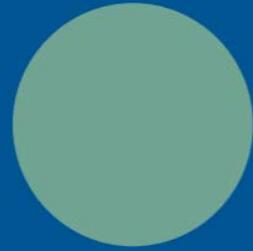
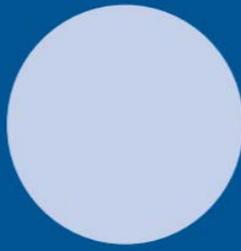




General Optical Council:

Equality and Diversity Data Monitoring Report 2020



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Introduction

About Us

The General Optical Council (GOC) is the UK-wide regulator for optometrists and dispensing opticians, student optometrists and dispensing opticians, and optical businesses. We exist to protect the public by raising standards in the optical professions.

Our regulatory functions

Setting standards for optical education and training, performance, and conduct

Approving qualifications leading to registration

Maintaining a register of those who are qualified and fit to practise, to train or carry on business as optometrists and dispensing opticians

Investigating and acting where registrants' fitness to practise, to train or carry on business is impaired

Commitments to EDI

We embed and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within our practice and sector. Our approach is set out in our [Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) strategy 2017-20](#) and aligns with our strategic objectives 2017-20. Please note that from 1 April 2020, we introduced a new [strategic plan, which incorporates our new EDI objectives](#).

We commit to continuously developing our capabilities within EDI, by promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and fostering good relations between key equality strands of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership. As a public body this aligns with the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people, including providing reasonable adjustments as appropriate;
- tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people who share a protected characteristic(s) and those that do not;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic(s) and those who do not;
- remove or minimise disadvantages and barriers experienced by people due to their protected characteristic(s); and
- encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public life or in other activities, particularly where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Equality Duty outlines specific duties requiring public bodies such as ourselves to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating our compliance with the Equality Duty, and for us to set equality objectives. This includes our EDI Strategy, action plans, and Annual EDI Report.

2019/20 Activities

In 2019/20 the GOC completed several activities that progressed EDI and its value for its staff and registrants. These can be split into three sections:

Learning and development of optical professionals:

During 2019/20 we completed impact assessments for our Education and CET operational work, the Education Strategic Review (ESR), the Continuing Education and Training (CET) Review, and other projects. In addition to this EDI related requirements of qualification providers were incorporated into the ESR project.

Targeted approach to regulation:

In 2019 we completed impact assessments for Standards Team operational work, new disclosing confidentiality guidance and whistleblowing guidance, empowering people to speak up.

There was work undertaken to improve the analysis of EDI factors within our fitness to practise function (FTP). From this work there are plans for further research to gain a deeper understanding and mitigate impacts through process adjustments.

Organisational transformation:

In 2019 we commissioned an external consultant to review our ways of working. Following extensive engagement with staff he produced a comprehensive report and recommendations, which formed the basis of a multi-year EDI plan that continues into next year. Included in this is a leadership development plan on EDI and an EDI training programme for staff and members. Unconscious Bias training has already been completed for case examiners, Investigation Committee and Hearing Panel members.

Several improvements have already resulted from the consultancy report, including a collaborative review group for our key HR policies and the establishment of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion groups. Recommendations from the report have been embedded into our Strategic Plan for 2020-25, to ensure EDI is embedded in all aspects of the GOC's work.

Following the staff survey and the need to re-visit the values underpinning our previous strategic plan. We listened to the comments made and have now developed a new set of values and behaviours in consultation with staff. These were rolled out as part of our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and will form a core part of life in the GOC henceforth.

Our new values are:

- We act with integrity
- We pursue excellence
- We respect other people and ideas
- We show empathy
- We behave fairly
- We are agile and responsive to change

Data, Definitions, and Method

Definitions

For the purpose of this report, a number of broad terms are used:

Disability	A limiting long-term illness, impairment, or disability
DO	Dispensing Optician
EDI	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
EWSNI	English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish
FTP	Fitness to Practise
FTPC	Fitness to Practise Committee
Members	Refers to Council and committee members.
OO	Optometrist
SO	Student Optometrist
SDO	Student Dispensing Optician

Data Collection

For the purposes of this report the data from our systems was extracted of the 31st March 2020. This is line with the start date of the fully-qualified professional's year of registrants (1st April – 31st March).

Where appropriate, we have provided data over the past five years to help us identify any trends.

In order to abide with the Data Protection Act and our [Approach to EDI monitoring policy statement](#) we may round up or group figures to ensure that individuals cannot be identified within the report.

Data Limitations

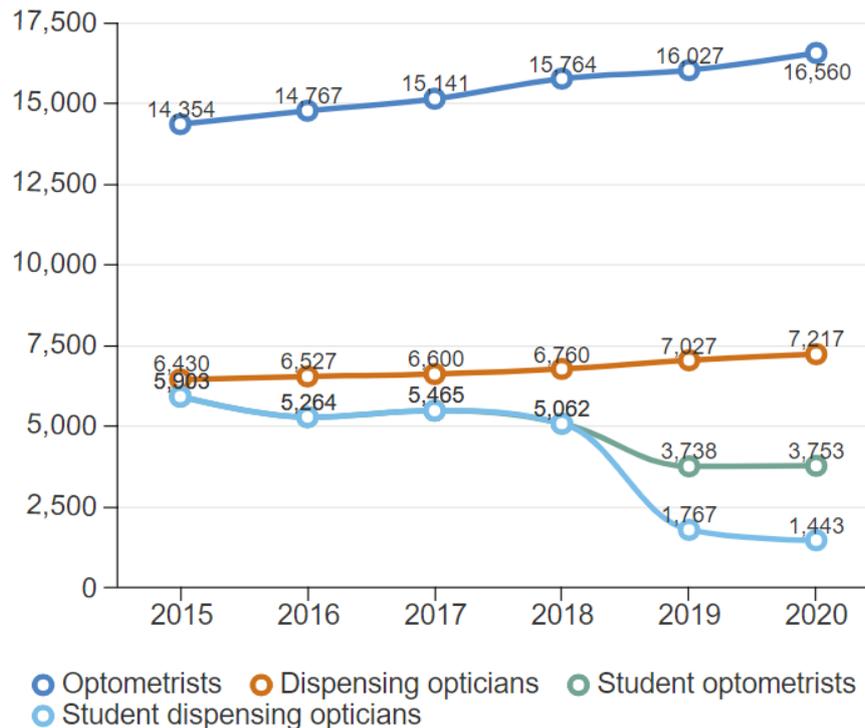
We understand that some people may not wish to disclose their personal details for the purpose of diversity monitoring. The data included in this report is the data that individuals have disclosed. Due to rounding, percentages may not always add up to 100.

It is important that no sweeping conclusions or assumptions are made on the information presented, particularly with regard to cause and effect, due to the complexity of factors and variables.

Overview

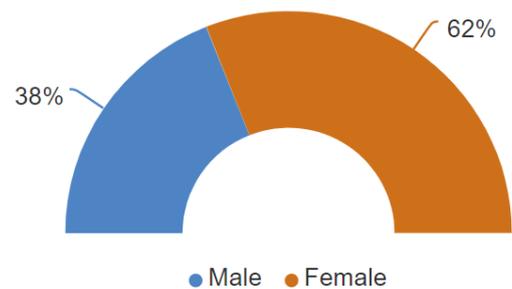
Registrants

Our total registrant number was greater in 2015 than 2016, but since 2016 our registrant numbers have been increasing each year with this year showing the largest number we have ever had – 28,973, which is an 8.6% increase from 2016. From 2016 to 2020, the total number of optometrists has increased by 15.4%, the total number of dispensing opticians has increased by 12.2%, and the total number of students has decreased by 13.6%.

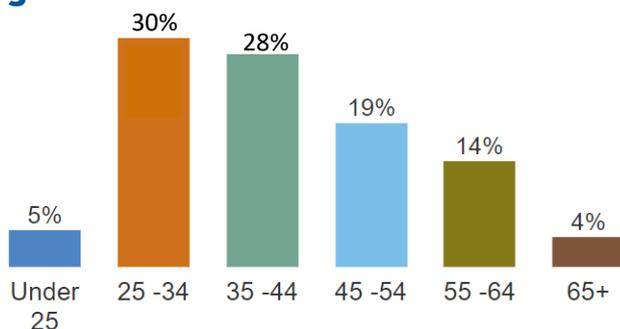


Gender

- Our registrant demographic has remained relatively stable over the past six years.
- There are still more female (62%) than male (38%) optometrists and dispensing opticians.

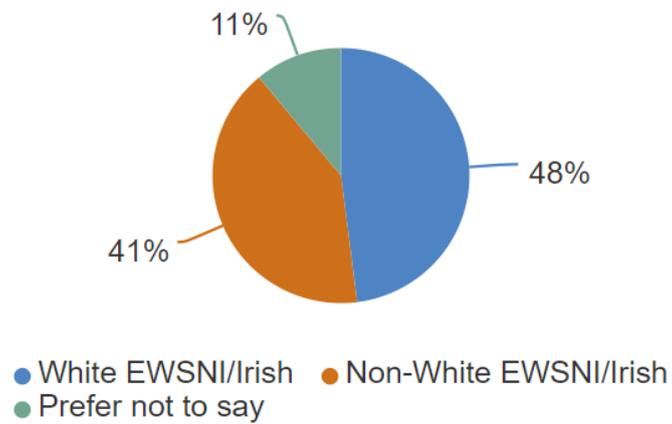


Age



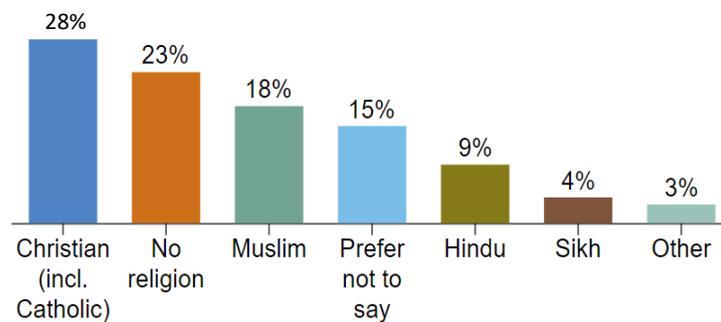
- 58% of registrants (excluding students) are aged between 25 and 44.
- Dispensing opticians have an older age profile than optometrists.
- This is almost identical to 2019.

Ethnicity



- 48% of registrants are White EWSNI/Irish (49% in 2019)
- 41% are non-White EWSNI/Irish (39% in 2019).

Religion



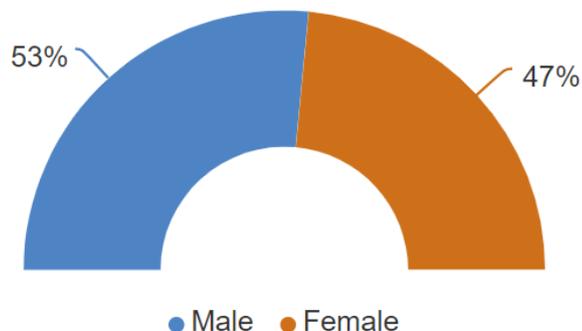
- 28% of registrants identify as Christian (incl. Catholic) (29% in 2019)
- 18% of registrants identify as Muslim (16% in 2019)

Fitness to Practise Registrants

The demographic of registrants subject to concerns about their fitness to practise has remained fairly similar.

Gender

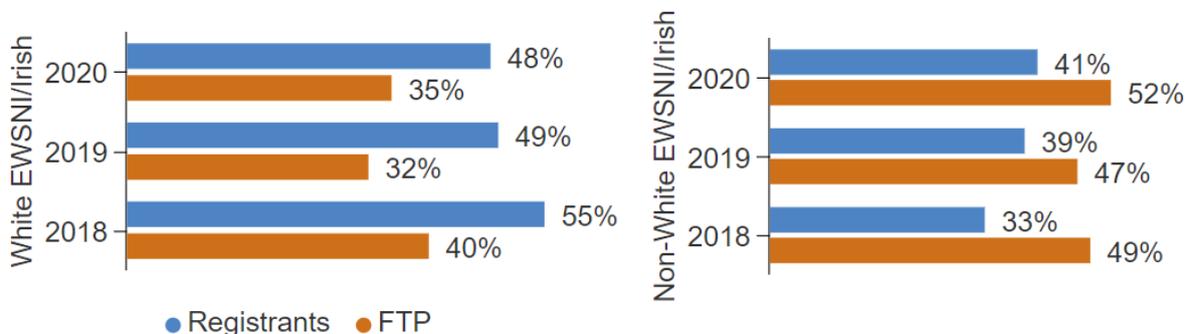
- 53% of the registrants referred for FTP investigation were male and 47% were female.
- This is disproportionate to the profile of our register, and fairly similar to last year's result. Men, therefore, are 3.5 times more likely than women to be subject to an FTP investigation¹.
- A smaller percentage of female registrants (36%) were referred to the FTP committee than male (64%)



Age

- The age profile of registrants subject to FTP investigation is in line with our register.

