care.

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and**
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

General introductory comments

In principle SeeAbility supports the proposals to extend business regulation so it is less piecemeal and confusing for the public, provides greater oversight and redress and addresses a longstanding gap. We also wonder if it may be advisable to change from 'business' regulation to "provider" regulation as that may be less confusing for the public too.

As noted by the GOC the extension will ensure more onus is placed on businesses rather than registrants who may find the commercial standards of approach or workplace culture sometimes conflicts with individual professional standards of practice.

We look forward to being able to contribute to the review of business standards, as research (including our soon to be published assessment of delivering the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and/or Autism) points to issues with patients with learning disabilities (and/or autism) accessing eye care and the need for businesses to be more receptive and educated on meeting these needs. While registrants may have these skills, front of house staff may not and there are some examples of people with more severe to profound learning disabilities being signposted away.

However our general comments mainly relate to the general picture for optical care. We wonder if the consultation would benefit from a more detailed overview of the areas of clinical and organisational practice that GOC currently regulates, and which others regulate (such as CQC) and the 'gaps' there may be in regulation currently and which are emerging.

This is because the consultation centres on filling the gap in regulating restricted activity, but there are much wider changes going on in optical care, such as enhanced schemes for independent prescribing and glaucoma care, that sit outside of restricted activity but may need greater combined oversight placed on one regulator in terms of the clinical management risks they present. Most of these services are provided under the NHS standard contract and the oversight lies with the contracting authority and some will be covered by CQC so there is a mixed picture.

Furthermore, we continue to urge the GOC, as we have done for many years, to undertake a more robust review of domiciliary eye care, delivered often by lone working practitioners to people who are often in more vulnerable circumstances. This presents risks to both practitioner and patient.

The mapping exercise undertaken for the GOC in advance of this consultation did not delve into the domiciliary business market, and there may be a gap in GOC's understanding. Gathering more evidence of structure, workforce, and custom and practice in this sector will help inform if additional regulation is needed along with separate business standards.

There is also a question mark over the future of the CQC, and healthcare provider regulation and inspection which may result in duplication or further gaps in approach, so the GOC review could be in some respects pre-emptive of that. Indeed the NHS 10 year plan, when published, may signal even wider changes around regulation and policy towards eye care.

Having said this, the review of registration of businesses sits within a much wider context including how the NHS GOS contract that enables NHS eligible patients to access restricted activity is funded, which can drive more commercial behaviours and a reliance on conversion to sales of optical appliances or pressures on 'chair time'. We recognise that this creates difficulty for the GOC in regulation but it is a widespread issue that creates inequalities and some poor experiences for different patient groups.

It would also seem appropriate for the GOC to consider, in its discussions with DHSC and devolved governments, how there may be more market oversight of delivery of eye care. For example, anecdotal reports are that more and more practices in England are giving up their NHS contracts even with the NHS sight test fee being a loss leader, and if this pattern continues it is going to have an impact on patient access to care. As a further example the predominance of multiples and the “power imbalance” this creates for regulation and the GOC, the quote being from the market report that GOC commissioned.

Lastly we found it difficult to comment in support of or against some of the proposals in the consultation as it remains unclear as to the costs of the proposals, and also how ‘light touch’ an approach to regulation of businesses GOC intends to take. We note the GOC has not yet set out the cost for business registrants and this will be set as part of its strategy for 2025-2030. Clearly a number of businesses are small and medium enterprises or not for profit/charities and it is difficult to understand the impact without knowing the financial costs of regulation.

Below we answer those questions most relevant to SeeAbility and the patient group we advocate for.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R94

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Association of Optometrists (AOP)

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GP practices and NHS and private hospitals are already required to register with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which demands that they demonstrate compliance against a rigorous set of standards. Patients can be further reassured by the fact that all individuals working for these organisations who carry out restricted functions as defined by the Opticians Act are subject to regulation as individuals. It is unnecessary, and would be burdensome, to require them to register as businesses with the GOC for the work they have traditionally undertaken.

A different approach would be appropriate for a GP practice or hospital that set up a sight testing service as a commercial enterprise, at which point it should be subject to further safeguards not already covered by CQC registration. In that case we would be supportive of their being required to register as a business.

We have expanded on our thinking below:

Currently restricted functions as listed in paragraph 23 of the consultation are limited to registered optometrists (all functions), contact lens opticians (contact lens fitting, and the sale of optical appliances to restricted groups) and registered medical practitioners (all functions). It is known that the number of registered ophthalmic medical practitioners (OMP) is in chronic decline with only a very small number of remaining practitioners. To the best of our knowledge, there are no current training courses for OMPs, therefore there are no new entrants to the market.

While the exemptions within the Act are not so detailed as to specify that only OMPs may test sight – instead, they use the more general ‘registered medical practitioner’ – in reality, very few medical practitioners without the additional OMP training would be able to perform a sight test to the currently expected peer standard. The

exception might be ophthalmologists, but even then, their experience of performing refractions is limited and most often passed to optometrists within a hospital setting.

We agree that it would not be appropriate for the GOC to attempt to regulate consultant ophthalmologists or medical practitioners. But as the intention of these proposals is to create a more uniform approach to business regulation, we think a broad exemption creates significant risk. A risk where parties who look to innovate or disrupt may seek to exploit and undermine the intention of the proposed regulatory change.

The CQC is responsible for registering businesses that deliver health or social care services, including GP practices and hospitals. However, under the CQC's rules of registration, "Primary ophthalmic services (for example, high street optometrists) or ophthalmic services that are of the same kind as those provided by high street optometrists" are explicitly exempt from CQC registration. However, the exemption does not apply to those who sublet a space within the GP practice or hospital. This could create ambiguity regarding who has oversight of the business if an optometrist was practising within a GP or hospital setting.

If a broad exemption existed, the GOC would not oversee the business activities of the GP practice or hospital. At the same time, the CQC could look to the wider primary ophthalmic services exemption and consider the business activities out of scope. This lack of clarity creates potential for a critical regulatory gap which goes against the wider aims of the business regulation proposals and creates unnecessary patient risk.

To close this gap, we think it is important to consider the intention of the practice rather than a broad exemption. For example, if an ophthalmologist were to conduct a sight test as part of their normal practice, it would be reasonable to exempt them from registration. However, if an ophthalmologist or GP sought to provide restricted functions considered the same as those provided by primary ophthalmic services, then they should be required to register. We see this as working as an inverse clause to the current CQC exemption for primary ophthalmic services.

In essence, if a business conducts activity of the type expected within primary ophthalmic services it should fall under the requirement to register."

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Commercial units within GP practices and hospitals should be treated no differently to any other. As they are sub-let spaces, the only distinction to any other commercial unit is their location.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The GOC has stated its intention to create a regulated market that protects patients and ensures consistent standards. While the Charity Commission provides general governance and oversight, it does not enforce clinical standards or patient safety protocols. GOC regulation would ensure that restricted functions are delivered with appropriate professional accountability and oversight.

Exempting charities from regulation could therefore undermine the regulatory objective and create a potential loophole. Some businesses could seek to exploit this exemption by restructuring as charities, circumventing registration requirements, regulatory standards, and associated fees. Such a scenario would compromise patient safety and introduce inequities within the sector.

However, recognising that charities often operate with significantly lower turnovers and make no profit compared to commercial entities, the AOP recommends that the GOC implements a tiered system of fees where the smallest businesses pay less than the larger corporations. Under this model, the regulatory burden – such as registration fees, reporting requirements and compliance – would be proportionate to a business's size, operational scope, and financial capacity. This ensures that all businesses providing restricted functions remain accountable to GOC standards while the associated regulatory obligations are scaled appropriately - safeguarding public trust and patient safety.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

University eye clinics predominantly provide training and experience for students, but in many instances, they also operate as commercial entities. Treating both students and members of the public, they will generate revenue from patient fees. In this regard they are comparable to high street optometrists and many also hold NHS contracts.

If university eye clinics are delivering restricted eye care services to the public, they are in effect a commercial entity and are competing with local practices – in this case, they should be required to be registered to avoid fostering inequity. This comes with the caveat they should be subject to our suggested tiered system of registration because any commercial earnings they make are secondary to their main function as education facilities.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We surveyed our members about the GOC's proposals and 75% agreed with the view that business registration should be compulsory. (Many of the quarter who disagreed said there was already sufficient regulation, and expressed concern that it would prove costly to practices).

Explaining their reasoning in free text responses, those who agreed with the proposal made it clear that they believe there should be a common set of standards to which all should be held equally accountable.

With this in mind, the AOP has concerns about the use of pre-determined exemption criteria and thinks that if the GOC is to have this power, then it should be used only by rare exception and in accordance with clear, published guidance on how and when it would be deployed.

All businesses that interact with patients and deliver restricted optical functions should be held to the same set of GOC standards. This approach ensures consistency, fairness, and uniform regulation across the eyecare sector – an issue the GOC itself has identified as a priority through its commissioned research. As we have highlighted elsewhere in this submission, allowing unnecessary exemptions would undermine regulatory uniformity, enabling businesses to adapt their operational models in ways that circumvent registration requirements and fees - compromising patient safety and accountability.

We envisage a system that allows the GOC to exempt a business from registration by rare exception only. However, this would require clear guidelines, transparency of decision making, and should only be used in genuinely unique cases. By extension, any such system must also explicitly seek to prevent businesses from adapting to meet stated criteria for exemption (as in outlined in our example of non-profit organisations). Until such a system is detailed, we do not agree that the GOC should have discretionary powers of exemption at this point.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The initial premise of this requirement at the creation of the first Optician's Act was to prevent large corporations from controlling optical practices. However, over the last seven decades, views on this matter have changed.

