General Optical Council

General Optical Council: Equality and Diversity Monitoring Report

Contents

1. Executive summary

1.1. Introduction

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.

We are committed to operating in a fair and transparent manner and in a way that is free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) we have a number of duties that we must carry out and exercise within our public functions. The Act provides protection against discrimination for people on the basis of nine protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; race/ethnicity; religion or belief; gender; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership; and pregnancy and maternity. It also provides the foundations for positive action to advantage some disadvantaged groups.

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 will have a new strategic plan.

1.2. Data

The information in this report is based on our in-house datasets on 31 March 2019. Where possible we have provided data over the last 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.

Due to rounding, percentages may not always to add up to 100 per cent. The totals will vary between 99 and 101 percentage range.

EWSNI means English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish.

1.3. Data limitations

It is important that no sweeping conclusions or assumptions are made on the information presented due to the complexity of factors and variables.

1.4 Progress in 2018/19

We have continued to make good progress against the objectives from our EDI strategy 2017-2020[1]. Key achievements under each of the objectives include:

Learning and development of optical professionals:
o   Completed an impact assessment as part of our Education Strategic Review (ESR) and explored impacts during consultation
o   Completed an impact assessment for business standards, explored impacts during consultation and included an EDI standard in the final document
o   Analysed EDI student data in our education work
o   Incorporated EDI impacts during our Continuing Education and Training (CET) principles consultation
o   MyCET system made more accessible through engagement, consultation and redesign to coincide with new CET cycle

Targeted approach to regulation:
o   Further developed our monitoring capabilities to be able to report and analyse our impact by building our EDI monitoring form into the online process for renewing the registration of our optometrists and dispensing opticians
o   Engaged with external stakeholders, such as other regulators, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and appropriate charities
o   Introduced a new consultation platform, CitizenSpace, to make it easier for stakeholders to engage with our consultations and therefore enable us to understand equality impacts
o   Developed a virtual tour video of the Hearings facility including text and audio, to support all witnesses, particularly those who are vulnerable which is available on our website www.optical.org
o   Developed a strategy for identifying and supporting vulnerable witnesses through the fitness to practice (FTP) process
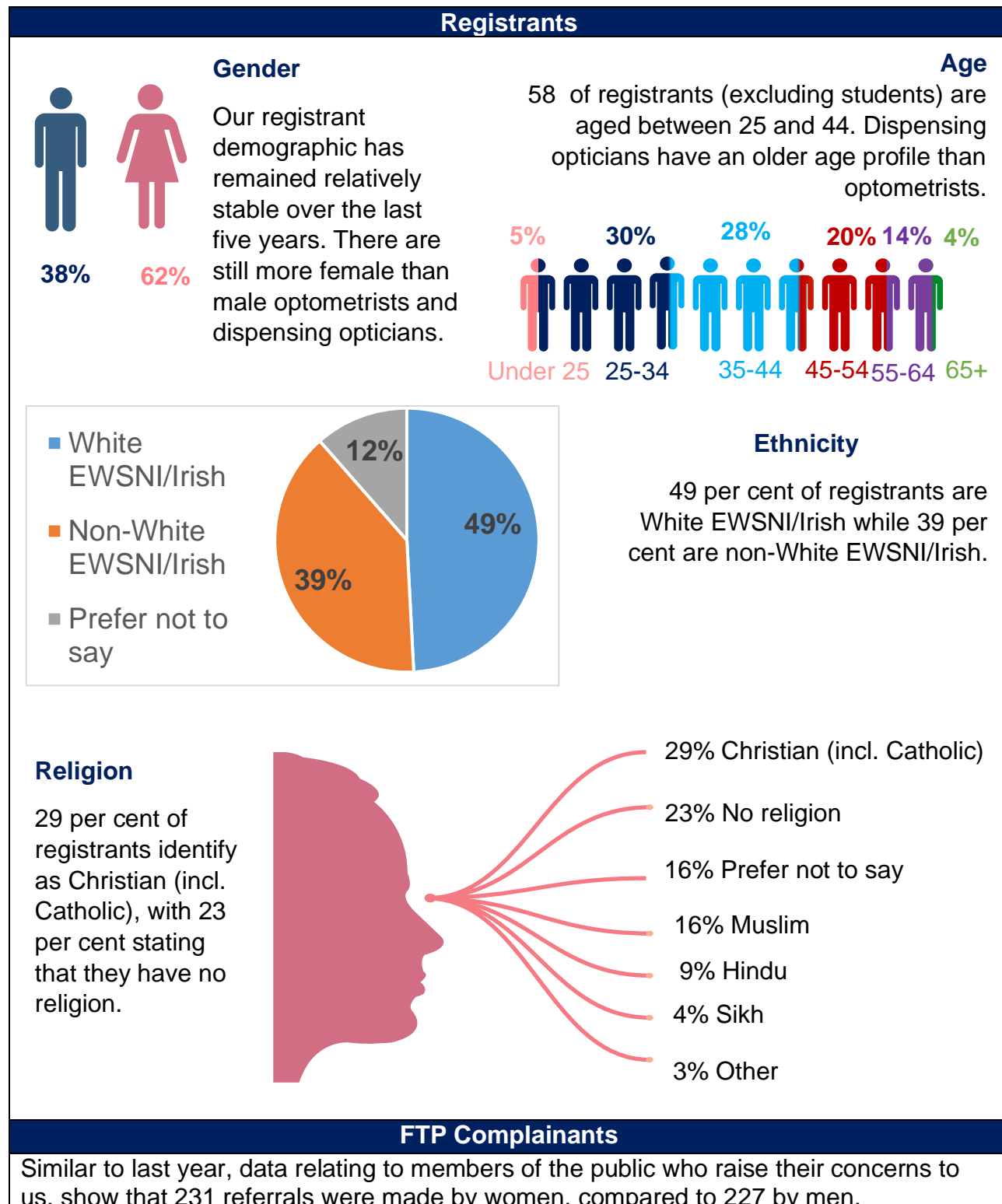
Organisational transformation:
o   Commissioned an independent review of our approach to addressing staff EDI issues and assessed how well the GOC provides a place of work that is safe, supportive and encouraging to all
o   Provided unconscious bias in decision making training for new members and CET approver Chairs
o   Incorporated EDI factors into tendering and contracting arrangements for new CET providers
o   Continued our staff engagement activities, linked to issues arising from the staff survey
o   Continued to work within our Welsh Language Scheme