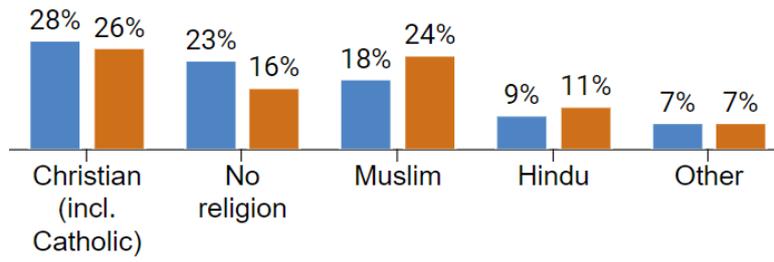
Ethnicity



- A disproportionate number of non-White EWSNI/Irish, and especially Pakistani and Indian registrants are subject to FTP investigation, compared to our registrant profile.
- Non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up 41% of the register but 52% of referrals to the FTPC. Non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants, therefore, are 1.7 times more likely than White EWSNI/Irish registrants to be subject to an FTP investigation².

¹ The calculation for this can be found in the appendix on page 59 of this report.

Religion



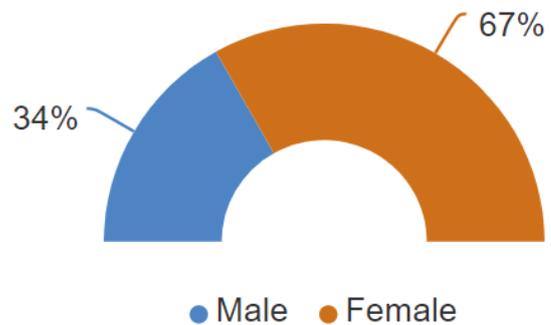
- A disproportionate number of Muslim registrants are subject to FTP investigation, compared to our registrant profile.

Employees

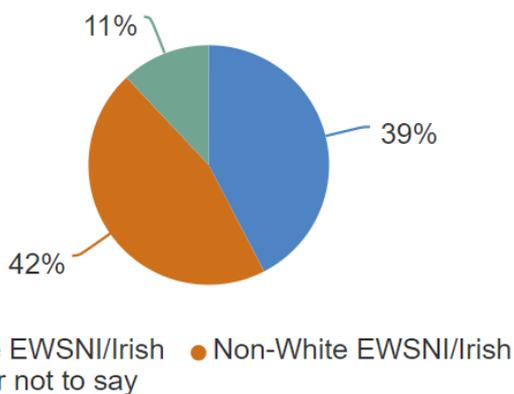
Our employee demographic has remained relatively stable over the past three years.

Gender

- Our employees are predominately female.
- The gender split across all roles remains representative of the overall GOC workforce.
- There was a 4% increase in the proportion of female employees in comparison to 2019.



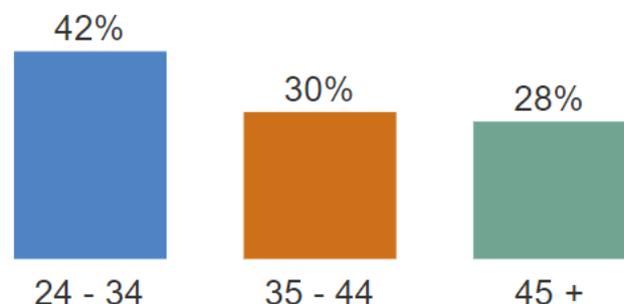
Ethnicity



- Our workforce is similar to London's population in relation to ethnicity, with 39% White EWSNI (London 45%).

Age

- 72% of employees are aged between 24 and 44, almost identical to 2019.
- The majority of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Heads of department are over 35 years old.



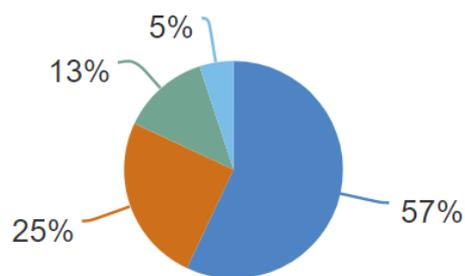
Our Registrants

The Registrant Profile

At 31 March 2020, we had 28,973 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student optometrists, and student dispensing opticians on our registers.

Registrant profile by profession – 31st March 2020

- 57% are Optometrists.
- 25% are Dispensing Opticians.
- 18% are Students.



● Optometrist ● Dispensing Optician ● Student Optometrist
● Student Dispensing Optician

Registration profile by professional group from 2015 to 2020

The structure of our register has remained stable during the past six years.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	1-year % change	5-year % change
Optometrists	14,354	14,767	15,141	15,764	16,027	16,560	+3.3%	+15.4%
Dispensing opticians	6,430	6,527	6,600	6,760	7,027	7,217	+2.7%	+12.2%
Student optometrists					3,738	3,753		
Student dispensing opticians	5,903	5,264	5,465	5,062	1,767	1,443	-5.9%	-13.6%
All registrants	26,687	26,558	27,206	27,586	28,559	28,973	+1.4%	+8.6%

Gender

At 31 March 2020, 62% of all registrants were female and 38% male. This compares with the UK population where 51% is female and 49% male.

Registrant gender profile – 31 March 2020

	Male			Female			Total	
	Total registrants	% of register	% of registrant type	Total registrants	% of register	% of registrant type		
Optometrists	6,642	23%	40%	9,918	34%	60%	16,560	57%
Dispensing opticians	2,599	9%	36%	4,618	16%	64%	7,217	25%
Student optometrist	1,253	4%	33%	2,500	9%	67%	3,753	13%
Student dispensing optician	470	2%	33%	973	3%	67%	1,443	5%
All registrants	10,964	38%		18,009	62%		28,973	

Registrant gender profile over the past six years (excluding students)

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	Optometrists	6,175	6,276	6,331	6,450	6,524	6,642
	Dispensing opticians	2,515	2,513	2,494	2,501	2,587	2,599
Female	Optometrists	8,179	8,491	8,810	9,314	9,503	9,918
	Dispensing opticians	3,915	4,014	4,106	4,259	4,440	4,618
Total		20,784	21,294	21,741	22,524	23,054	23,777

Over the past six years the proportion of female and male registrants has remained fairly stable across both fully qualified roles.

Specialty Registrant gender profile – 31 March 2020

	Contact Lens Specialty		Independent Prescribing Specialty		Additional Supply Specialty		Supplementary Prescribing Specialty		All specialties	
Female	387	68%	538	59%	545	59%	541	59%	2,011	60%
Male	178	32%	378	41%	386	41%	377	41%	1,319	40%
Total	565	100%	916	100%	931	100%	918	100%	3,330	100%

Like in 2019, there are more female than male registrants on all four of the specialty registers – overall there are 1.6 times more women than men on the overall register.

Age

In line with previous years, the largest age group amongst registrants (excluding students) is between 25 and 34 years of age, followed by those aged 35 to 44.

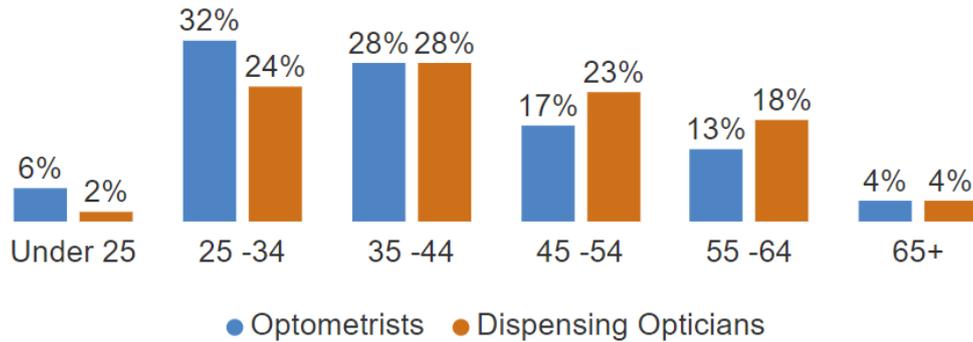
Registrant age profile by professional group (excluding students) – 31 March 2020

	Optometrist		Dispensing optician		All non-students	
Under 25	996	6%	157	2%	1,153	5%
25-34	5,313	32%	1,748	24%	7,061	30%
35-44	4,668	28%	2,038	28%	6,706	28%
45-54	2,830	17%	1,677	23%	4,507	19%
55-64	2,084	13%	1,326	18%	3,410	14%
65+	669	4%	271	4%	940	4%
Total	16,560	100%	7,217	100%	23,777	100%

Registrant age profile by professional group (only students) – 31 March 2020

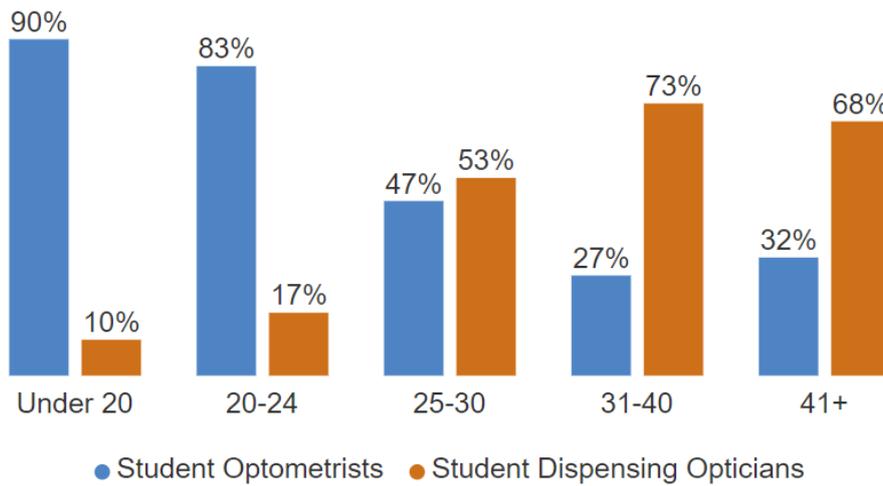
	Student Optometrist		Student Dispensing Opticians		All Students	
Under 20	707	19%	79	5%	786	15%
20-24	2493	66%	513	36%	3006	58%
25-30	391	11%	436	30%	827	16%
31-40	111	3%	305	21%	416	8%
41+	51	1%	110	8%	161	3%
Total	3,753	100%	1,443	100%	5,196	100%

Registrant age profile by professional group (excluding students) – 31 March 2020



There is a higher proportion of optometrists than dispensing opticians aged below 35. Between 45-64 years old, there is a higher percentage of dispensing opticians than optometrists. This is consistent with the past two years.

Registrant age profile by professional group (only students) – 31 March



Specialty age profile – 31 March 2020

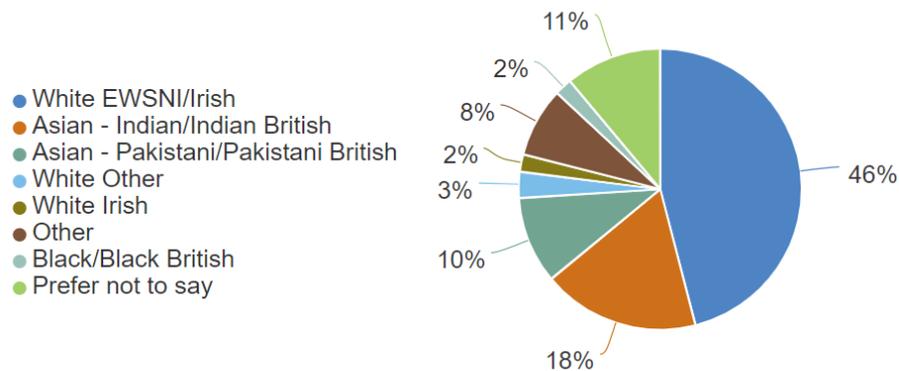
Most people with a specialty are aged 35-44. The further away you move from this age group, the smaller the number of registrants.

	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
Contact Lens Specialty	4	105	233	130	76	17	565
	1%	19%	41%	23%	13%	3%	100%
Independent Prescribing Specialty	0	261	317	223	101	14	916
	0%	28%	35%	24%	11%	2%	100%
Additional Supply Specialty	0	260	317	227	109	18	931
	0%	28%	34%	24%	12%	2%	100%
Supplementary Prescribing Specialty	0	261	317	222	103	15	918
	0%	28%	35%	24%	11%	2%	100%
Total	4	887	1,184	802	389	64	3,330
	<1%	26%	36%	24%	12%	2%	100%

Ethnicity

The ethnicity of our registrants is diverse with a total of 41% of registrants being non-White EWSNI/Irish in comparison to the UK (13%), which has increased from 39% in 2019. 48% are White EWSNI/Irish in comparison to the UK population (82%), which has reduced from 49% in 2019. The second largest registrant group is Indian/Indian British (18%) in comparison to the UK (2.3%).