While we support this change in principle, it is important that it does not happen in isolation. For example, if the requirement was removed, but mandatory business registration wasn't enacted, then this could increase, rather than decrease the risk of businesses adapting to avoid registration. The proposal also links to the requirement to maintain registrant input into the wider process and as such must be considered alongside the responsibilities of the Head of Optical Practice role.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"b) No"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The AOP opposes mandating a Head of Optical Practice (HOP) for every business. Only 34% of the members who responded to our survey agreed with the idea. 36% were opposed and 30% unsure/undecided. They gave a range of reasons in extensive free text responses that reflect the reality of running an optical business, most of which focused on how the idea makes less sense for smaller practices. NB: We would be happy to share the survey results with the GOC.

To illustrate, comments included:

- "As a joint business partner (myself the optometrist, my business partner the practice manager/DO) I believe we both have a part to play in this and it shouldn't fall to one person in this situation"
- "This smacks of too much interference and puts yet more responsibility on the shoulders of individuals who are already regulated to the hilt"
- "It is unclear why this role seems to be needed. Every business will already have someone doing this whether it's the owner (small businesses) or a senior manager. I would want to understand much deeper why this role is needed, the expectations of the roles and repercussions for this person if things go wrong"
- "As I work in independent small group of practices, we already have an overall HOP naturally as one sole director fulfils this role. However, I think the multiple sector would benefit from this role"
- "I think this is a good idea. Most practices with multiple practitioners have a lead clinical optom. Makes absolutely no sense in a small practice with one optometrist!? Again, blanket regulations not taking the size of the business into account makes absolutely zero sense"
- "I believe Optometrists are professionals and uphold a good standard without further regulation. There are already systems in place such as QIO and DSTP toolkits that are required & recommended"
- "It could lead to diminished care and responsibility by registrants if the buck does not stop with them, but accountability can be deferred to a HOP"

- “I think there will be overlaps and gaps in responsibilities creating doubt, conflict of interest and risks for patients and staff”
- “More responsibility on professional staff will just cause people to step out of the profession or demand higher wages. I have no idea how this will work in large multiples. In my small Indie practice, the responsibility will fall to me and my other professional staff. So, more pressure on a busy clinic environment. Legislation and Bureaucracy are stifling clinical freedom and our ability to do the job we love which is to look after our patients”

Considering these valid concerns, instead of a blanket requirement for the HOP role, we advocate for a flexible, proportionate approach that reflects the diverse nature of the optical sector. (Please note, that as per our response to Q6, we think the interaction between the requirement for registrant directors and the HOP should be considered).

To illustrate our flexible approach, take the example of a small single-registrant business, where the owner is already responsible for both clinical oversight and operational management. In this common scenario, the HOP role is unnecessary. In such a business the owner/director/registrator already holds liability and accountability in ways that an owner/director of a larger practice does not. Introducing an additional governance role in this context creates unnecessary bureaucracy and adds an unwarranted financial burden that small or independent businesses – already operating under tight margins – are ill-equipped to bear. It risks stifling the viability of these smaller practices, which are vital to the sector’s community accessibility and diversity.

Conversely, for larger corporate bodies or businesses with complex structures, an HOP role could add value particularly if the majority registrant director requirement is removed. Such businesses may benefit from enhanced oversight to ensure compliance with GOC standards, particularly where clinical and operational decision-making are more detached from one another. Importantly, larger organisations are better positioned to absorb the costs associated with this role, making it a proportionate measure.

The AOP maintains that regulation must be proportionate, risk-based, and targeted to avoid imposing undue burden on businesses with limited capacity. A tiered regulatory model where larger, higher-risk businesses are required to appoint an HOP would offer a far more balanced and effective solution. For an idea of how this system could be broadly categorised, it might be helpful to align with definitions used in the Small Business and Enterprise Act.

In short, clarity is needed on the specific responsibilities of the HOP role and its interaction with existing regulatory requirements. Without detailed and clear guidance, introducing this role risks creating confusion, redundancy, and administrative inefficiency.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While the GOC's intentions to strengthen accountability and regulation are understood, the current proposals for the HOP role are impractical, vague, and risk undermining the very goals they seek to achieve. The AOP cannot currently support the proposed HOP role as outlined due to the significant lack of clarity and potential for unintended consequences that could undermine its stated aims.

Concerns raised through engagement with AOP members and the AOP Legal Team have emphasised that the description of the HOP needs to be far more explicit for such a pivotal governance role. For example, paragraph 98 highlights that the HOP will need to "declare relevant information to the GOC, including material breaches of GOC requirements." However, the term "material breaches" remains undefined. To ensure consistency and mitigate the risk of either over or under-reporting, the GOC must provide specific examples of "material breaches", along with thresholds and guidance for reporting.

Over-reporting could overwhelm the GOC with unnecessary referrals, creating inefficiencies which could result in actions regarding genuine risk being delayed. Under-reporting could expose the HOP to punitive action, as the GOC has outlined consequences for failure to report breaches but not for inappropriate or excessive referrals. The GOC has not adequately addressed the capacity implications of this increased workload, nor provided assurances on how such referrals would be assessed and managed. This lack of clarity may also disincentivise qualified individuals from taking on the role of HOP for fear of ambiguity, liability, or disproportionate scrutiny.

The GOC has also not addressed how the HOP would interact with existing governance structures, particularly in corporate businesses where decision-making power often rests with boards of directors or senior management. The lack of defined parameters may result in blurring of responsibilities, creating confusion around decision-making and reducing the effectiveness of governance. There is a real risk that the HOP's recommendations may be overridden/sidelined by operational or financial priorities.

The GOC must clarify whether the HOP will be held to a higher standard of accountability than other registrants. If so, this additional burden must come with commensurate authority and protections to ensure the HOP can fulfil their responsibilities without undue risk of detriment and even dismissal. Without explicit authority or protections, the HOP's role could become symbolic rather than effective.

We strongly recommend that the GOC clarifies the HOP's responsibilities, powers, and accountability mechanisms through further consultation with sector stakeholders. Ultimately, any new regulatory role must be clear, balanced, and pragmatic, ensuring patient safety while supporting the diverse businesses that make up the optical sector. When/if the HOP role becomes mandatory, we strongly

feel that GOC example scenarios must outline such potential complex conflicts of accountability.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As noted in the response to Q8, the AOP requests further clarification on the proposed role of the HOP, as its scope, remit, and day-to-day responsibilities remain overly broad and ill-defined.

However, if the HOP role is created and is responsible for ensuring the business meets standards, then it would seem reasonable that this would extend to ensuring that those undergoing training have the correct, time, equipment and supervision arrangements in place.

As per the consultation document there would need to be differentiation between the advice on how to do something well (within scope of the HOP role) and the day-to-day operational implementation, which would sit with the wider business, managers and supervisors.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The appointment of a GOC registrant with suitable levels of experience to the HOP role will foster greater trust and confidence among employees. Working under the guidance of a fellow optical professional who understands the intricacies of clinical practice encourages open communication, collaboration, and a shared commitment to professional standards. This familiarity with sector-specific procedures and expectations should ensure that employees feel supported while simultaneously reinforcing a culture of accountability and compliance within the organisation.

Requiring the HOP to be a qualified GOC registrant is the most likely way to ensure that there is a balance between governance, professional expertise, and clinical oversight, thereby ensuring that the HOP's contributions are effective.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The AOP supports the idea that in instances where a HOP is required, they should be employed by the business.

However, as noted in previous responses, in a small practice, a single registrant business owner already holds responsibility for daily operations, patient care, and clinical oversight, making the idea of a HOP potentially redundant. However, if the HOP proposal proceeds for all businesses, then we believe an employee, director, or owner of the business is the most appropriate approach. If an external, third party was to be required the cost pressure on small businesses would be unsustainable, while in larger businesses the role would not be effective in maintaining standards.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Appointing a HOP to a single business ensures that the organisation benefits from continuous oversight and immediate access to regulatory and compliance advice. This is particularly critical in the context of evolving healthcare sector regulations, where maintaining high standards is essential to prevent potentially severe consequences from any lapses in practice.

Furthermore, a HOP dedicated to one business creates a cohesive work environment for the clinical team, ensuring that professional standards are upheld in a consistent way. This approach fosters a clear and accessible point of contact for clinical teams, helping to avoid potential conflict of commercial interests that could arise if the HOP were overseeing multiple, unlinked businesses. In situations of non-compliance, or a breach of GOC standards, having the HOP operate across multiple organisations would be more challenging to defend.

A HOP employed by a single business is directly accountable to that organisation for ensuring compliance with GOC regulations. Operating within the organisation's policies, the HOP would be better positioned to uphold regulatory requirements, and the business itself would bear responsibility in cases of non-compliance or regulatory failure.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If the HOP is already a registered professional, they will be subject to the GOC's general conduct standards, which apply to all registrants. The expectations for HOPs in terms of professional ethics, patient care, and regulatory compliance should align

with those of other GOC-registered practitioners. Creating separate standards could lead to the over-regulation of the role.

The consultation document suggests that separate standards for HOPs are not required, and there is no rationale provided for their creation. As such, we support the GOC position that additional standards are not required. Further, we do not think it is appropriate for a regulatory body to seek the power to introduce new standards on a speculative basis. Instead, if the GOC identifies a legitimate need for separate standards in future, they should consult again at that time providing full and detailed reasoning.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As we noted in the responses to previous questions, it is imperative that the HOP role is better defined in order that the postholder is as effective as they can be. This can be achieved using a template "person specification" for businesses to adapt. Detailing the general desirable levels of education and experience that would make someone a good candidate for this role would be hugely beneficial.