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[1] https://www.optical.org/filemanager/root/site_assets/edi/edi_strategy_2017-2020.pdf

o   Participation in theinter-regulatory LGBTQ+, disability, and BAME (Black, Asian, and minority ethnic group) groups to promote engagement within healthcare regulators

1.5   Statistics summary

The complexity of contributing factors and variables behind the data means that it is important that no assumptions are made based on the data in this report. Not all data is included in this section (1.5)and more data can be found in sections 4 to 9.
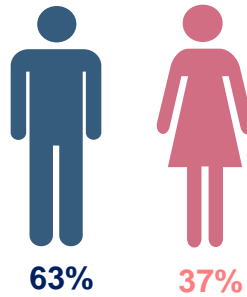
Registrants

Gender

Our registrant demographic has remained relatively stable over the last five years. There are still more female than male optometrists and dispensing opticians.

38% **62%**

Age

58 of registrants (excluding students) are aged between 25 and 44. Dispensing opticians have an older age profile than optometrists.

5% 30% 28% 20% 14% 4%

Under 25   25-34   35-44   45-54   55-64   65+

Ethnicity

49 per cent of registrants are White EWSNI/Irish while 39 per cent are non-White EWSNI/Irish.

- White EWSNI/Irish
- Non-White EWSNI/Irish
- Prefer not to say

12% 49% 39%

Religion

29 per cent of registrants identify as Christian (incl. Catholic), with 23 per cent stating that they have no religion.

29% Christian (incl. Catholic)

23% No religion

16% Prefer not to say

16% Muslim

9% Hindu

4% Sikh

3% Other

FTP Complainants

Similar to last year, data relating to members of the public who raise their concerns to us, show that 231 referrals were made by women, compared to 227 by men.

Registrants subject to FTP

The demographic of registrants receiving FTP allegations has remained fairly similar.

Gender

Of the registrants referred for FTP investigation, 63 per cent were male and 37 per cent were female. This is disproportionate to the profile of our register, and consistent with last year's result.
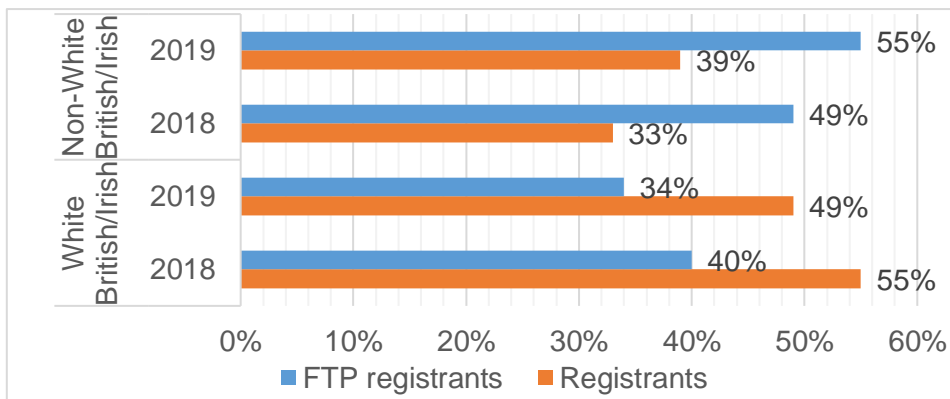
63% **37%**

Professional group

From all four professional groups, a higher proportion of males were subject to FTP investigation.