Registrant ethnicity profile – 31 March 2020



Registrant ethnicity profile for 2019 to 2020

		Optometrists	Dispensing Opticians	Student Optometrists	Student Dispensing Opticians	All registrants
2019	White EWSNI /Irish	7,338	4,775	752	872	13,737
		46%	68%	20%	49%	49%
	Non-White EWSNI/Irish	6,665	1,271	2,519	543	10,998
		42%	18%	67%	31%	39%
	Prefer not to say	2,024	981	467	352	3,824
		13%	14%	12%	20%	11%
	Total	16,027	7,027	3,738	1,767	28,559
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2020	White EWSNI /Irish	7,382	4,957	710	828	13,877
		45%	69%	19%	57%	48%
	Non-White EWSNI/Irish	7,226	1,385	2,787	484	11,882
		44%	19%	74%	34%	41%
	Prefer not to say	1,952	875	256	131	3,214
		12%	12%	7%	9%	11%
	Total	16,560	7,217	3,753	1,443	28,973
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values.

Non-White EWSNI/Irish optometrists make up a higher percentage of total optometrists when compared to the percentage of non-White EWSNI/Irish dispensing opticians to total dispensing opticians. This is largely due to the number of Asian optometrists on our register, who make up 37% of optometrists (increased from 35% in 2019). This is compared to the 13% of dispensing opticians who are Asian (same as in 2019). This trend is likely to continue to increase as 62% of student optometrists are Asian.

There are slightly more White EWSNI/Irish optometrists on the register than non-White EWSNI/Irish. There are 3.6 times more White EWSNI/Irish dispensing opticians on the register than non-White EWSNI/Irish.

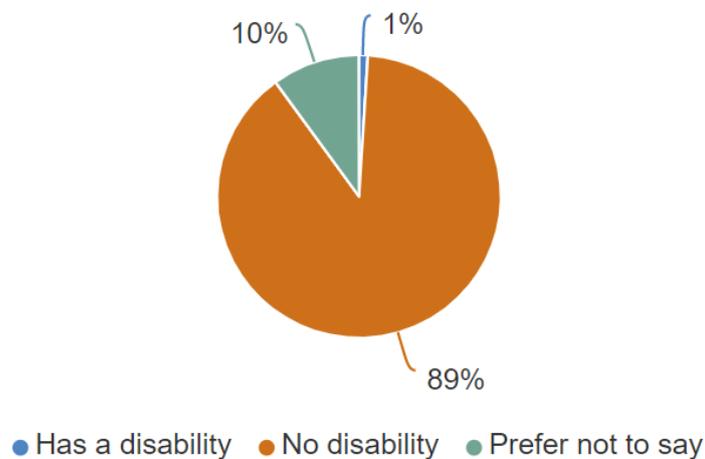
Specialty Registrant ethnicity profile – 31 March 2020

Across all the specialty registers, White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up the largest group.

	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		Prefer not to say		Total	
Contact Lens Specialty	381	67%	119	21%	65	12%	565	100%
Independent Prescribing Specialty	589	64%	244	27%	83	9%	916	100%
Additional Supply Specialty	596	64%	248	27%	87	9%	931	100%
Supplementary Prescribing Specialty	588	64%	246	27%	84	9%	918	100%
Total	2,154	65%	857	26%	319	10%	3,330	100%

Disability

Registrant disability profile – 31 March 2020



Less than 1% of all registrants consider themselves disabled, which is consistent across optometrists, dispensing opticians, and students, and is consistent with 2019. In the UK, 16% of working age adults identify as having disabilities, of which 46.3% are in employment.

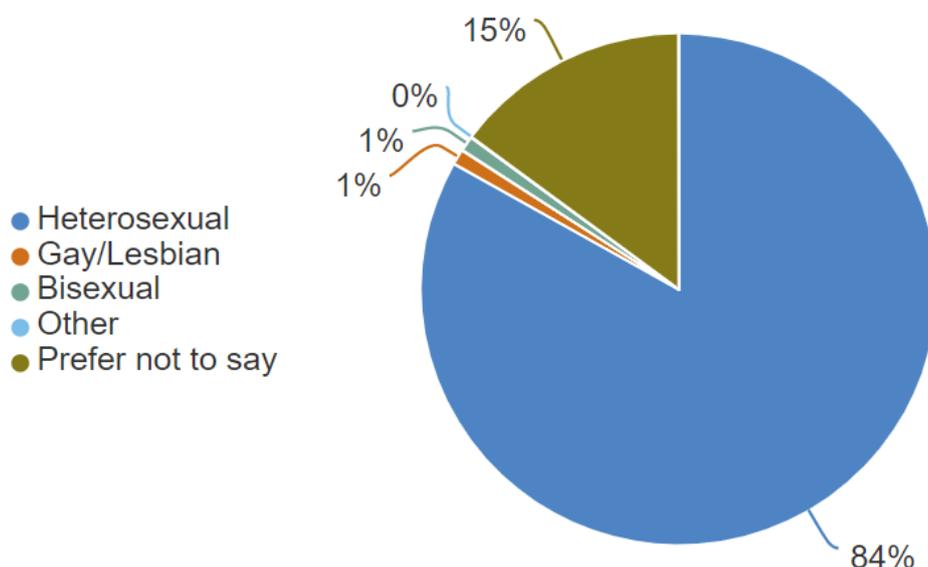
Registrant disability profile for 2019 to 2020

	2019		2020	
Identifies as having a disability	224	<1%	240	<1%
No stated disability	24,916	87%	25,872	89%
Prefer not to say	3,419	12%	2,861	10%
Total	28,559	100%	28,973	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values.

Sexual Orientation

Registrant sexual orientation profile – 31 March 2020



The majority of registrants reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual.

2% reported their sexual orientation to be non-heterosexual. This is consistent across the professional groups and is consistent with 2019.

The majority of the UK population (93.5%) report they are heterosexual, with 1.1% reporting as gay/lesbian, and 0.4% cent reporting as bisexual.

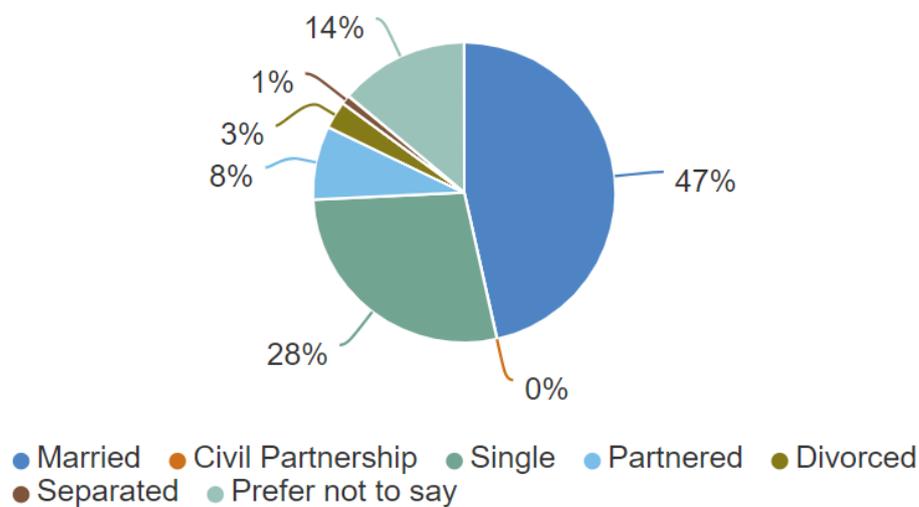
Registrant sexual orientation profile for 2019 to 2020

	2019		2020	
Heterosexual/straight	23,260	81%	24,279	84%
Gay/Lesbian	313	1%	336	1%
Bisexual	191	<1%	184	<1%
Other	76	<1%	76	<1%
Prefer not to say	4,719	17%	4,098	14%
Total	28,559	100%	28,973	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values.

Marital Status

Registrant marital status profile – 31 March 2020



47% of all registrants are married, (roughly the same as in 2019). This is in line with the UK, where the marriage rate is 51.5%.

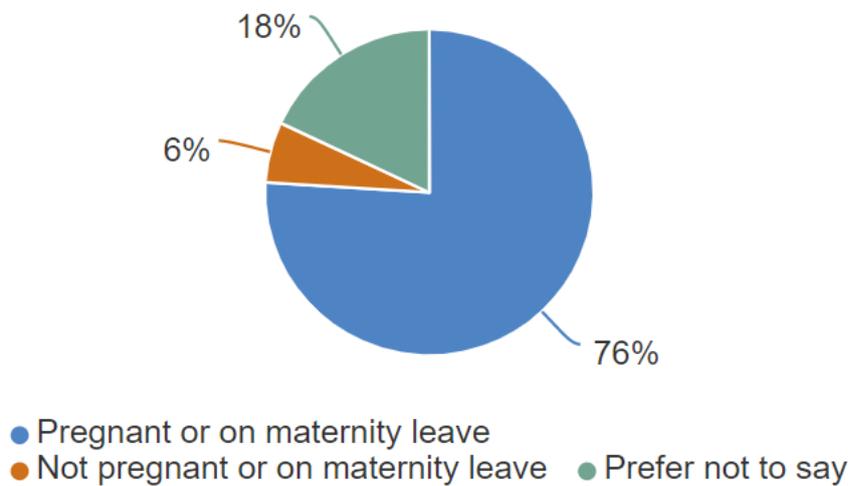
Registrant marital status profile for 2019 to 2020

	2019		2020	
Married	13,056	46%	13,405	47%
Single	7,674	27%	8,338	28%
Partner	2,251	8%	2,158	8%
Divorced/Legally Dissolved	787	3%	799	3%
Separated	245	<1%	246	<1%
Civil Partnership	102	<1%	101	<1%
Prefer not to say	4,444	16%	3,926	13%
Total	28,559	100%	28,973	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Registrant pregnancy and maternity profile – 31 March 2020



6% of all registrants were either pregnant or were on maternity/paternity leave (the same as 2019).

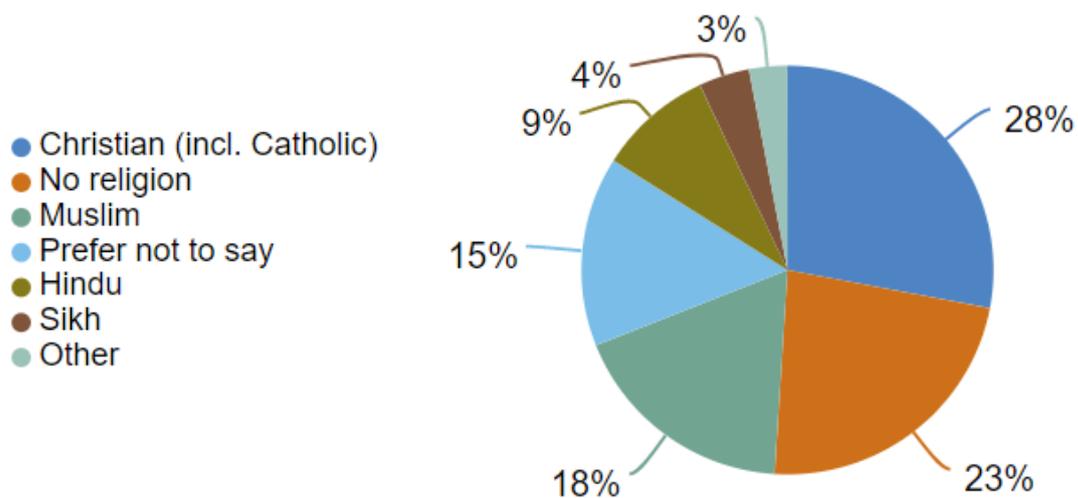
Registrant pregnancy and maternity/paternity profile over the past two years

	2019		2020	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Pregnant or on maternity/paternity leave	1,836	6%	1,877	6%
Not pregnant or on maternity/paternity leave	20,967	73%	21,931	76%
Prefer not to say	5,756	20%	5,165	18%
Total	28,559	100%	28,973	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values.

Religion

The most common religion that registrants belong to is Christianity (incl. Catholicism) – 28% (29% in 2019). In comparison, 60% of the UK is Christian (incl. Catholic). The next largest group is Muslim – 18% (16% in 2019) compared to 4% of the UK population, and Hinduism – 9% (same as 2019) compared to 1% of the UK population. 23% hold no religious allegiance (22% in 2019), compared to 26% of the UK population.