We would also welcome clarity on how this role may be protected to assure that it can operate as intended.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The purpose of the GOC business register is to ensure that businesses, as entities, meet regulatory standards for patient safety, governance, and service delivery. The business register should focus on organisational accountability, ensuring systems and processes are in place to meet GOC standards. Listing the individual HOP risks shifting focus away from the business's systems and structures, undermining the emphasis on collective accountability. It may also give the misleading impression that they are solely accountable for any misconduct or regulatory failures within the business.

We welcome that the GOC has set out example scenarios where the business would be accountable and not the HOP, but we think these scenarios do not currently cover enough eventualities. While they do serve to draw the distinctions in responsibility – listing the HOP as an individual may undermine this.

More broadly, our view is that accountability for compliance should be shared proportionately among business owners, directors, senior management, and clinical leads, as they all play a role in operational and clinical governance. Singling out the HOP publicly could place an unfair burden on one individual.

Moreover, if following advice that the HOP needs to be a qualified registrant, their name will already feature on the GOC's professional register. Duplicating it on the business register could generate additional risk of an increase in complaints to the GOC as both the business name and the HOP's name would be accessible. Members of the public who wish to raise a complaint could do so against both the business and the HOP. This does not enhance regulatory oversight but serves to create inefficiency.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Annotating the HOP's name implies a greater level of personal accountability compared to other key stakeholders, such as business owners, directors, and senior managers. This undue scrutiny may discourage qualified individuals from applying for the role, undermining the GOC's broader goal of improving regulatory oversight.

The GOC individual register exists to verify a professional's qualifications, registration status, and Fitness to Practise history. Adding annotations unrelated to clinical risks or clinical qualifications dilutes the register's primary function and purpose. The HOP role is fundamentally a governance position tied to business compliance, not personal clinical practice. Any information pertaining to the HOP's responsibilities should therefore be tied to business regulation, not individual registrant records. Combining the two will risk blurring the lines between business accountability and individual professional obligations.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"b) Linking the financial penalty to turnover"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Linking financial penalties to a business's turnover ensures fines are proportionate, fair, and impactful across businesses of all sizes. This approach deters breaches by aligning penalties with financial capacity, encouraging businesses to prioritise compliance and governance.

In a market where there is a full spectrum of business types, ranging from large corporations to single-handed independent practices, turnover-based fines can

prevent bigger businesses from treating penalties as a trivial “cost of doing business,” creating a more level playing field.

Other regulators have adopted similar frameworks with proven success – an example being the Solicitors Regulation Authority, which applies penalties of 5% of a business’ turnover. However, we note that some UK-based businesses are part of wider global corporations and consideration should be given as to how to ensure that the appropriate turnover is used. Global turnover may not be appropriate as the potential fine might exceed the UK based turnover.

By aligning with these practices, the GOC would modernise its approach, ensuring fairness, strengthening accountability, and enhancing public trust in the regulatory system.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The AOP cannot support the proposed GOC visiting powers without firm assurances for several reasons. Regulatory intervention must be proportionate to business size, risks, and specific non-compliance activity. Our key concerns regarding this proposal are:

First, these visits could be easily conflated with Fitness to Practise (FTP) investigations, leading to confusion. Although the proposal states that these visits are to be considered part of a “fitness to carry on business” process, the consultation does not clarify how they differ from FTP issues. Activities such as observing practices, obtaining records, and reviewing documents overlap significantly with FTP procedures, creating ambiguity and a risk of misuse. There would need to be clearly defined criteria about what was in and out of scope of these visits before we could support them.

Second, there is insufficient justification for introducing such powers. There is no clear evidence that these visits would enhance regulatory effectiveness or patient safety. Existing tools like audits and reviews are already available to address compliance concerns without resorting to invasive and potentially costly visits.

Implementing this power would require significant investment by the GOC in staffing and training, potentially increasing fees for registrants – an outcome that would disproportionately impact smaller businesses. At a time when businesses face mounting financial pressures from national UK policy and global instability, this would be both unwelcome and counterproductive.

Moreover, granting such powers risks eroding trust between businesses and the GOC. These visits could be perceived as overreach and unnecessary regulation of day-to-day operations, fostering distrust and tension within the sector. Importantly,

regulatory interventions must be proportionate to risk. Without evidence of widespread non-compliance or clearer rationale from the GOC, this proposal appears both unjustified and disproportionate.

The AOP understands how in theory this power could assist the GOC to investigate concerns, but believe it should be used only rarely, in a circumscribed way, and only in relation to reported breaches of business regulations. It should not be used opportunistically, to gather evidence against individual registrants.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The AOP does not support the implementation of a mandatory scheme due to a lack of clear justification and detail. The reasons provided in paragraph 182 of the GOC consultation documents are speculative, unsupported by evidence, and could be addressed through alternative means. Additionally, any mandatory scheme would require a statutory basis, as seen in other regulated sectors. Without such footing, enforcing participation would be impractical.

The proposal lacks clarity on some critical aspects. For instance, it is unclear whether participation would be compulsory for both consumers and businesses or whether the GOC would refer cases to the Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS) before considering them. Furthermore, the proposal does not specify if the GOC would reject consumer complaints that bypass the OCCS process. These ambiguities raise concerns about the scheme's implementation and impact.

Financial implications are another major concern. Mandatory participation could impose additional costs on businesses, particularly small and independent practices. The current OCCS system is funded by registered businesses, and an increase in the number of regulated businesses, as proposed by the GOC, would likely lead to a rise in cases handled by the OCCS. While it may be hoped that additional revenue from new business registrants would offset these costs, no analysis has been provided to confirm this. This lack of financial transparency makes the proposal difficult to support, as the burden on smaller businesses could be significant.

Thus, without clear justification, statutory underpinning, or detailed analysis, the proposal is unsubstantiated, potentially costly, and impractical. The AOP advocates for a proportionate and evidence-based approach that fully considers the financial impact on businesses. We are prepared to reconsider our position on this matter if a new proposal is brought forward which addresses the above concerns, as we are aware that consumer redress schemes have worked in other areas.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

While the AOP is aware that consumer redress exists in many other areas, it cannot support a proposal to render the decisions of any Consumer Redress Scheme for optometry legally binding until there is clarity on a number of significant issues. To ensure that there is not an unnecessary formalising of simple complaints, increased costs, and possible overlaps with Fitness to Practise procedures, we need clarity on the status, identity and processes of any such scheme. Our concerns are explained in detail below.

The proposed change would shift the OCCS from a mediation-based system to an arbitration-based or adjudicative service. It is not clear why this is seen as necessary, since the current mediation-based OCCS model has proven effective in resolving typical consumer concerns. The change to the system would unnecessarily formalise these largely simple consumer issues (such as broken frames, refunds etc.) elevating them into quasi-legal disputes. Based on the AOP's experience of assisting members, such a transformation would be disproportionate to the nature of complaints that are typically managed by the OCCS.

There are also significant concerns regarding the overlap with Fitness to Practise (FtP) processes. There is not enough clarity on how legally binding OCCS decisions would interact with existing regulatory functions. Key questions remain unanswered, such as whether OCCS outcomes would automatically trigger FtP investigations or if they would pre-empt GOC disciplinary action. Additionally, if a practitioner or business fails to comply with an OCCS decision, it is unclear whether this would escalate as an FtP matter. Such ambiguities create unnecessary risks of procedural confusion and regulatory duplication.

More fundamental are the practical and legal concerns about the proposal. Where similar binding redress schemes have been successfully implemented in other areas, it is common that they are rooted in clear statutory legislation to ensure that the bodies concerned are properly established to exercise their claimed powers. It is not currently clear, for example, whether the GOC can delegate investigatory powers to an external body like the OCCS, or if that requires a change to legislation which would require further, separate consultation. If investigations were outsourced it would be essential that proper mechanisms were put in place to ensure that the provider met the relevant standards of accountability, consistency, data-handling rigour and quality.

The use of a profit-making entity such as a law firm in comparison to a not-for-profit body could be particularly controversial. Critically, there would have to be rules and processes to ensure that the decision-making processes used met the proper legal principles of due process. These principles would underpin the running of mandatory schemes in order that both complainants and those complained about could have confidence that decisions were robust.

Financially, a legally binding scheme would impose higher costs on optical businesses, particularly for small and independent practices. Expanding the OCCS's remit to include arbitration would increase operational expenses, which would likely be passed on to businesses via higher GOC registration fees. With the general move for the GOC to regulate more businesses, case volumes – and related costs – are set to rise further, making this scheme economically unsustainable for many practices.

To conclude, while the AOP is supportive of the general aim to increase consumer protection, we consider the lack of supporting evidence and detail on the proposed redress scheme in this consultation unhelpful, given the risks involved. Therefore, we must strongly oppose the proposal.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The AOP believes the current OCCS model is largely effective, and any changes must be approached with caution to avoid unintended consequences. It is important to acknowledge potential risks that could arise in maintaining or altering its delivery.

Firstly, the OCCS's current single-provider model ensures consistency in decision-making and outcomes. Introducing multiple competing complaint services risks creating fragmentation, inconsistency, and confusion for both consumers and businesses. Uniformity in decision-making is critical for maintaining trust in the sector.

On balance, while the existing OCCS model works efficiently, we acknowledge that there is a general risk of complacency over time, which could impact the quality of service. However, this risk is mitigated by the periodic competitive process and is far outweighed by the risks of moving to an alternative model without robust justification. Proposals to expand the OCCS's remit to introduce a legally binding decision-making process or adopt a quasi-judicial role would represent significant changes that require thorough consideration. As noted above, the GOC has yet to provide clarity on how these changes would be implemented, the operational impact, or how such changes would improve outcomes for businesses and patients.