Registrant religious profile for 2019 to 2020

	2019		2020	
Christian (incl. Catholic)	8,222	29%	8,246	28%
Muslim	4,521	16%	5,099	18%
Hindu	2,631	9%	2,729	9%
Sikh	1,162	4%	1,207	4%
Jewish	292	1%	282	1%
Buddhist	135	<1%	137	<1%
Any other religion/faith	324	<1%	334	1%
No religion	6,337	22%	6,560	23%
Prefer not to say	4,935	17%	4,379	15%
Total	28,559	100%	28,973	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values

Registrant religious profile by professional group – 31 March 2020

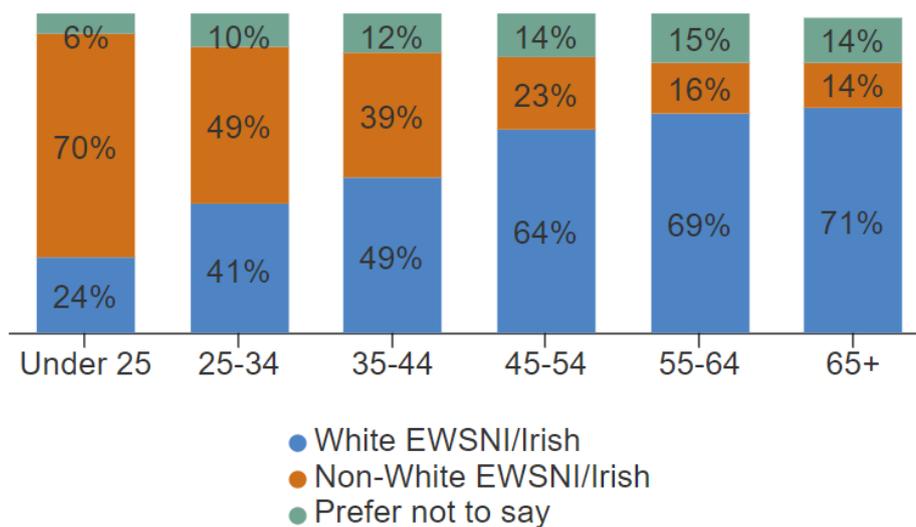
	Optometrists		Dispensing Opticians		Student Optometrists		Student Dispensing Opticians		All	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Christian (incl. Catholic)	4,900	30%	2,492	38%	554	15%	300	21%	8,246	28%
Muslim	2,717	16%	396	5%	1,737	46%	249	17%	5,099	18%
Hindu	1,968	12%	366	5%	332	9%	63	4%	2,729	9%
Sikh	870	5%	130	2%	182	5%	25	2%	1,207	4%
Any other religion/faith	514	3%	160	2%	67	2%	11	<1%	753	3%
No religion	3,016	18%	2,421	34%	518	14%	605	42%	6,560	23%
Prefer not to say	2,575	16%	1,252	17%	363	10%	189	13%	4,379	15%
Total	16,560	100%	7,217	100%	3,753	100%	1,443	100%	28,973	100%

Note: Due to small numbers, 'Jewish' and 'Buddhist' were merged into the 'Any other religion/faith' category.

Age and ethnicity

In the 25-34 age group, the percentage of White EWSNI/Irish and non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants is similar (41% and 49% respectively) – in 2019, this was 43% and 47% respectively. However, under 25 years of age there are 70% non-White EWSNI/Irish (68% in 2019). Like previous years, at age 35 and older there is a higher percentage of White EWSNI/Irish registrants than non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants, with the difference increasing with age. This trend is more evident amongst optometrists.

Registrant age and ethnicity profile – 31 March 2020



Fitness to Practise Complaints

About Fitness to Practise (FTP)

One of our statutory functions is to investigate allegations where registrants may not be fit to practise as part of our role in protecting the public. Anyone can complain to us if they have a concern about one of our registrants. If the complaint raises a question about a registrant's fitness to practise (FTP), we will investigate by gathering all the relevant information, for example, optical records, witness statements or information from the police or NHS organisations. Once the investigation is complete and both the registrant and complainant have had the opportunity to provide comments, all papers are passed to case examiners to decide whether the case should be either closed or referred to the FTP Committee for a hearing.

Further information regarding FTP outcomes can be found in our [Annual Report](#).

Note: Some data relating to registrant numbers and FTP registrant numbers in this report differ to that in our Annual Report. This is due to the datasets being exported at different times in the year. From next year, we will endeavour to present identical data in both our EDI Monitoring Report and our Annual Report.

EDI Data Collection for complainants

We collect diversity data from complainants on a voluntary basis. In 2019 we collected 30 monitoring forms (compared to 19 in 2018, 33 in 2017 and 51 in 2016) – which equates to approximately 6% (4% in 2018, 8% in 2017, and 8% in 2016) of all known complainants. Therefore, it is not possible to analyse the diversity of complainants, with the exception of gender diversity which is collected from all complainants.

Registrants subject to a fitness to practise investigation

	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
Optometrists	158	71%	170	58%	169	64%	191	69%	120	75%
Dispensing Opticians	28	13%	37	13%	35	13%	29	10%	15	9%
Student Optometrists	12	5%	12	4%	8	3%	15	5%	5	3%
Student Dispensing Opticians	2	1%	8	2%	4	2%	9	3%	6	4%
Subtotal	200	90%	227	77%	216	82%	244	88%	146	91%
Business Registrants	23	10%	67	23%	47	18%	34	12%	15	9%
Total FTP Investigations	223	100%	294	100%	263	100%	278	100%	161	100%

Between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, we received 348 complaints, of which 161 were opened (46%). Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, we received 488 complaints, of which 278 (57%) were opened. Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018, we received 315 complaints, of which 303 (96%) were opened. The large drop in complaints this year compared to past years is due to the introduction of the new acceptance criteria.

Registrants subject to an FTP investigation profiled by professional group (including business registrants) from 2016 to 2020

Optometrists received higher numbers of investigations (82%) than dispensing opticians (10%), compared to the proportion of optometrists (57%) and dispensing opticians (25%) on our register. This is consistent with the profile of complaints since 2012/13 and is a gradually increasing trend. Students made up 7% of the total FTP investigations, in comparison to 2019 where students made up 10% of the total FTP investigations, and 6% in the year before.

Registrants subject to an FTP investigation profile by professional group (excluding business registrants) – 31 March 2020

	Total investigations	% of total FTP investigations against role	% of investigations against total registrant role	Total registrants	% of total registrants
Optometrists	120	82%	0.7%	16,560	57%
Dispensing Opticians	15	10%	0.2%	7,217	25%
Student Optometrists	5	3%	0.1%	3,753	13%
Student Dispensing Opticians	6	4%	0.4%	1,443	5%
All (minus body corporate)	146		0.5%	28,973	

In comparison to previous years, these proportions are similar.

Registrants subject to an FTP complaint profiled by specialism (excluding business registrants) – 31 March 2020

	Total registrants	% of total FTP complaints against specialism	% of complaints against total registrant specialism	Comparison total registrants with specialties	% of total registrants with specialties
Contact lens specialty	3	2%	0.5%	565	2%
Independent prescribing specialty	6	4%	0.7%	916	3%
Additional supply specialty	5	3%	0.5%	931	3%
Supplementary prescribing specialty	5	3%	0.5%	918	3%
Total	19	13%	0.6%	3,130	12%

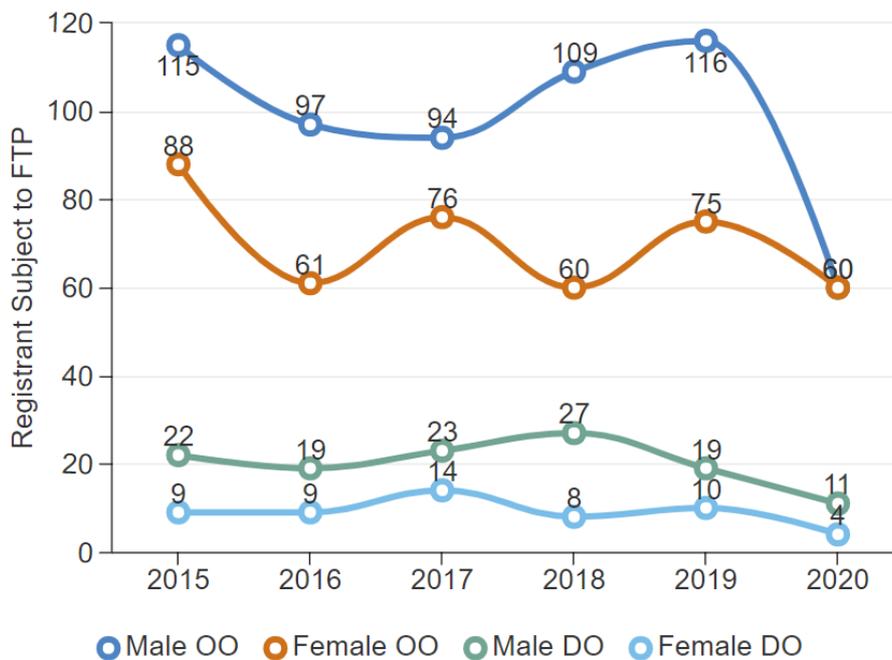
Gender

Excluding business registrants, 42% of complaints were made against male registrants (a decrease from 48% in 2019 and 48% in 2018). 38% of all registrants are male.

Gender profile of complaints for 2017 to 2020

	2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Total complaints	% of total complaints						
Male	155	36%	253	47%	227	47%	127	36%
Female	217	51%	269	50%	231	47%	178	51%
Not known	35	8%	8	1%	14	3%	0	0%
Other (e.g. referred by company)	18	4%	9	2%	16	3%	43	12%
Total	425	100%	539	100%	488	100%	348	100%

Gender profile of registrants subject to an FTP investigation by professional group 2015 to 2020



Gender profile of registrants subject to an FTP investigation by professional group – 31 March 2020

	Total	Male			Female		
		Under investigation	% of Register		Under investigation	% of Register	
Optometrists	120	60	50%	40%	60	50%	60%
Dispensing Opticians	15	11	73%	46%	4	27%	64%
Student Optometrists	5	3	60%	33%	2	40%	67%
Student Dispensing Opticians	6	3	50%	33%	3	50%	67%
All registrants	146	77	53%	38%	69	47%	62%

The gender distribution of registrants subject to FTP investigation is very similar for optometrists, and students.

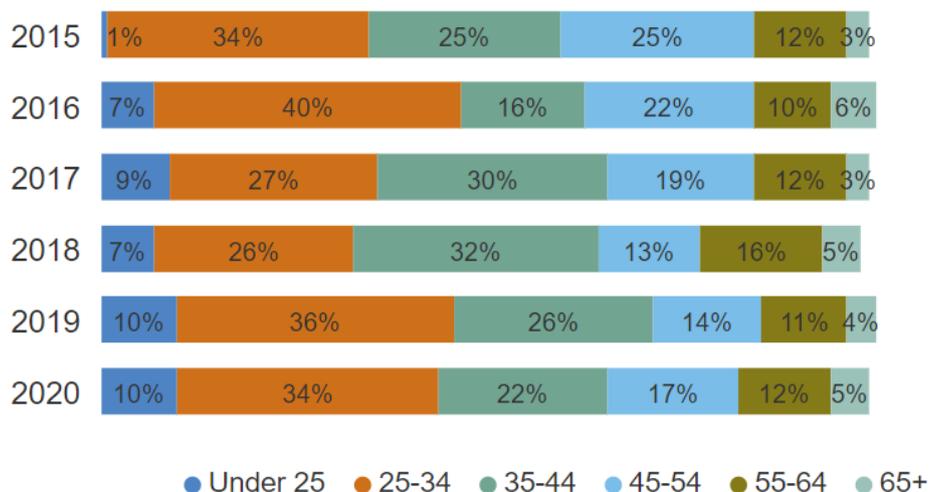
There are 1.1 times more men than women subject to FTP investigation, but there are 1.6 times more women than men on the register. Men, therefore, are 3.5 times more likely than women to be subject to an FTP investigation³.

³ The calculation for this can be found in the appendix on page 59 of this report.

Age

In previous years, the majority of registrants subject to FTP investigation were in the 25-34 age group. From 2017 to 2018 there was a slight change in this trend, as the 35-44 age group received a slightly higher proportion of complaints. 2019 saw a return to the original pattern, with the 25-34 age group subject to most investigations – this year is the same. Combining the two most common age groups, 25-44-year-olds made up 55% of investigations (61% in 2019).

Percentage of investigations opened per age group from 2015 to 2020



The age profile of registrants subject to FTP investigation is consistent over time.