Another key concern lies in the potential conflict of interest if the OCCS continues to be delivered by an external provider. Since the GOC determines funding and contracts, an external provider may prioritise satisfying the regulator over ensuring fair and impartial outcomes. This dynamic could undermine trust in the system and raise questions about the fairness of decisions for both businesses and complainants. It may be that this can be addressed via updated terms of reference, but some action would be required to avoid a conflict of interest.

Any proposed changes must be grounded in clear evidence, provide demonstrable improvements, and avoid creating unnecessary complexity or conflicts. Without such justification, maintaining the existing OCCS model – with ongoing monitoring to ensure quality – is the most pragmatic and proportionate approach.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We believe that the shared funding model is the most equitable and is likely to deliver the overall lowest cost to all practices.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

N/A

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

N/A

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.** N/A

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

**(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and  
(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

N/A

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

Risks the proposals are unlikely to address: [Sub-heading]

In our survey of AOP members on the GOC's proposals we asked if they agreed with the list of five risks the GOC has identified as the reason for the change and to rank them in order of importance. Our respondents largely agreed with the GOC and rated them fairly equally but placed "the business environment" and "clinical governance" as the two most important.

We also asked our members if there were any risk factors missing from the list. 77% of our members cited "Online sales by non-UK based companies" and 73% "Online sales of optical products without any patient contact".

For this consultation, it is understandable that the GOC has concentrated on businesses that are already within its remit. However, we believe it must be acknowledged that the biggest clinical risks are often posed by companies that are outside the GOC's control. We do not believe the GOC should simply accept this situation. We have found the GOC to be slow to act in cases of online sales by UK-based companies that breach current regulations and hope that the new power to require business registration will lead to a greater willingness to extend the rules for online suppliers.

One of the respondents to our survey summed up well how this is a matter of public protection. "Over the years I have seen several people who have lost their sight etc from online CL and ready readers [that are] way over allowed power - last one using ready reader of + 6 Had never had a sight test and presented with end point glaucoma - ie GOC directly at fault from not doing their existing job". These concerns are unlikely to be addressed by the proposed changes.

It is also our view that the GOC should become a thought leader and innovator, working with Government, to argue for and develop safeguards for patients who buy from non-UK suppliers.

The interaction between business standards and the standards for optometrists and dispensing opticians. [Sub-heading]

The AOP has argued for many years that there are certain areas included within the standards for individual registrants that are beyond their control and that can only be managed by the business. The working environment can significantly affect an individual's ability to practice safely. Equipment that is operating well and accurately,

the skills and qualifications of colleagues who contribute to patient care, the time allocated for appointments and availability of clinical support are all matters out-with the individual registrant's control, and the responsibility of the business.

Respondents to our survey touched on this. The following quotes offer an example:

- Short appointment times are sometimes enforced by the loss-leading GOS ST fee and requirement to offer a free test vs greatly increased overhead, especially corp tax / NI / minimum wage.
- Lack of attention to detail amongst staff in multiples and bonus incentives for retail aimed at filling director's pockets by upselling rarely needed products. Focus on 'conversion rate' rather than clinical excellence
- Ghost clinics and over booking patients
- Pressure to meet sales targets is generally found on the multiples. I locummed for 14 yrs all over Scotland and sales targets were pushed by all the multiples. Poor supervision occurs in practices with high number of test rooms. One [REDACTED] practice I locummed in had 3 pre reg full testing .1 supervisor with a full clinic. And locums who were expected to supervise without knowing the pre reg. Clinical governance is done fine in Scotland by NHS. Short appointment times is only an issue if the optom doesn't speak up. If nobody did it, there wouldn't be any short appt times. Online sales impacts only that section of the public who are concerned more about money than quality.

It is essential that the business standards review ensures the correct balance of responsibilities between business and individual practitioner.

This will help to ensure that those who work for these businesses are treated fairly and are not expected to take responsibility for things that are outside of their control. We are aware that formal whistle blowing protections are defined in legislation, but there is an opportunity for the GOC to make clear how it will protect those employees or locums who seek to raise concerns. Our members have at times reported being 'blacklisted' by some businesses if they have raised concerns and we hope the GOC will find a way to prevent such behaviours.

The burden of existing regulation and its impact, particularly on smaller practices:  
[Sub-heading]

Many of our members have expressed concern that these proposals could lead to duplication of regulatory burdens in the countries where they operate. One summed this up thus: "I believe with QIO and DSTP, health & safety, and meeting GOS contract terms there is quite sufficient scrutiny, if you hold an NHS contract. For private work only, I have completed (as advised by the AOP years ago) QIO to ensure a good standard of practice."

Another gave a vivid description of their experience of regulation over the last two years:

- "In 2022 we changed our business from a partnership to a limited company. We had to negotiate a whole new NHS contract. They wanted hundreds of photos

and a virtual tour of every part of our practice from the smallest bit of equipment to every fire extinguisher and fire safety sign. We had to prove electrical compliance and supply hundreds more items of documents of policies, staff training, evidence of data protection and signs all over the practice. We have recently (2023) been subject to a PPV episode which lasted almost the whole of 2023. This was incredibly time consuming and stressful. During this time all of our records were checked and reasons for early recall. We had challenges and post PPV meetings. We know there were no issues with our record keeping through post verification discussions. For [REDACTED] we all need DBS checks and bi-annual certification of adult and child safeguarding training. For GOC registration we need to complete all the requisite CPD and discuss what and why we have done. I have at times felt physically and emotionally exhausted just trying to run our little practice and I can see that if governance increases further, small practices will be unable to cope”.

A domiciliary provider made the following comment:

- “As a domiciliary practitioner and 1 of 2 people who work in the business, we do everything. We check stock, diagnostics, see patients, deliver glasses, answer the phone, send recalls, etc. We attend [REDACTED] meetings to ensure our referrals and guidance is up to date with local guidelines, we often observe each other's tests to improve our practice. I think we're old perhaps that's why this change seems so unnecessary to me. This is just going to be more paperwork, another thing to pay providing minimal benefit to our patients apart from taking time away from us being able to care for them and probably cost them more as we can't afford to pay the fee”.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R96

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

FODO - the Association for Eye Care Providers

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

Provided the services in question are led by a GMC registrant, such as an OMP/ophthalmologist, then we would support this proposal.

This is because medically-led practices and hospitals are already regulated - e.g. by Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), The Care Quality Commission (CQC), The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), The Care Inspectorate (CI) or Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW).

While these regulators do not specifically regulate the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23, the regulatory framework covers higher risk healthcare and organisational system/controls, and therefore any additional regulation by the GOC would be disproportionate. This blanket exemption however needs further consideration (see our response to question five).

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

As with our response to question one, if the unit is led by a GMC registrant and is already regulated by HIS, HIW, CQC, RQIA, CI or CIW then there is no reason for the GOC to regulate based solely on how care is funded.

If the commercial service is operated/led by a GOC registrant independently of the GP/hospital (i.e. the actual provider organisation of the commercial service does not

fall under HIS, HIW, CQC, RQIA, CI or CIW regulation) then it should be regulated by the GOC.

To ensure this is the case, any exemptions need to be carefully designed (see our response to question five).

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Our responses follow better regulation principles which mean that regulation should be proportionate and based on objective rather than ideological criteria. This means there is no basis on which to make universal assumptions about incentives/behaviour based solely on organisational form.

Hence, unless a charity falls under the example in question one, if the GOC's proposed reforms to business regulation do proceed then charities providing restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC on the same basis as other providers.

In summary, if the GOC is to regulate providers delivering restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 there must be an objective basis on which to offer an exclusion (see our response to question five).

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Please see our response to question three.

University clinics which provide restricted functions under listed paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC on the same basis as other providers.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

"Given the case the GOC is making to extend business regulation, there would seem to be no objective case for discretion at an individual business level. Instead, we believe, the GOC should be explicit about exemptions and the reasons for them.

With this and proportionality in mind, we would advise that if reforms are to proceed then all organisations that provide restricted functions listed in paragraphs 23 would be regulated by the GOC, unless provided/led by a GMC registrant working in a setting that is already regulated by HIS, HIW, CQC, RQIA, CI or CIW."

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the reasoning the GOC has set out in annex 3, paragraph 92.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the proposal to remove the requirement for a majority of directors to be registrants (see our response to question six).

We also support the concept of a head of optical practice (HOP) as set out in annex 4 implemented proportionately.

Many FODO members also agree this should be a registrant, however some members have raised technical challenges that might arise if this is the only option. Based on member feedback we therefore feel this would benefit from further discussion as it could disproportionately impact on smaller practice owners (e.g. some of the issues listed in paragraph 92 could be read across to a poorly designed HOP role) and have unintended consequence (see our response to question 10-13 and 23).

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with much in the overview (annex 4 paras 97, 98 and 100) of the HOP role. However, see our responses to question nine and 10.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This depends on the type of organisation. For example, in a smaller practice this is most likely to be the same person in any case in some larger organisations, it might be necessary to have more than one HOP and a large team with a different head of department leading training and education in other organisations, it might be that each practice has a HOP, but training and education is organised centrally.

Education and training are increasingly specialist areas and some HOPs, who are more than able to take on the main practice-based role, might wish to delegate/discharge responsibilities for training and education to/via a separate specialist – e.g. a lead optometrist at head office.