Percentage of investigations opened per age group by professional group from 2015 to 2019

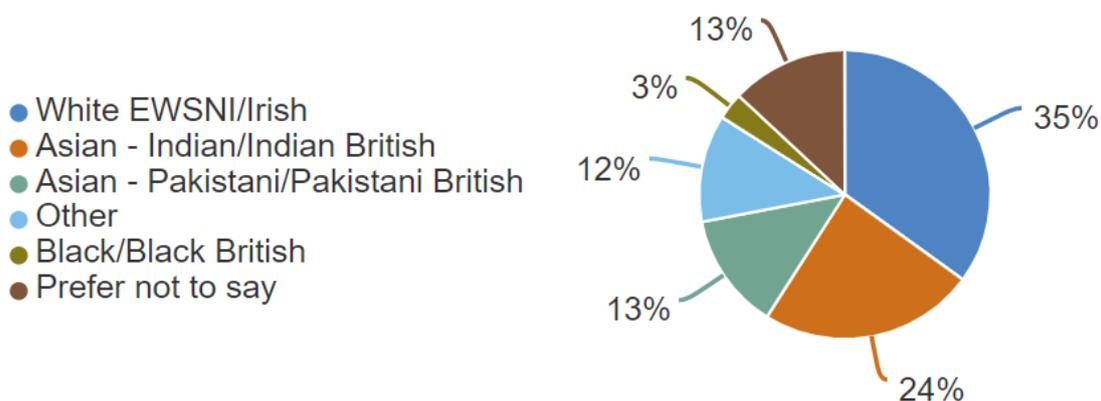
	Under 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+		Total	
Optometrists	8	5%	43	29%	26	18%	22	15%	16	11%	5	3%	120	82%
Dispensing Opticians	1	<1%	4	3%	3	2%	3	2%	2	1%	2	1%	15	10%
Student Optometrists	4	3%	1	<1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	3%
Student Dispensing Opticians	1	<1%	2	1%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6	4%
Total	14	10%	50	34%	32	22%	25	17%	18	12%	7	5%	146	100%

Ethnicity

There is a disproportionate number of Asian Indian / Asian Indian British registrants subject to FTP investigation. This ethnic group makes up 18% of registrants but 24% of registrants subject to FTP investigation. 41% (39% in 2019) of registrants are non-White EWSNI/Irish, but this ethnic group makes up 52% (47% in 2019) of registrants subject to FTP investigation.

There are 1.5 times more non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants than White EWSNI/Irish registrants subject to FTP investigation, but there are 1.2 times more White EWSNI/Irish registrants than non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants on the register. Non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants, therefore, are 1.7 times more likely than White EWSNI/Irish registrants to be subject to an FTP investigation⁴.

Ethnicity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation – 31 March 2020



⁴ The calculation for this can be found in the appendix on page 59 of this report.

Ethnicity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation over the past two years

		Optometrists	Dispensing Opticians	Student Optometrists	Student Dispensing Opticians	All
2019	White	58	16	2	1	77
	EWSNI/Irish	30%	55%	13%	11%	32%
	Non-White	98	7	6	4	115
	EWSNI/Irish	51%	24%	40%	44%	47%
	Prefer not to say	35	6	7	4	52
		18%	21%	47%	44%	21%
Total		191	29	15	9	244
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2020	White	40	9	0	2	51
	EWSNI/Irish	33%	60%	0%	33%	35%
	Non-White	66	4	3	3	76
	EWSNI/Irish	55%	27%	60%	50%	52%
	Prefer not to say	14	2	2	1	19
		12%	13%	40%	17%	13%
Total		120	15	5	6	146
		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

After revisiting past year datasets, we have corrected certain values. The values for DOs, SOs, and SDOs are too small to have any significant meaning.

Ethnicity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation, compared to all registrants – 2019 and 2020

		FTP Registrants	Total Registrants	UK Ethnicity Profile (roughly)
White EWSNI/Irish	2019	32%	49%	87%
	2020	35%	48%	87%
Indian / Indian British	2019	26%	18%	2%
	2020	24%	18%	2%
Pakistani / Pakistani British	2019	17%	9%	2%
	2020	13%	10%	2%
Black / Black British	2019	3%	1%	3%
	2020	3%	2%	3%
Other ethnicities	2019	9%	12%	6%
	2020	12%	12%	6%
Prefer not to say	2019	13%	12%	N/A
	2020	13%	11%	N/A
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

The percentages for the UK profile are based on data given, so there is no 'Prefer not to say' section.

Disability

Fewer than ten registrants referred for an investigation into their fitness to practise report having any disability.

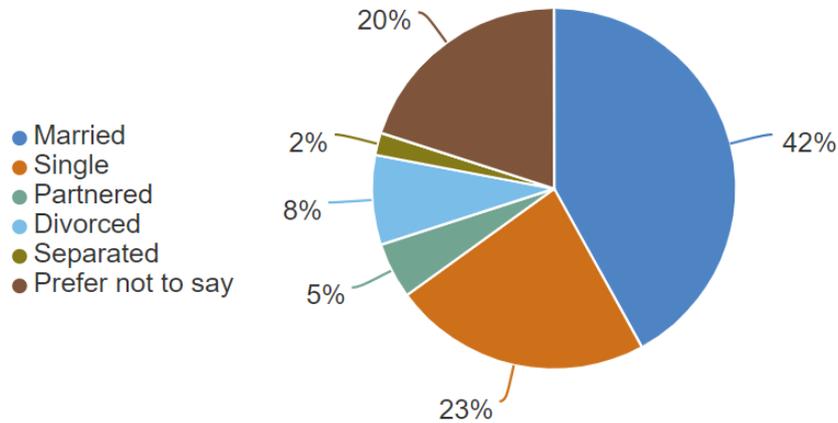
Sexual Orientation

Fewer than ten registrants referred for an investigation into their fitness to practise report having any sexual orientation other than heterosexual.

Marital Status

The marital status of registrants subject to FTP investigation is in line with the marital status of all registrants.

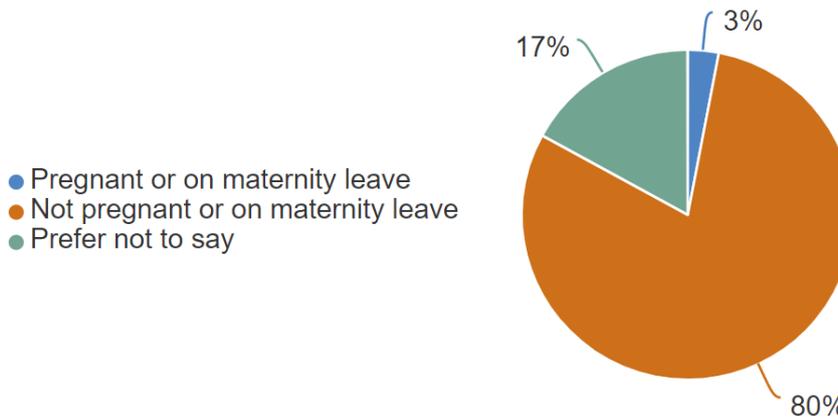
Marital status of registrants referred for FTP investigation – 31 March 2020



Pregnancy and Maternity

The majority of registrants subject to FTP investigation reported that they were not pregnant, nor on maternity/paternity leave. The data for registrants subject to FTP investigation is in line with the register.

Pregnancy and maternity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation – 31 March 2020



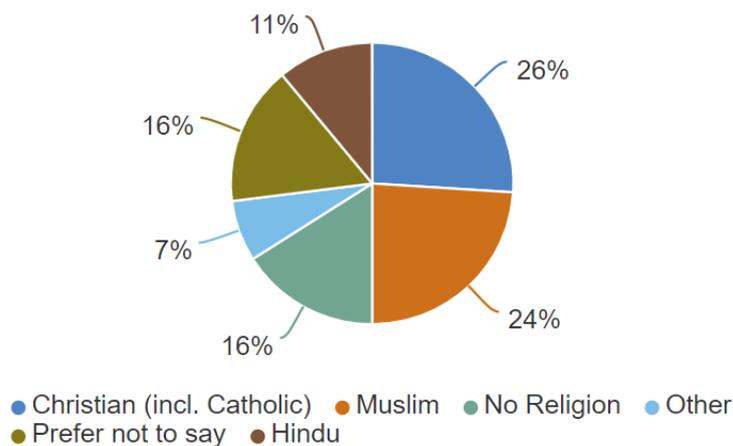
Religion

There is a large disparity regarding Muslim registrants facing FTP investigation: 24% (26% in 2019) of registrants subject to an FTP investigation are Muslim while 18% of all registrants are Muslim (16% in 2019).

Christian (incl. Catholic) registrants make up 28% (29% in 2019) of the register and 26% (27% in 2019) of FTP registrants.

'Hindu + Muslim + Other' registrants make up 34% (32% in 2019) of the register and 42% (45% in 2019) of FTP registrants.

Religious belief profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation – 31 March 2020

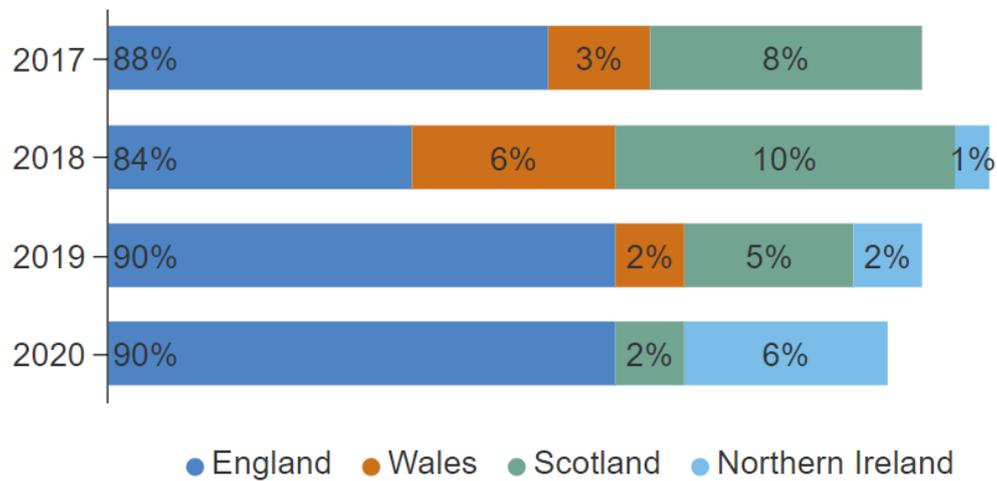


Religious belief profile of FTP Registrants compared to the register for 2018 to 2020

	2018		2019		2020	
	FTP Registrants	Register	FTP Registrants	Register	FTP Registrants	Register
Christian (incl. Catholic)	29%	28%	27%	29%	26%	28%
Hindu	12%	11%	11%	9%	11%	9%
Muslim	18%	12%	26%	16%	24%	18%
Other	10%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%
No religion	15%	25%	13%	23%	16%	23%
Prefer not to say	16%	17%	15%	16%	16%	15%

Location

Location profile of FTP complaints of 2017 to 2019



This year saw a greater concentration of complaints coming from Northern Ireland, with a reduction in complaints from Wales and Scotland.

Fitness to Practise Allegation

About this section

When we receive a complaint about an individual registrant's fitness to practise or a student registrant's fitness to undertake training, we consider the type of allegation. The types of allegation are varied but are categorised into 'clinical', 'conviction/caution', 'conduct', 'health', and 'mixed'. These allegation types are distilled further into sub-categories depending on the nature of the complaint, sometimes containing allegations that are mixed in nature (for example clinical and non-clinical).

Registrant profile

Percentage of allegation types split by professional group – 31 March 2020

	Optometrist		Dispensing Opticians		Student Optometrists		Student Dispensing Opticians		Total
Clinical	66	55%	2	15%	0	0%	0	0%	68
Conduct	22	18%	8	62%	3	60%	1	17%	34
Conviction/caution	15	13%	1	8%	0	0%	5	83%	21
Health	5	4%	1	8%	1	20%	0	0%	7
Mix	12	10%	1	8%	1	20%	0	0%	14
Total	120	100%	13	100%	5	100%	6	100%	144*

*Note: two registrants are subject to allegations about business procedures. The total is therefore 144, not 146.

Gender

Most allegations against men and women are of a clinical nature.

Percentage of allegation types split by gender for 2018 to 2020

	Female						Male					
	2018		2019		2020		2018		2019		2020	
Clinical	44	20%	43	18%	36	25%	78	36%	67	27%	32	22%
Conduct	17	8%	18	7%	15	10%	36	17%	34	14%	19	13%
Conviction/caution	3	1%	9	4%	8	6%	16	7%	26	11%	13	9%
Health	3	1%	5	2%	4	3%	6	3%	5	2%	3	2%
Mix	3	1%	16	7%	5	3%	9	4%	21	9%	9	6%
Total	70	33%	91	37%	68	47%	145	67%	153	63%	76	53%

Note: two registrants are subject to allegations about business procedures. The total is therefore 144, not 146.

Age

The nature of allegations is in line with the age profile of the register.