On balance it would seem sensible that registered businesses or a HOP should be able to allocate this responsibility to another registrant. Of course, given the HOP role, they would still be involved in oversight at a systems level.

In addition, it is possible that an academic or medic (that are not GOC registrants) might lead on training placements in some clinical settings where functions listed in paragraph 23 are provided.

Being overly prescriptive runs the risk of the GOC regulating a variety of job descriptions with the unintended complications that could flow from that."

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As we set out in our response to question seven, while most feedback we received supports that this should always be a GOC registrant, we also received some feedback about challenges the current proposal from the GOC might create for smaller practice owners.

As set out in para 121, some businesses will not be able to comply with this specific requirement and will need an exemption as stated – e.g. enabling “compliance responsibility resting with the business registrant” (para 121, page 46). We welcome the GOC acknowledging this and we would support such an exemption if well designed.

In addition to the example set out in para 121, mandating that the HOP is always a GOC registrant could also prove difficult for other organisations if the HOP must also be directly employed by the practice (see question 11) and not work across multiple businesses (see question 12). For example:

- a lay practice owner might depend on part time GOC registrant or locums if the resident HOP is off for a sustained period due to ill-health etc. If the practice owner is required to employ an additional GOC registrant to hold the HOP role or pay a locum

to become an employed optometrist and HOP, many smaller practices might become financially unviable, especially given that the NHS in England and the health service in Northern Ireland do not currently appropriately fund the cost of an NHS/health service sight test.

In paragraph 92 the GOC sets out several arguments against the GOC maintaining majority registrant director requirements, it is apparent that some of these would apply to the HOP role if the restrictive criteria proposed in this consultation remain. For example:

- overly restrictive criteria for the HOP role could make it difficult for some businesses to sell their practices or result in the purchaser not paying the full value – e.g. if a lay practice owner sells their business post the proposed reforms, they might only be able to sell to a GOC registrant unless their store has a significant margin for another lay owner to be able to absorb the cost of a HOP. This could result in more small practices closing.

Given the variety of organisational models and other complexities in implementing the HOP (see our responses to questions 11, 12 and 23), we feel that the time before any legislative change could be used to further clarify how the HOP role would operate in practice to mitigate these risks/costs/consequences. This would also be important as some businesses might wish to start to work towards a HOP model ahead of legislation.

We would be very happy to discuss these in more detail with the GOC and other sector bodies as proposals are developed further post consultation."

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Whilst most businesses are likely to employ the HOP, there might be sound reasons for also allowing the HOP role to be fulfilled by a contractor, for example:

- the need to cover a period of sick leave
- the need to cover a period in which a new HOP is being recruited
- smaller businesses might struggle to find an employed optometrist who wishes to take on the responsibilities of a HOP and a business owner might need to hire in additional resource to help them manage this (also see our response to question 10, 12 and 23)

As we set out in our response to question 10, we feel that more work with stakeholders would be helpful to refine how the HOP role will operate in practice pre-legislation.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Whilst we understand and share the GOC's wish to avoid a situation in which "someone performs a nominal or consultancy role across multiple businesses" (para 125), the reality is that business structures in optics can be complex and this needs further thought. For example, a head office might in fact have oversight of many subsidiaries and therefore on paper a HOP might in fact work across multiple businesses very effectively.

While we acknowledge, that para 97 sets out the HOP is expected to have "overall responsibility for the conduct of the business in accordance with the GOC's regulatory arrangements" and para 98 provides more detail on HOP responsibilities, it might still be feasible in some cases for a HOP to work across multiple businesses.

For example, a parallel example comes from data protection, where a provider can hire/share a data protection officer and other compliance specialists to help them comply with increasingly complex areas of regulation. Equally, there are scenarios in which it might serve patients better for smaller practices to rely on an external more experienced HOP to ensure compliance than a reluctant employee.

Further, if a small practice has a single highly valued employed optometrist who can only work part time because they have caring responsibilities and cannot take on the HOP role, then the GOC's proposals to require HOPs to be employed and not to support multiple practices could result in less good patient safety outcomes. Such restrictions on the HOP role could also create complexities with existing employment law, the Equality Act 2010 and put smaller practice owners at risk of having to close – e.g. having to hire an additional GOC registrant to be the HOP which the practice income cannot support (see our response to question 23).

At the same time, one can imagine a scenario in which a part-time optometrist is the only GOC registrant working at a small practice but does not wish to hold the HOP role but nevertheless is responsible for ensuring safe and effective care in their clinics. If they are supported by an external HOP who works across multiple businesses and this is the model that is viable for a practice, then it seems sensible to permit this and other models that could work well for patients in real world settings.

Needless to say, the practice owner/directors would need to act on the advice of an external HOP contracted to advise in exactly the same way an employed HOP and both kinds of HOP would have the same duties to raise concerns if necessary with the GOC.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We note that, in para 102, the GOC does not consider a separate set of standards will be necessary at this stage but wishes to have the power to introduce these if required in the future.

We support this as, subject to the GOC's response to our feedback on question 10, if exemptions are extended for some lay practice owners to fulfil HOP functions, then separate set of standards for non-GOC registrants might be helpful in the future.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The FCA and other regulators have such criteria/principles. However, in those sectors, firms are not appointing individuals who are already regulated in their own right in that specific sector/specialism. In the case of a HOP being a GOC registrant, it is therefore difficult to imagine what the GOC would define as "essential characteristics" that are not already covered in existing registrant standards.

Subject to the GOC's response to our feedback to question 10 and, if exemptions are extended for some lay practice owners to fulfil HOP functions, then for those practices setting out the characteristics of non-registrants appointed to the HOP role might be helpful.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The FCA has a similar approach. GOC registrants are also already on the register, so there is no significant impact with respect to data in the public domain.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This would be unnecessary and could also cause confusion – e.g. where an individual registrant works across multiple practices but has a HOP role at just one practice.

Listing HOP(s) next to the business entry would be clearer for patients and the public (see our response to question 15 and question 23 regarding why a practice should be allowed to list more than one HOP).

An additional point to consider is how the register would be organised/published for when a business is registered but has multiple practices and has opted to appoint a HOP at each practice or a group of practices within a region etc.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Of the three options proposed – owing to the complexity and variety of optical business models – any financial sanction based on turnover would not be workable in this sector. For example, what constitutes turnover of a GOC regulated entity would be significantly influenced by the following business models:

- A single limited company for all practices supported by a common purchasing organisation
- Separate limited companies for each practice in joint venture/franchise models
- A combination of a single limited company for owned practices plus separate joint venture/ franchise limited companies
- Operating opticians' practices as a part of a much larger trading company involved in other forms of retailing.

We can expand on and provide wider examples if required.

In addition, turnover is different from profit - a business can have a large turnover but still be making a loss. In such scenarios it is unclear how a sanction based on turnover would help protect the public, for example if it made it more difficult for a provider to investment in improvements.

Hence, if the GOC did have powers to impose a financial penalty based on turnover, it would be difficult to use such a regulatory tool effectively and proportionately in the UK, given the wide range of business models and complex global supply chains. It is therefore not clear under which circumstances a financial penalty based on turnover for primary eye care services would protect the public. For these reasons we think linking a financial penalty to turnover is an unviable option.

That leaves the options of unlimited financial penalties or an uprating of the current maximum level.

Taking unlimited financial penalties first and noting the GOC's view that "there is no evidence of any immediate risks to public protection in terms of the powers we currently have" (para 149). We feel that taking such a power would be disproportionate in the optical sector, especially as the GOC does not present any solid evidence in its consultation that a power to impose unlimited fines would be required or would be effective.

Furthermore, the criteria for unlimited fines would be subject to the same issues as applying a fine based on turnover – e.g. the GOC could not consider a legal entity it did not regulate (a global head office) when imposing a fine on a legal entity it did regulate.

There is also the important issue of how financial penalties would be imposed if the GOC had this power. While we appreciate that Fitness to Practice (FtP) panels would operate within guidelines and seek to do so proportionately and on advice, we have experience that this is not always the case, and many businesses would not be able to afford the High Court costs of an appeal.

We understand that no changes can be made until primary legislation is amended. However, as a sector, we do want to encourage as many optical businesses as possible to come into registration before that and not to challenge the Section 60 order when it comes forward for consultation. The fact there is no evidence provided to justify the GOC having the power to impose unlimited fines would mean that the GOC seeking such a power would most likely discourage potential business registrants from supporting regulatory change in the first instance, again not benefiting the public.

In our view this leaves powers to impose a maximum fine.

While we note the PSA's perception of power imbalances and strategic importance in primary care settings (para 146), we believe the PSA misunderstands the realities of the optical sector in the context of healthcare in general. For example, three NHS trusts in London have a larger turnover than the entire UK optical market and are in fact 'too big to fail'. The CQC and NHS commissioners also have more significant issues re asymmetric power than exist in primary eye care settings. Also, the NHS has a system to manage providers that are in fact too big to fail via its licencing regime in England for example. Hence, there is no logical deduction that can be drawn from organisations on this scale to make a case of unlimited financial penalties in primary eye care settings.

As Table 2 page 49 shows, the GOC already has powers to impose a financial penalty of £50,000 on both individual and business registrants, and the referenced GOC guidance states the main purpose of sanctions is to protect the public [1]. It is not clear that the GOC has ever used a serious financial sanction on an individual, despite the volume and range of adverse fitness to practise outcomes at a registrant level. This, along with the tone/framing of the consultation, suggests the GOC incorrectly thinks that 'companies' are only incentivised by fines. As the GOC's own data/evidence shows, the sector serves patient interests very well, and organisations

are incentivised to deliver high value care for many reasons of which the potential of a financial penalty is only one.

We would also make the following further points:

- in a complex market with state-funded care and self-funded care, it might be difficult to establish the root cause of any systems failure.
- While the GOC states it only regulates 50% of optical businesses, it is important to be clearer with the government and public that it currently regulates businesses that provide more than 80% of primary eye care provided in the UK. The GOC's own consultation provides evidence that the sector is working well and provides no evidence to support the case for new powers to impose more significant fines.
- It is a myth that providers are not already regulated. They must already comply with a wide range of other regulatory requirements be it via the HSE, ICO, employment law, competition law, etc. GOC sanctions should therefore focus more on ensuring compliance with/around the protected functions in paragraph 23 and protecting the public – e.g. in some cases it might make more sense to require a provider to make investments in specific systems/control as opposed to the GOC collecting monetary penalties.
- Crucially, large as well as small businesses already take the issue of the 'up to £50,000' financial penalty extremely seriously. A GOC fine is a serious public sanction which impacts heavily on the providers brand reputation, which is key to their success and survival. Past fines have had serious sector impact and led to businesses taking all possible steps to prevent and avoid ever being in the position of incurring a fine themselves. Its deterrent effect is therefore far greater than any possible financial sums involved.
- If a provider needed to be closed for regulatory reasons, this could be achieved by erasure from the GOC register preventing them from delivering the restricted functions in paragraph 23.
- Finally, it is recognised however that the current maximum fine level is out of date owing to inflation and should, when possible, be up-rated to reflect inflation since it was introduced under the Section 60 Order in 2005 which has stood the test of time. (We have not been able to trace its origin in previous legislation despite the references in the consultation document and note the uprated value is different to that set out in the consultation document.)
- It is also no longer best practice to set out such issues as maximum financial regulatory penalties in primary legislation.
- We would prefer therefore a power for the GOC periodically to set a maximum penalty in regulations and even for the to be able to be uprated or reduced annually by the GOC without further regulations by reference to an accepted official published inflation/deflation rate. This should be limited to £50,000 uplifted for inflation from 2005.

We would be very happy to discuss this further with the GOC.

Endnote

[1] GOC, 2021, Hearings and indicative sanctions guidance, <https://optical.org/media/v4abwdbu/hearings-and-indicative-sanctions-guidance-final.pdf>

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the GOC's prior analysis that there is no evidence to support regular or routine inspections. This would pose a significant and unnecessary cost on eye care in the UK.

That is why we cautiously welcomed the outcome of the GOC's previous consultation which concluded that practice visits would only take place as part of a Fitness to Practise (FtP) process. However, the examples given on pages 56-57 are unlikely to cross this threshold. For example:

- scenario one appears to demonstrate that a performance concern has been raised by the business with an individual registrant, and an employee has reported this to the GOC as a business regulatory matter
- scenario two seems to require nothing which could not be addressed by a photo or video of the premises, plus a standard operating procedure, room allocation log and statements.

If the GOC regulated hospital eye departments and took a similar approach, it is likely they would be visiting departments on a weekly basis. The CQC and other UK equivalents do not regulate hospitals at this level of detail. It is therefore unclear on what basis the GOC would use such powers and for what purpose.

This leads us to our major concern and objection which is that, however tight the visiting protocol might be, there is a risk that an actual FtP process could be prejudiced by a poorly executed practice visit. This is why it is vital that any new system does not undermine existing fairness rules.

It is also not clear who would visit a practice and what expertise they would have. For example, case examiners currently reach decisions on papers only and do not cross-examine witnesses. FtP panels only cross-examine witnesses based on previously submitted witness statements, and with the Panel benefiting from 'in person' legal advice in doing so. Again, any visit would need to avoid prejudicing an FtP process.

In short, it is not clear how the GOC could use such powers in a safe and proportionate way based on the information provided.

On balance therefore we would prefer the GOC not to seek to take this power but, first, to make better use of its existing powers to call for any documents to help it better make regulatory decisions. These could include of policies, operating procedures, maps, diagrams and photos/videos of practice, consulting room layouts and equipment etc - in fact nothing which would be added to by a practice visit.

It may be helpful for the GOC to model one or two such cases and test the need to visit with stakeholders before proceeding further. Equally the GOC could produce anonymised examples of where a visit might have been helpful in recent cases so the need for this power can be better understood/evidenced. It would also be helpful to understand why modern technologies cannot be used to meet any perceived gaps in powers – e.g. a video of a practice layout – as opposed to increasing regulatory costs for all registrants through a practice visit regime.

Without such evidence we cannot support this proposal.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If the GOC is eventually permitted to regulate all businesses providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23, then mandating a business to be part of a consumer redress scheme could help avoid regulatory time being taken up with consumer product type complaints. These are best resolved as quickly as possible at local level or, if not, by referral (currently) to the GOC quality-assured OCCS.

Even with such a requirement on contractors, however, patients/consumers could not be forced to accept findings of any redress scheme (without further complex legislation which governments of any stripe would be likely to resist).

Patients/consumers can also already go to Trading Standards or the Small Claims Court which is now an online and relatively simple process for product-related matters.

Nevertheless, if it is possible for the GOC to require use of a quality assured system such as the OCCS and the GOC is confident that its governance arrangements can demonstrably manage any conflicts of interest into the future, we would support this proposal.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

There is no evidence that this is necessary. The GOC evidence is clear that the current system works very well, it is quick and efficient and adding more duties and red tape for businesses is likely to increase costs for all without benefits for the majority.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the GOC's analysis. The current scheme is proportionate, popular with patients and works very efficiently.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

In the same way as it would be unworkable for individual registrants to fund more of the GOC costs if they get a complaint/concern, it would be impractical and add to bureaucracy for businesses to have a pay per use model. It could also result in less provider support for customers accessing such services (especially from a business struggling to meet expectations).

A model where all registrants pay the GOC fee and the GOC procures an efficient service, works cost-efficiently and effectively and ensures there is a level playing field for patients/consumers and registrants with poor providers exiting the market sooner than if there were a pay per use model.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The way in which the Head of Optical Practice (HOP) has been specified and restricted might have a negative impact. For example,

- might suggest there is a single head role and, other things being equal, more likely to be offered to somebody working full time as opposed to part time
- a registrant that works part time because they are bringing up a child or looking after a parent, might not feel they can take on additional HOP responsibilities. Where a practice cannot afford to hire more than one person to simply fill the HOP role this might have a negative impact on those groups which are more likely to have caring responsibilities

• in addition, businesses might wish to employ more than one HOP – e.g. job shares as people capable of doing the job need to work part-time for personal reasons.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

While we appreciate business registration fees are not within the scope of this consultation, the cost of regulation will be an important factor in assessing the cost-benefits of the GOC's plans. As the GOC would be generating more revenue (growth in registrants) but any increase in the cost of regulation would be marginal, we would expect fees to remain broadly as they are or reduce. It is important to avoid adding significant new costs to provider organisations who are often already funding individual registrant fees for their employees.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R97

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

[REDACTED]

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

GOC business registrant

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

If GP practices and hospitals have regulatory oversight by a GMC registered professional or a system in place such as CQC which has a nominated, accountable medically registered individual that is responsible for clinical governance and standards, then it would seem disproportionate to require GOC business regulation also.

This principle needs working through with impact assessment because our reservation is that the GMC/CQC etc might not see the relevance or underestimate the impact of concerns or complaints raised in relation to the business operation of registration, dispensing, the supply of optical appliances, complaints handling or even allegations of professional misconduct. This would lead to an uneven playing field in optical business regulation, which this exercise is trying to control i.e. it would seem unfair for a business registrant to be taken to task and possibly heavily fined for a matter that a the CQC perceive to be irrelevant.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

It's the business and the protected function that needs to be registered/regulated, not the physical bricks and mortar site on which it's located and operated from. This is no different to optical businesses operating from other fixed premises such as supermarkets or even mobile premises e.g. eye test bus. If it's an optical business providing protected services, it should be GOC registered as a business. The

exception to this is possibly where a medically registered individual or business is the business owner as outlined in Q1.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The principles and risks you outline in section 16 above apply to whatever the business model. It could be argued that charities should have more regulation because they are more likely to be dealing with members of the public who are extremely vulnerable e.g. homeless, children with severe disabilities.

You may consider reducing the financial burden of GOC registration on charities by reducing or having no cost to register if the business has charitable status.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Same response as Q3.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

There seems to be no rationale for this except that the GOC is trying to future proof the rules to allow for business models to be exempt from registration for models that have not yet been thought of.

The objective of this business reform is to create proportionate and fair regulation, which if the GOC does have discretionary powers to allow for exemption, would create more confusion. Should this proposal go ahead, we would expect to see a high level of consultation and governance around rule creation.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the GOC's rationale set out in annex 3, paragraph 92.

To safety proof removal of the majority board rule, you do need to have a registrant HOP, responsible officer or similar in place. Having a diligent, experienced, accountable registrant in place with not just oversight of the organisation but responsibility for ensuring that the organisation has a robust management system in place is far more effective to ensure patient safety and quality than the majority board rule. Sufficient systems and measures need to be in place to ensure that the individual holds authority and listened to at business ownership level.

The HOP may be a registered optometrist or dispensing optician.