Percentage of allegation types split by age – 31 March 2020

	Under 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+	
Clinical	4	29%	24	49%	10	31%	16	59%	13	72%	1	17%
Conduct	7	50%	8	16%	9	28%	5	19%	1	6%	4	67%
Conviction/caution	2	14%	9	18%	7	22%	3	11%	1	6%	1	17%
Health	0	0%	2	4%	2	6%	2	7%	1	6%	0	0%
Mix	1	7%	6	12%	4	13%	1	4%	2	11%	0	0%
Total	14	100%	49	100%	32	100%	27	100%	18	100%	6	100%

Note: two registrants are subject to allegations about business procedures. The total is therefore 144, not 146.

Ethnicity

This year, unlike the previous two, non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants have more allegations against every allegation type, than White EWSNI/Irish registrants.

Percentage of allegation types split by ethnicity for 2018 to 2020

		Clinical	Conduct	Conviction/ caution	Health	Mix	All
2018	White EWSNI/Irish	47	18	3	2	1	71
		39%	34%	16%	22%	8%	33%
	Non-White EWSNI/Irish	49	20	8	2	6	85
		40%	38%	42%	22%	50%	40%
	Prefer not to say	26	15	8	5	5	59
		21%	28%	42%	56%	42%	27%
Total	122	53	19	9	12	215	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
2019	White EWSNI/Irish	45	10	12	3	12	82
		41%	19%	34%	30%	32%	34%
	Non-White EWSNI/Irish	52	24	6	4	17	29
		47%	46%	17%	40%	46%	78%
	Prefer not to say	13	18	17	3	8	133
		12%	35%	49%	30%	22%	55%
Total	110	52	35	10	37	244	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
2020	White EWSNI/Irish	27	11	7	2	4	51
		40%	32%	33%	29%	29%	35%
	Non-White EWSNI/Irish	33	18	11	4	8	74
		49%	53%	52%	57%	57%	51%
	Prefer not to say	8	5	3	1	2	19
		12%	15%	14%	14%	29%	13%
Total	68	34	21	7	14	144*	
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

*Note: two registrants are subject to allegations about business procedures. The total is therefore 144, not 146.

Religion

Percentage of allegation types split by religion – 31 March 2020

	Clinical	Conduct	Conviction/caution	Health	Mix	Total
Christian (incl. Catholic)	20	12	4	0	2	38
	29%	35%	19%	0%	14%	26%
Muslim	16	9	7	1	3	36
	24%	26%	33%	14%	21%	25%
Hindu	5	5	1	2	1	14
	7%	15%	5%	29%	7%	10%
Other	4	2	1	1	1	9
	6%	6%	5%	14%	7%	6%
No religion	12	2	4	2	3	23
	18%	6%	19%	29%	21%	16%
Prefer not to say	11	4	4	1	4	24
	16%	12%	19%	14%	29%	17%
Total	68	34	21	7	14	144*
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Note: two registrants are subject to allegations about business procedures. The total is therefore 144, not 146.

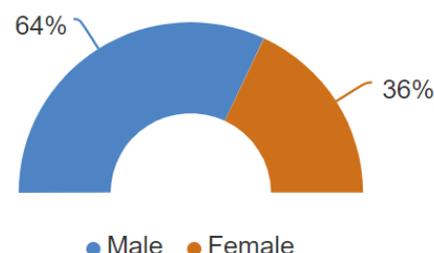
Case Examiner Outcomes

About

Each case is considered by two case examiners (one registrant and one lay person) and they decide whether the allegation should be referred to the FTP committee for a full hearing.

Gender

A smaller percentage of female registrants were referred to the FTP committee than male, which is the same trend seen since 2016.



Percentage of total case examiner outcomes split by gender – 31 March 2020

	Male		Female		Total	
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	115	77%	72	86%	187	80%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	34	23%	12	14%	46	20%
Total	149	100%	84	100%	233	100%

Percentage of total case examiner outcomes split by gender for 2017 to 2020

	Male				Female			
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2017	2018	2019	2020
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	66%	68%	79%	77%	66%	78%	83%	86%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	22%	31%	21%	23%	11%	11%	17%	14%
All case examiner decisions	50	108	114	149	38	73	71	84

Age

More 25-34 year-olds were referred to the FTPC than any other age group. The cases of under 25s and over 65s that were considered by case examiners had a large proportion of registrants being referred to the FTPC, however, this data is not very reliable as the numbers are so small.

Percentage of total case examiner outcomes split by age – 31 March 2020

	Under 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+		Total	
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	9	4%	64	28%	48	21%	30	13%	28	12%	8	3%	187	80%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	6	3%	13	6%	6	3%	8	3%	5	2%	8	3%	46	20%
Total	15	6%	77	33%	54	23%	38	16%	33	14%	16	7%	233	100%

Percentage of total investigation outcomes split by age – 31 March 2020

	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Total
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	60%	83%	89%	79%	85%	50%	80%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	40%	17%	11%	21%	15%	50%	20%
All case examiner decisions	15	77	54	38	33	16	233

Ethnicity

A smaller percentage (6%) of White EWSNI/Irish cases were sent to the FTPC, compared with 20% of non-White EWSNI/Irish cases. This is a similar outcome to that seen in 2019.

Percentage of total case examiner outcomes split by ethnicity – 31 March 2020

	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		Prefer not to say		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	73	39%	85	45%	29	16%	187	100%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	5	11%	21	46%	20	43%	46	100%
Total	78	33%	106	45%	49	21%	233	100%

46% of registrants referred to the FTPC were non-White EWSNI/Irish (compared with 44% in 2019), and 11% were White EWSNI/Irish (compared with 25% in 2019) – the rest (a whole 43%) preferred not to say. This shows a disparity because non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up only 41% of the register.

Percentage of total case examiner outcomes split by ethnicity over the past two years

	White EWSNI/Irish				Non-White EWSNI/Irish			
	2019		2020		2019		2020	
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	60	87%	73	94%	61	79%	85	80%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	9	13%	5	6%	16	21%	21	20%
Total	69	100%	78	100%	77	100%	106	100%

Employees

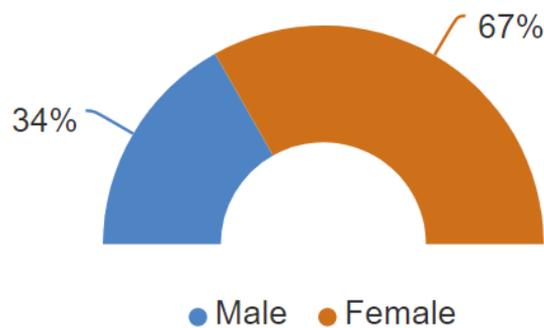
As an employer, we are committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity in our work. Our objective is to behave consistently and fairly to everyone and ensure that we operate in a fair and transparent manner and in a way that is free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

All employees are asked to complete an EDI monitoring form on appointment. The information requested covers only gender, age, ethnicity, and disabilities and is managed by our HR team, who also collate information on maternity and pregnancy and marriage and civil partnership.

Summary of GOC employees (31 March 2020)

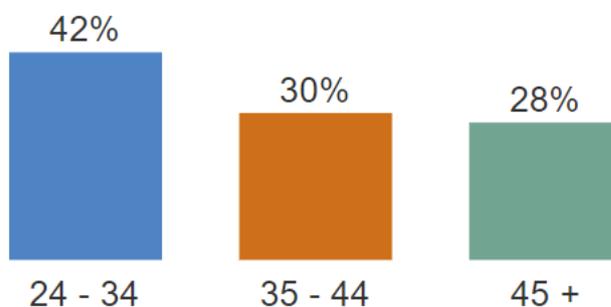
Please note that case examiner data is not included in this data set.

Gender



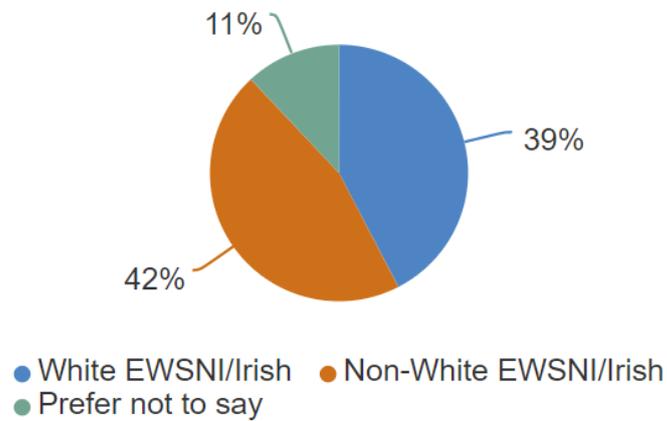
The gender split across all roles remains representative of the overall workforce and is broadly consistent with the past two years.

Age



The largest single group of employees were between 24 and 34 years of age. The second largest group was among those aged 35 to 44. This is similar to the past two years.

Ethnicity



39% of employees reported as White EWSNI (43% in 2019) and 42% non-White EWSNI (32% in 2019), with 19% preferring not to say (24% in 2019), although the high percentage of employees not disclosing their ethnicity reduces the accuracy of this data. London's population is 45% White British.

Pregnancy and maternity/paternity

Fewer than ten employees were on maternity/paternity leave.

Our Members

This section analyses whether the member appointment process attracts applications from a diverse range of people. Members are the members of Council and our Committees, who scrutinise the GOC, providing checks and balances on the organisation to protect the public. Council also sets the vision and strategy of the GOC.

Data

We encourage all applicants for member roles to complete an EDI monitoring form. The data is collected and used solely for the purpose of monitoring and is kept strictly private and confidential at every stage. Within this report, we consider the diversity of candidates for member roles at each stage of the process (from initial applications to final shortlisting). Where there is a small amount of data, which may lead to identification of the individual, it has been aggregated or not published to ensure anonymity.

Data Limitations

An individual's response has been counted twice, for example, if they sit as a member of Council and a committee. This is to provide a fuller picture about the overall make-up of our Council and committees.

Number of members (31 March 2020)

	Total Members	of which there are the following type of members:			
		Council	Lay	GOC Registrant	Other / independent
Council	12	12	6	6	-
Advisory panel	33	5	7	21	-
Investigation committee	5	-	1	3	1
Audit and Risk committee	5	4	3	1	1
Remuneration committee	4	3	2	1	1
Nominations committee	4	3	2	1	1
Hearing panel*	40	-	20	20	-
Education Visitor panel	23	-	7	14	2

* these members are used to form the FTP committee and the Registration Appeals committee

Member Appointment Profile

The data has been drawn into two categories – Lay and Registrant member appointments – due to the different professional backgrounds that the roles attract. The member appointments in the table below are from the period April 2019 to October 2019. Regarding the Hearing Panel campaign, due to legislative change there was an approximate number of members that we set out to recruit; the panel decided to appoint a few extra because the field of candidates was so strong.

Committee	No. of Roles	Stages of the Appointments Campaign			
		All Apps	Longlisted	Interviewed	Appointed
Lay					
Hearing Panel	20	7	-	6	23
Education Visitor Panel	2	28	-	7	2
Council	1	159	43	11	1
	23	194	43	24	26
Registrant					
Education Visitor Panel	6	36	-	16	6
Investigation committee	2	3	-	3	2
	8	39	0	19	8
Other					
Education Visitor Panel	2	0	-	-	-
TOTAL	31	233	43	43	34

Registrant Hearing Panel Campaign

About

For the registrant Hearing Panel campaign, we received a total of 201 applications 150 from Optometrists and 49 from Dispensing Opticians. We did not report on the longlisted dispensing optician candidates, due to the small sample size.

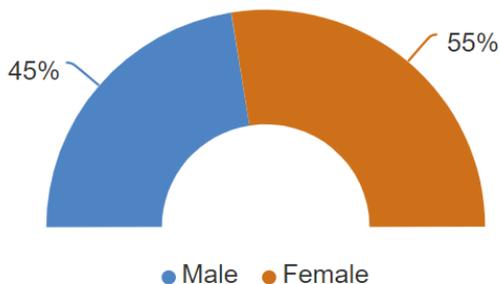
	Optometrist		Dispensing Optician		Total
Number of applications	152	76%	49	24%	201
Candidates longlisted	65	100%	N/A	N/A	65
Candidates interviewed	28	67%	14	33%	42
Candidate appointed	14 (+4 reserves)	70%	6	30%	20

Note: one candidate did not provide consent to use their data for monitoring purposes.

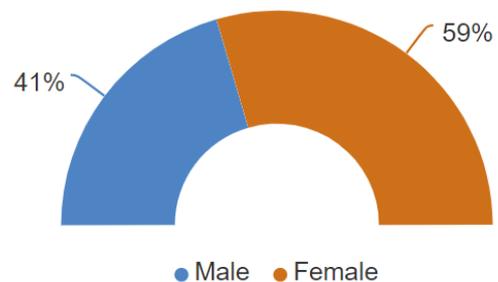
Gender

The graphs below do not take into account 'prefer not to say' due to low figures.

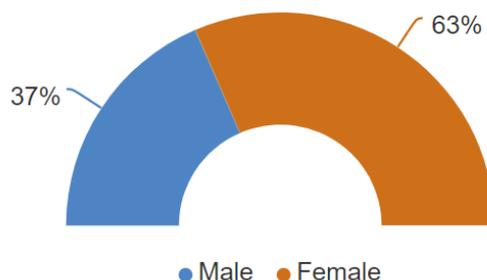
Percentage of total Optometrist applications by Gender



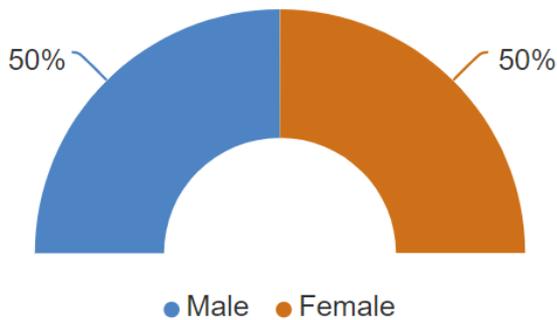
Percentage of longlisted Optometrist candidates by Gender



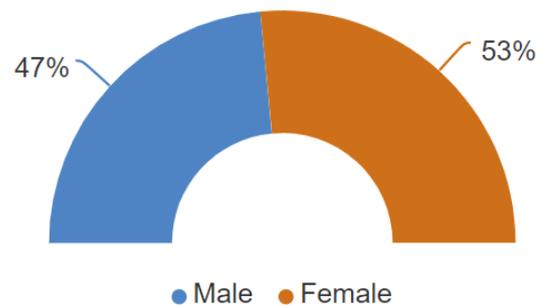
Percentage of shortlisted Optometrist candidates by Gender



Percentage of shortlisted Dispensing Optician candidates by Gender



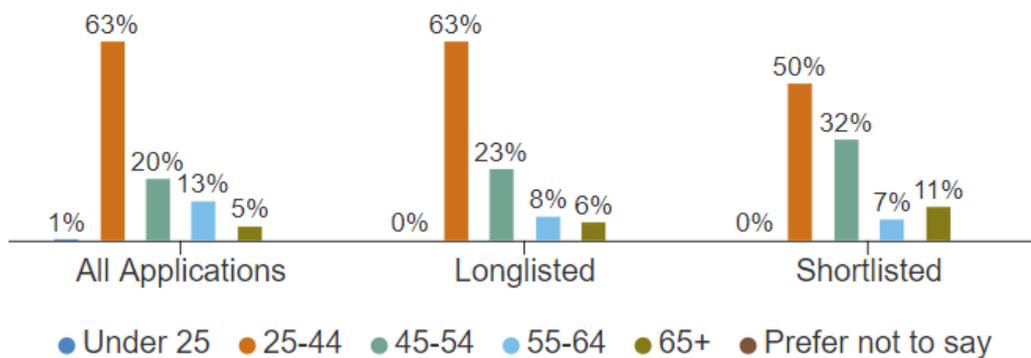
Percentage of total Dispensing Optician applications by Gender



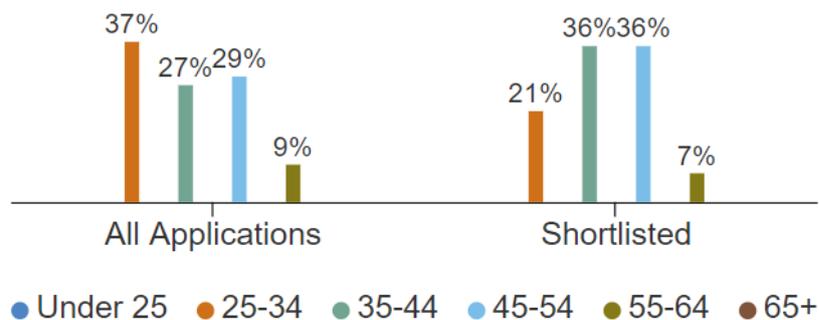
Age

This data does not take into account prefer not to say.

Percentage of Optometrist Candidates at each stage by age



Percentage of Dispensing Optician Candidates at each stage by age



Disability

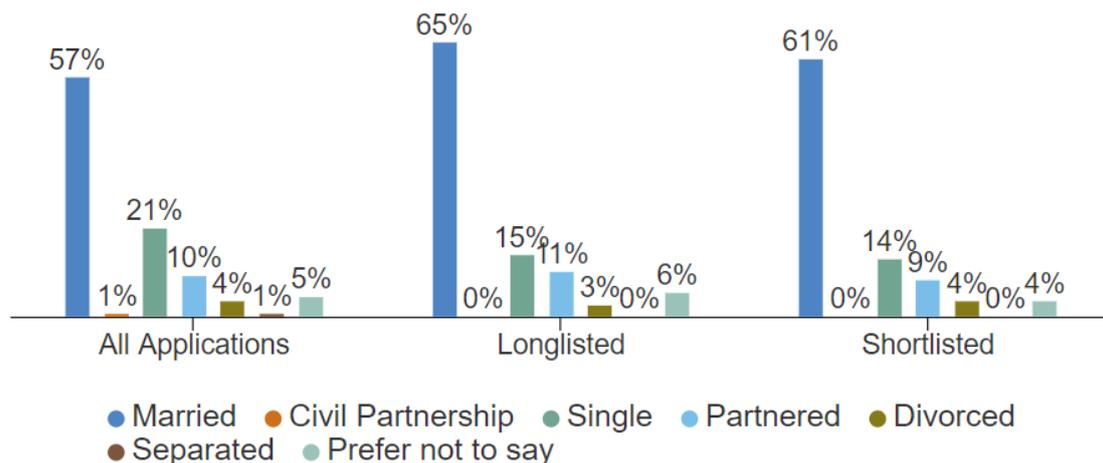
Percentage of Optometrist applications by Disability

	All Applications	Longlisted	Shortlisted
Yes	1%	1%	4%
No	99%	99%	96%
Prefer not to say	0%	0%	0%

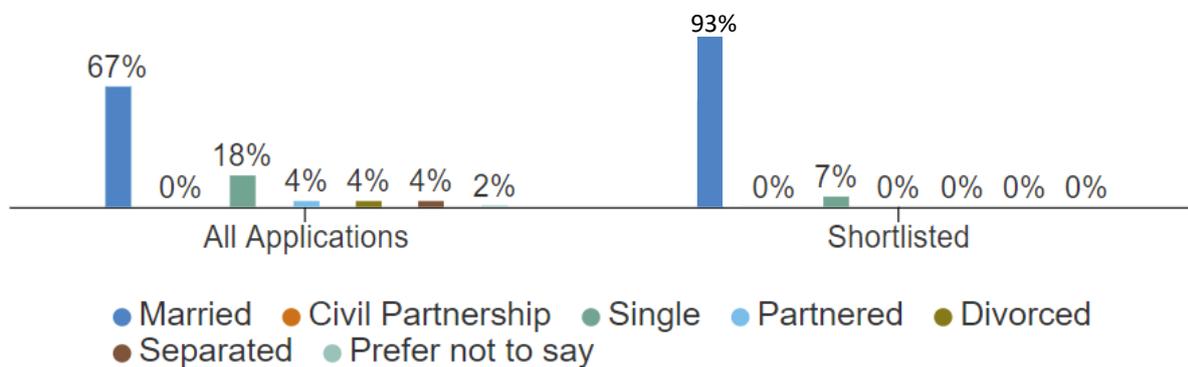
All Dispensing Optician applicants 'No' when asked if they have a disability.