The responsible officer model (Opticians Act S9 (2) (c) used by businesses whose business is mostly not optical (e.g. ████████) ensures better regulation. The "responsible officer" model seems more closely aligned to the GOC's proposal on having a Head of Optical Practice.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As detailed in our response to Q6, all business registrants should be required to appoint or nominate a HOP to ensure fairness, however it should not be a requirement that the HOP be on the premises for all trading hours, as required of the Pharmacy responsible officers.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Agree with your principles, however there should be flexibility to allow for the HOP role to evolve and change as this new model beds in and standards of practice evolve and change.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The GOC's Standards for Optical Businesses requires that the business ensures that training placements are adequately operated and people are properly supervised. It can still be the businesses responsibility to ensure high standards for training and that any programs are operated in accordance with rules laid down by the BCO/ABDO/training institutions.

How the business decides to delegate this, either to the HOP or to a Learning & Development (L&D) manager should be left to the business based on the business need.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As the HOP role is to ensure business safety and accountability in the face of the proposed removal of a majority registrant board, the HOP should be a registrant. Or businesses needs an accountable or responsible officer that is a registrant. As we have set out Q6, businesses should have a nominated registrant who is accountable for ensuring that the business operates safely and in accordance with the standards and rules laid down by the GOC. This is because registrants fully understand the nuances and impact of when and how things go wrong within the optical practice setting. If the HOP is not a registrant and the business was found to have a problem with it's clinical governance system, there would be insufficient routes of redress against the business, the business would simply move the non registrant HOP to another role or dismiss them as remediation.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Employment is the preferred and likely model, but a nominated or named registrant is equally viable or preferable.

For example, employment may be onerous for small businesses who's resident registrant does not wish to take on the HOP responsibility or where a business has a prolonged period of absence of the incumbent HOP (e.g. sick leave, maternity/paternity leave) or where the HOP leaves the business and the business is in the process of recruitment.

Equally, in the case of [REDACTED] (whereby [REDACTED] many independent individual registrants supported by a head office specialities), it would not be each business who employs the HOP, but rather the [REDACTED] who would employ a HOP to be accountable for clinical operations in each of it's vested business entities.

The system should allow for flexibility, just as GDPR regulations allows for the specialist Data Protection Officer to be a consultant. This principle needs more exploration on the risks and benefits and we would be happy to explore or explain this option should the GOC wish (i.e. ██████████ ██████████ operating model)

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It is wholly possible for an individual to ensure that standards and systems are in place across many sites and businesses, especially with current high tech risk management systems. We see the HOP as a specialist role which currently exists with professional services departments across current GOC registered businesses. We also see that such an individual could be nominated or named as the HOP across many businesses.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The GOC should have autonomy to introduce new standards (which are helpful) in the same way that the current standards for individual registrants and optical businesses are updated from time to time to allow for change.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It is hard to imagine how the GOC could mandate the characteristics of a HOP candidate as there will be variables across many business models. It may make it difficult to recruit to a mandated model, especially for smaller businesses. It would be helpful if the GOC provided guidance on essential and preferable knowledge, skills and characteristics ie like a job specification.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This may add unnecessary complexity to the register and needs further thought.

Where a business has multiple sites listed on the GOC's body corporate register and has multiple HOPs (e.g. they may wish to adopt a regional HOP approach), it would not be easy to identify which HOP is relevant for which site. Further thought is required to understand the benefits to patients, employers and other businesses in listing the nominated HOP on the business register.

Any solution needs to take account of the fact that patients/businesses etc need to be able to easily identify the HOP relevant to that particular business site/location.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This may add unnecessary complexity to the register, especially as people work in multiple locations. For example, if an individual works in 3 optical locations/sites but is only HOP in 1 location, and their registration is annotated with HOP, a business or patient may find it difficult to identify which premises they are the nominated HOP. It makes more sense for the business registration to detail their nominated HOP. It would be useful for a new search function to be created on the GOC's registration webpage to find if and where a registrant is a HOP.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

More thought and consultation will need to be given to agree a fair way of imposing fines that are proportionate to the business model as proposals a and b would be difficult to establish and possibly unfair

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

It is not clear what benefit a site visit adds to FtP cases unless it helps the FtP panel gain a better understanding of what happened in any particular situation (?). Perhaps give the GOC power to utilise this where they have a strong prevailing argument for doing so. It should not be a part of every FtP case or we can see that it may prolong GOC FtP cases even more than currently.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This proposed system is designed to introduce fairness across business registrants, and the current OCCS works well where businesses participate in the service. Any proposal for consumer redress should build on the success of the OCCS model.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We are a low risk industry so we should not need this level of regulation at this stage. It should be mandatory for businesses to participate in consumer redress, but not legally binding.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The current OCCS model works well and is efficient and any new system should be based on this success.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We are not sure of the current funding for the OCCS, presumably this is through point A (?). If so, we agree that this funding model should continue especially as more business will be registered, thus improving fairness.

We strongly disagree that option B should be pursued for 2 reasons. Firstly, we use OCCS as a mediation service where trust has clearly broken down and we wish to have an impartial body advise the patient. If option B applied it would discourage this practice.

Furthermore, we have no control over where or how patients complain and it would be unfair of practices were charged per use. We have noticed a trend where a small minority of patients are aggressive in their complaint style and it would be unfair to be charged where a patient makes an unfounded or malicious complaint.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

We believe that business registration fees have not been considered in this consultation and are out of scope. We would be concerned if the approach to setting business registrant fees was changed i.e. business registrant fees were increased above the level for individual registrants and would be further concerned that this would be a barrier for businesses to become registered. We presume that once the current proposals are consulted on and agreed, a further consultation or working group will be established on proportionate fees.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes, but please keep my name and/or my organisation's name private

R98

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Clyde & Co LLP

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Other

legal firm, acting for business and individual registrants in GOC fitness to practise proceedings and advising businesses as to regulatory compliance.

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

We agree with the rationale set out within the consultation document.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

We agree with the rationale set out within the consultation document.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the rationale set out within the consultation document.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree with the rationale set out within the consultation document.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We cannot envisage there being a need for a discretionary power to exempt businesses from registration if appropriate measures have already been put in place setting out when registration will be required and which organisations will be exempt.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

No comment.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"c) Not sure"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We understand the rationale for requiring businesses to appoint a Head of Optical Practice but consider that further thought needs to be given to how this would work in practice and what additional support would be offered by the GOC for these individuals. This is likely to be an onerous task that may be difficult for smaller businesses to manage and the GOC therefore needs to ensure that the expectations and requirements of the role are achievable for businesses of all sizes. Hitherto these responsibilities will have been shared by Directors of a business and therefore the consolidation of the management of those responsibilities on a single named individual will inevitably be a more onerous undertaking than has been the case previously. That should not be underestimated where the HOP is expected to be a registrant is likely to be balancing those additional responsibilities alongside clinical commitments and patient-facing duties.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

See comments above.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We wish to highlight that the College of Optometrists has overall responsibility for the Scheme for Registration and is well placed to assess the suitability of training placements when carrying out its functions which include practice visits. There is a risk of conflict between the College and HOPs if additional responsibilities regarding training are imposed by the GOC. That would be unhelpful and unnecessary.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Given the expectations set out within the consultation document, we anticipate that the Head of Optical Practice role would be best suited to a GOC registrant.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We anticipate that this role could be provided by a contractor as long as the relevant individual is able to fulfil the necessary requirements of the role. It may be necessary in some circumstances for a business to engage an external contractor to fulfil this role due to having no one suitable within the business.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider that this would necessarily present any issues, as long as the relevant individual is able to carry out the requirements of the role.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider that a registrant acting in the role of HOP requires different standards of practice to that which they would currently be required to follow (individual and business standards). Indeed, to introduce a third set of standards to which HOPs would have to adhere would be cumbersome and potentially confusing. That being said, we consider that it would be helpful for anyone appointed as Head of Optical Practice to have clarity as to what is expected of them by way of guidance documents from the GOC.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

As above, we consider that there should be clarity as to what will be expected of a Head of Optical Practice. We do not consider, however, that the GOC should be overly prescriptive about the essential characteristics to the extent that this prevents appropriate individuals from taking on the role and requires businesses to recruit additional members of staff. We note that registrants already have to comply with their own professional standards.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider this to be necessary and would query the purpose of such a listing. The necessary information would already be available to the GOC and any member of the public would be able to raise any concerns with the regulator in the usual way without having access to this information.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider this to be necessary and would query the purpose of such an annotation. The necessary information would already be available to the GOC and any member of the public would be able to raise any concerns with the regulator in the usual way without having access to this information.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

We consider that a power to impose unlimited fines is unnecessary and would be entirely disproportionate.

We consider that the current ability to impose a financial penalty already acts as a deterrent to optical businesses and is taken seriously. It is important to take into account that a financial penalty imposed at the end of a fitness to practise process will be only one aspect of the cost to a business of being subject to such an investigation and a public hearing (given reputational issues and legal fees).

Furthermore, the very limited number of occasions on which the GOC has used its power to fine businesses at the top end of the current fine limit evidences the fact that the current power is sufficient. Were the GOC regularly issuing £50,000 fines it might suggest that such an amount was failing to deliver the intended deterrent effect. That might then justify consideration of higher fines but that is not the case.

We also take issues with the underlying premise of the proposal that higher fines would create a greater deterrent and greater compliance with the standards. Experience in other jurisdictions (ie SRA, FCA etc) demonstrates that very large fines do not prevent the recurrence of serious regulatory breaches within the respective regulated professions. Accordingly, if greater regulatory compliance is not assured by this proposed amendment of the cap, the GOC must give greater weight to the adverse impacts such a proposal could have on the market, financial viability of businesses facing such fines and the relationship between the GOC and its business registrants.