Marital Status

Percentage of Optometrist Applicants at each stage by marital status

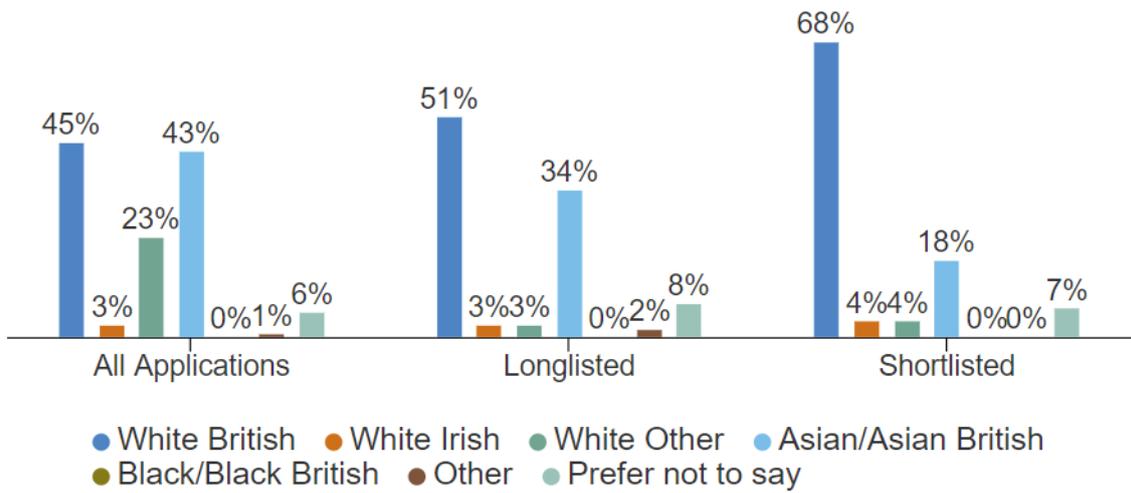


Percentage of Dispensing Optician Applicants at each stage by marital status

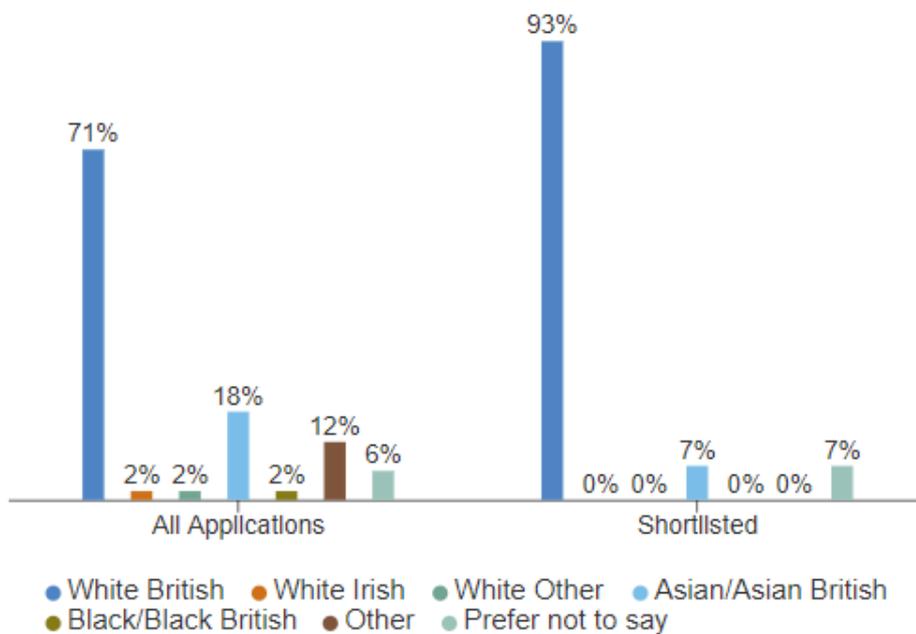


Ethnicity

Percentage of Optometrist Applicants at each stage by ethnicity

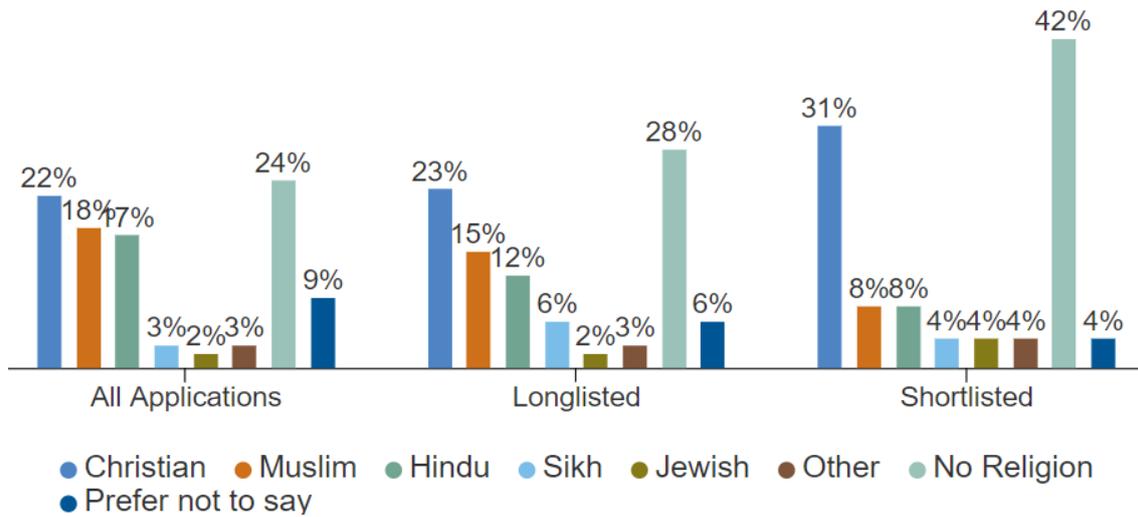


Percentage of Dispensing Optician Applicants at each stage by ethnicity

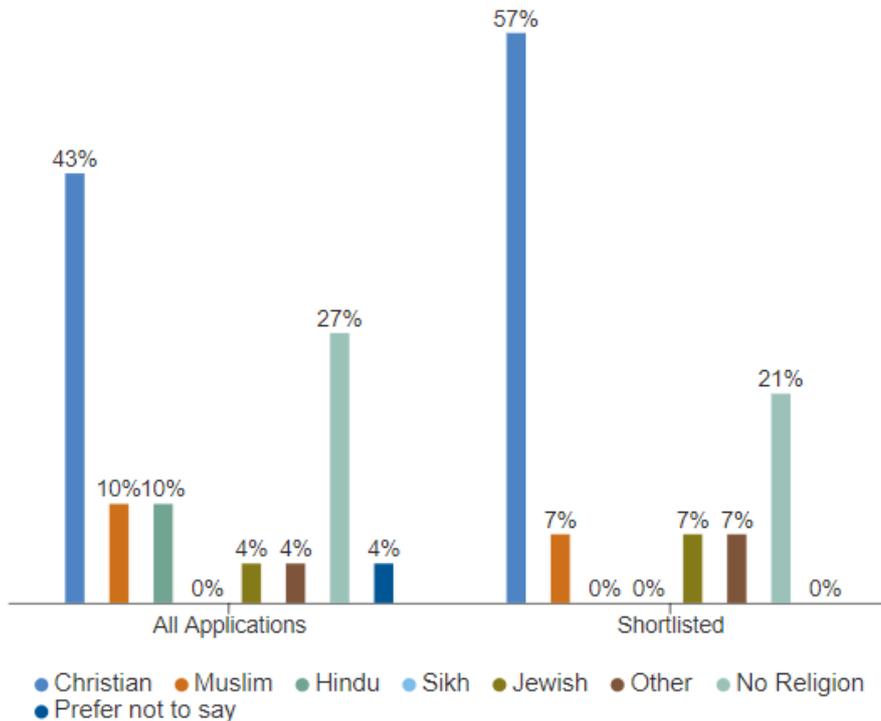


Religion

Percentage of Optometrist Applicants at each stage by Religion

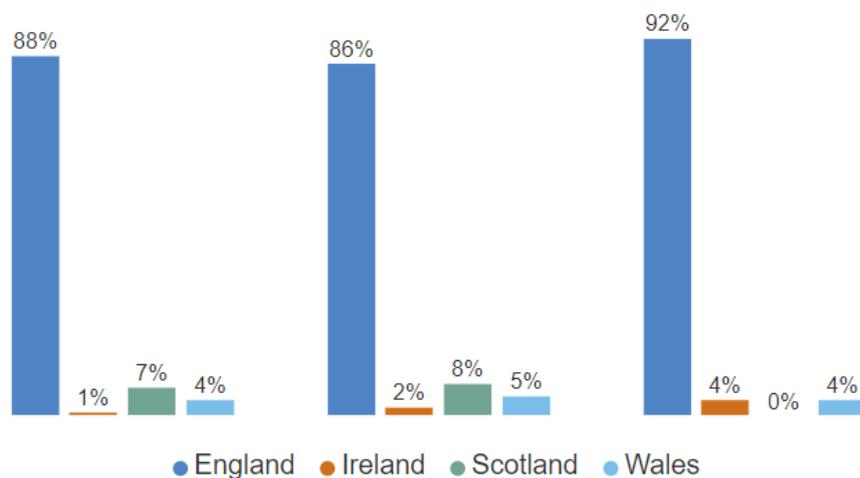


Percentage of Dispensing Optician Applicants at each stage by Religion

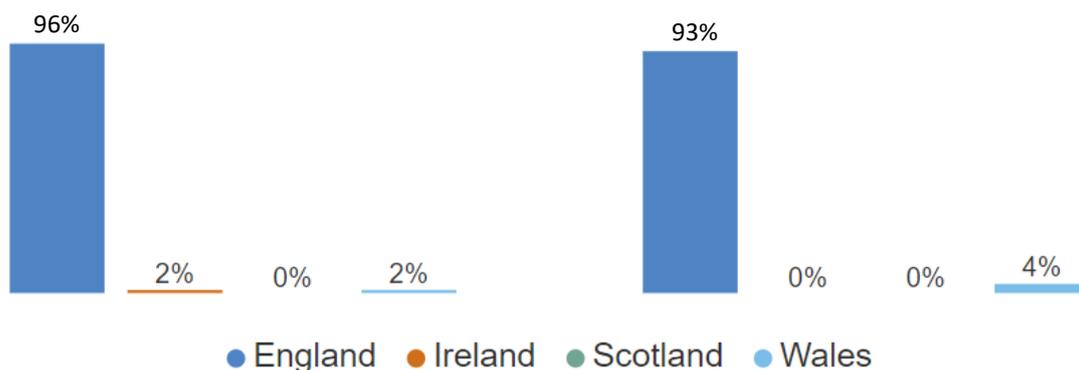


Location

Percentage of Optometrist applicants at each stage by location



Percentage of Dispensing Optician applicants at each stage by location



Gender Reassignment

1% of applicants declared their gender was different from birth.

Maternity

Less than 1% declared that they were pregnant or on maternity leave.

Carer Responsibility

6% declared that they had carer responsibilities.

Sexual Orientation

- 92% declared that they were straight/heterosexual
- 2% declared that they were non-heterosexual
- 6% preferred not to say

Lay Hearing Panel Member Campaign

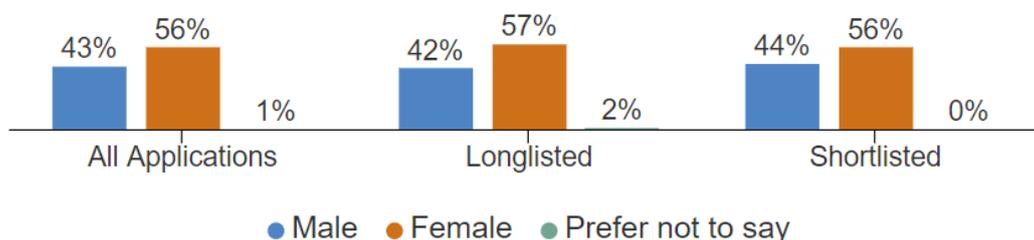
There were 705 applications submitted – five were removed due to ineligibility/ incomplete applications/ withdrew.

	Applicants
Total applications	705
Candidates longlisted	135
Candidates interviewed	55
Candidate appointable	36 (25 appointed + 11 reserves)

Five candidates did not provide consent to use their data for monitoring purposes. The data is therefore based on 695 applications.

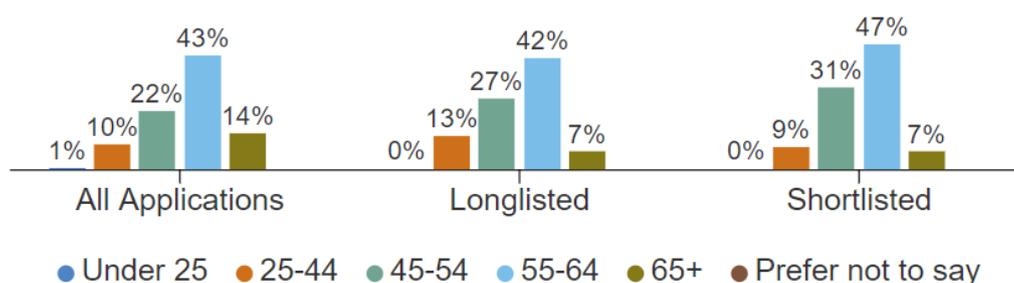
Gender

Percentage of applications at each stage by gender



Age

Percentage of applications at each stage by age



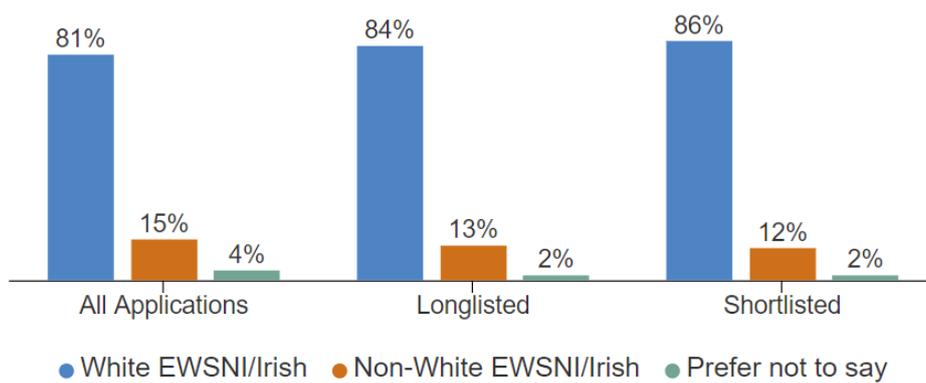
Disability

Percentage of applications at each stage by disability

	All Applications	Longlisted	Shortlisted
Yes	9%	8%	13%
No	90%	90%	86%
Prefer not to say	4%	2%	2%

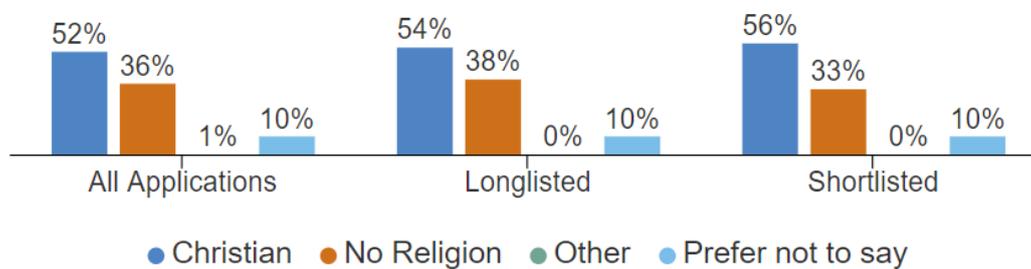
Ethnicity

Percentage of applications at each stage by ethnicity



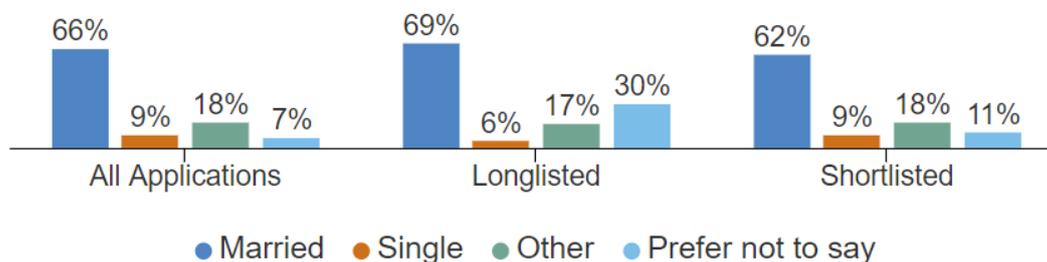
Religion

Percentage of applications at each stage by religion



Marital Status

Percentage of applications at each stage by religion



Location

Percentage of applications at each stage by location

	All Applications	Longlisted	Shortlisted
England	91%	93%	91%
Ireland	0%	0%	0%
Northern Ireland	2%	3%	2%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Scotland	4%	4%	6%
Wales	3%	1%	2%

If you have any questions or feedback about our report, please get in touch with our EDI group at edi@optical.org or call 020 7307 8851.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Calculation of odds ratio of the gender profile of registrants subject to an FTP investigation

Calculation

a = men subject to FTP = 146

b = men not subject to FTP = 10964-146 = 10818

c = women subject to FTP = 69

d = women not subject to FTP = 18009-69 = 17940

$(a/b)/(c/d) = (146/10818)/(69/17940) = 3.508966537$

Therefore, men are 3.5 times more likely to be subject to FTP investigation than women.

Calculation of odds ratio of the ethnicity profile of registrants subject to an FTP investigation

Calculation

a = non-White EWSNI/Irish subject to FTP = 76

b = non-White EWSNI/Irish not subject to FTP = 11882-76 = 11806

c = White EWSNI/Irish subject to FTP = 51

d = White EWSNI/Irish not subject to FTP = 13877-51 = 13826

$(a/b)/(c/d) = (76/11806)/(51/13826) = 1.745167794$

Therefore, non-White EWSNI/Irish are 1.7 times more likely to be subject to FTP investigation than White EWSNI/Irish.

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The GOC is a charity registered in England and Wales (1150137)