We consider that linking a financial penalty to turnover would be unnecessarily complicated and could lead to unfairness. It would inevitably lead to satellite litigation/argument over financial data (potentially requiring the GOC and the business registrant to involve forensic accountants to provide evidence against which fines could be considered and argued). It also increases the likelihood of appeal in relation to disproportionate fines. This would increase the complexity of investigations into business registrants and lengthen FTP hearings to accommodate such disputes.

Taken together we consider this proposal to be wholly without merit or logical application. At most, any increase to the cap should be linked to inflation and reviewed annually.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree that there is no evidence to support regular or routine inspections. We consider that the current proposals are disproportionate and unnecessary. Further, it is not clear who would carry out the inspections and what documents or information the GOC would seek to access. We query whether the GOC has staff with the necessary skills and training to appropriately carry out visits which would not prejudice ongoing investigations. We also note that practice visits can be carried out by the College of Optometrists for any issues relating to supervision of pre-registration optometrists.

In our significant experience of representing business registrants in fitness to practise investigations before the GOC, the GOC has more fundamental improvements it needs to focus on before it considers itself capable of undertaking practice visits (i.e. improvements to its investigative processes, charging practices and evidence gathering from business registrants). Our consistent experience of the GOC's ability to satisfactorily investigate business registrants is very poor indeed.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider that there is any evidence that this is necessary. In our experience, the current systems in place work well and businesses engage with them well.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We do not consider that there is any evidence that this is necessary. In our experience, the current systems in place work well and businesses engage with them well.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

No comment.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Not sure

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We have no comments to add regarding the funding of any consumer redress scheme.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

As highlighted within [redacted] response, there is potential for the Head of Optical Practice role to impact on part time workers.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"b) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

**(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

**(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and  
(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?**

"a) No"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes

R99

**Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?**

Yes

**What is the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optometry Scotland

**Which category best describes the organisation you are responding on behalf of?**

Optical professional/representative body

**Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GP practices and hospitals (NHS and independent) carrying out restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be exempt from GOC business regulation?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

GP practices and hospitals are already regulated, so introducing another layer of oversight could create confusion and require additional time to comply with multiple regulations.

**Q2. Do you think that commercial units operating in GP practices and hospitals that are providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Yes"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals).**

In scenarios where optical businesses operate out of GP practices/Health centre premises, they should be regulated by the GOC.

**Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that charities providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Charities providing restricted functions should be regulated by the GOC to ensure consistent service and patient safety. However, the cost of registration could be a concern, so a reduced fee or exemption should be considered for these charities.

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that university eye clinics providing the restricted functions listed in paragraph 23 should be regulated by the GOC?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Similar to charities in that it would ensure a consistent and safe service to patients.

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a discretionary power to exempt particular businesses from registration?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We strongly recommend this is only used in rare exceptions, with clear exemption criteria outlining the reasons. Businesses eligible for exemption should be identified from the outset.

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to remove the requirement for some bodies corporate to have a majority of registrant directors?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We agree that if an alternative, such as the Head of Optical Practice serving as a director, were in place, the majority registrant director requirement would not be necessary. However, any alternative should ensure businesses understand optical regulations and maintain compliance.

**Q7. Should all businesses be required to appoint a head of optical practice?**

"a) Yes"

**If there are businesses that you think this arrangement should not apply to, please explain which ones and your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

No and business size should not determine whether one is required. All practices should be aware of the regulations. However, larger businesses will naturally have greater responsibilities.

**Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed responsibilities for the head of optical practice?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The HOP role should not become an isolated position where businesses rely solely on them without taking ownership themselves. We also support ongoing training for individuals taking on these responsibilities.

We welcome the GOC's recognition of the need for clarity in relationships and ensuring the HOP is not unfairly penalized for all issues. The level of authority required should be clearly defined, particularly when the HOP reports to others within the business. Additionally, limiting the role to one HOP raises concerns around succession planning and coverage during absences, such as annual leave or paternity leave or other long term leave or periods of recruitment.

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should have responsibilities around the adequacy of arrangements for training placements?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The HOP should have a role in ensuring training is conducted, but the overall responsibility must remain with the business. A key unintended consequence of placing this solely on the HOP is the significant time commitment required in larger organisations.

It could also lead to registrants relying entirely on their employer for development rather than seeking opportunities to expand their knowledge independently. Additionally, optometrists and dispensing opticians may not have the expertise to assess the "adequacy" of training, so they should not bear sole responsibility for it.

**Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be a fully qualified GOC individual registrant?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The HOP role would need clearly defined responsibilities and a minimum knowledge requirement if both optometrists and dispensing opticians can be eligible. A dispensing optician, for example, should not be held responsible for advice related to procedures within an eye examination.

**Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the head of optical practice should be an individual employed by the business?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

If providing consultancy, the HOP is not present in the business and therefore cannot ensure compliance. The Head of Optical should also hold a company director

position. While there will be situations where the HOP is absent, such as paternity leave or other absences (as noted in a previous response), there should be clear recommendations for businesses to manage these scenarios effectively.

**Q12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an individual should not be a head of optical practice for multiple businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

This would depend on the situation and would need clarity over the variety of models out there.

For example there are cases where an individual could be a director of multiple businesses where they split their time with other directors. In cases such as this, the HOP is a director and could work as HOP across multiple practices.

**Q13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should have a power to introduce a separate set of conduct standards for the head of optical practice should this be required in the future?**

"c) Neither agree nor disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

HOP should of course remain up to date with standards however it is important that this role does not have "moving goalposts". Any future standards should be put to consultation and communicated ahead of changes to allow HOP and businesses to make any necessary changes. The standards should be simple to implement and understand.

**Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the GOC should specify in rules/guidance essential characteristics of a head of optical practice that businesses should satisfy themselves are met?**

"b) Somewhat agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

An unintended consequence is that too much detail on essential characteristics could limit the people who would be suitable for these roles OR put registrants off. The current set up is not an onerous one on registrants and therefore attracts more individuals looking to progress.

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for the name of the head of optical practice to be listed on the GOC register of businesses?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Putting too much emphasis on a specific person by naming on the GOC list suggests ultimate responsibility which may not be the case and could be misleading to the public or other businesses. The business should remain named only as this keeps the company responsible. Another unintended consequence is that patients may wish to speak directly to the HOP and bypass company complaints procedure which in larger businesses particularly would be problematic and in some cases could cause delay in procedures.

**Q16. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal for individuals acting as a head of optical practice to have an annotation against their entry on the GOC register of individuals?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Would be confusing in instances where an optometrist works across other practices.

**Q17. In relation to the GOC's powers to impose a financial penalty on business registrants, which option do you favour?**

"c) A new maximum amount (replacing the current £50,000 financial penalty cap)"

**Please explain your answer, including any advantages, disadvantages and impacts.**

Linking to turnover would be difficult and unfair to measure with turnover not purely linked to eyecare service provision for example in businesses operating audiology etc. Those with higher turnover, may not be as profitable either with higher costs. Volume of eye exams conducted could be used as a measure which links to risk to public however again this would have to be further investigated and consultation on with how this would be applied to different business models.

A maximum cap would ensure businesses new "worst case".

We would seek clarity as to what the new cap would be and reserve comment until understanding where this amount came from.

**Q18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that introducing a power to visit businesses as part of the fitness to carry on business process could give the GOC greater powers to protect patients and the public?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Practices are already inspected by the NHS and therefore we feel this would be duplication of time, cost and effort to both practices and GOC. We don't understand

the situations that the GOC may require to visit as part of a fitness to practice and would seek further clarity on this before responding further.

**Q19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it should be mandatory for business registrants to participate in the consumer redress scheme?**

"d) Somewhat disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

We acknowledge that the OCCS are working well in current capacity and would encourage members to access this service however we have concerns that if mandatory, this could cause complications for patients/customers who contact other services first such as the NHS feedback services in Scotland or trading standards. We would suggest making it a recommendation to practices to utilise the service and provide more awareness to optical businesses on how the service operates.

**Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the consumer redress scheme should have powers to make decisions that are legally binding on businesses?**

"e) Strongly disagree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

The system works well – why over complicate and put pressure on system.

**Q21. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue with our current model of delivering the consumer redress scheme i.e. a single provider through a competition for the market model?**

"a) Strongly agree"

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Appears to be fair and operating effectively.

**Q22. How should any consumer redress scheme be funded?**

Every business contributing through the registration fee

**Please explain your reasoning (including any unintended consequences of our proposals and how they could be mitigated).**

Cost effective to have all businesses contributing. Would encourage businesses to utilise service better. Could impact small businesses more where they don't have support from peers or additional departments that can specialise in customer service. In many cases it is a breakdown in communication and may not be the practices "fault" and therefore, why should they be penalised in this instance. There is no cost to the patient in these scenarios so believe it should be the same for practices.

**Q23. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"a) Yes"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

The HOP role could be assumed to be full time and affect those working part time due to childcare or caring responsibilities.

One HOP may limit those who can apply – companies may wish to have multiple HOP to cover in instances of pregnancy or paternity or long term absence.

**Q24. Are there any aspects of our proposals that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics?**

"c) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q25. Will the proposed changes have effects, whether positive or negative, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q26. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain how.**

**Q27. Could the proposed changes be revised so that they would not have negative effects, or so that they would have decreased negative effects, on:**

- (a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and
- (b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

"a) Not sure"

**If yes, please explain your reasoning.**

**Q28. Please tell us about any other areas relevant to business regulation that are not covered by this consultation.**

The current business regulation lacks specifics regarding unregistered businesses supplying glasses or contact lenses. This causes ongoing risk to public when patients purchase these items online and drive with unchecked correction or in some cases inadequate correction.

**Can we publish your response?**

Yes