Age

The age profile of registrants subject to FTP allegations is in line with our register.
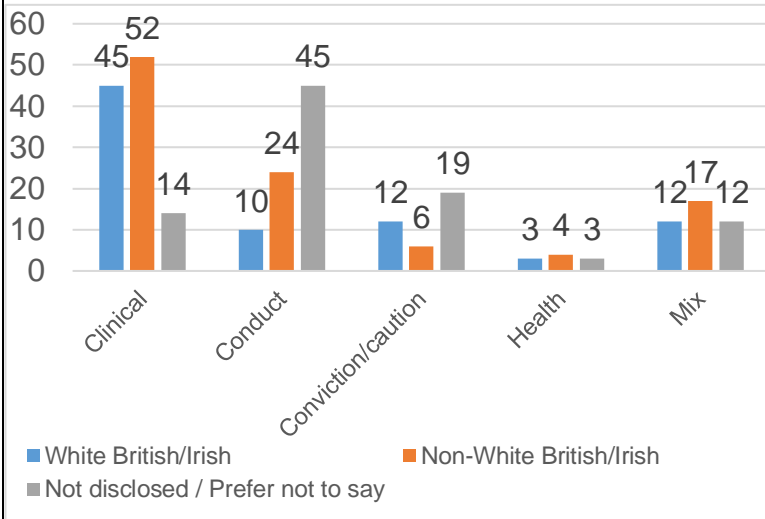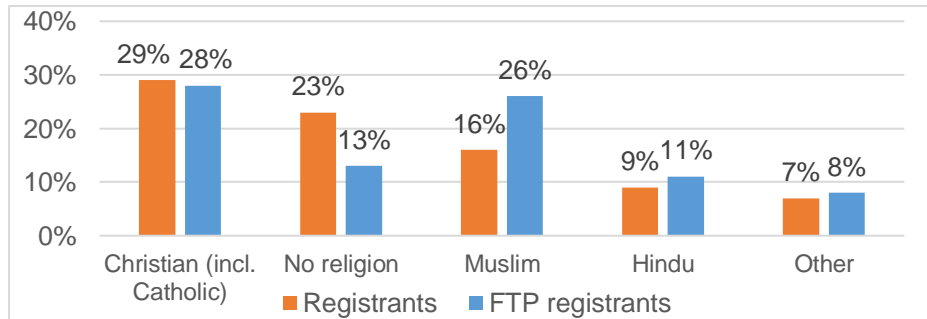
Ethnicity

A disproportionate number of non-White EWSNI/Irish, and especially Pakistani registrants are subject to FTP complaints, compared to our registrant profile.

Bar chart (FTP registrants vs Registrants):

- Non-White British/Irish — 2019: FTP registrants 55%, Registrants 39%
- Non-White British/Irish — 2018: FTP registrants 49%, Registrants 33%
- White British/Irish — 2019: FTP registrants 34%, Registrants 49%
- White British/Irish — 2018: FTP registrants 40%, Registrants 55%

Religion

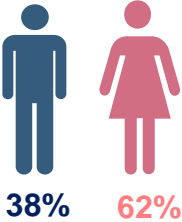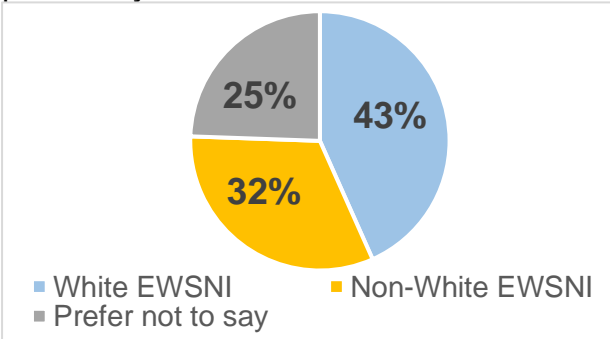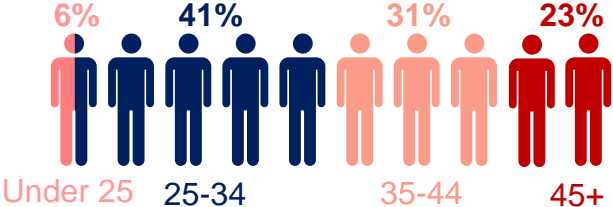A disproportionate number of Muslim registrants are subject to FTP complaints, compared to our registrant profile.
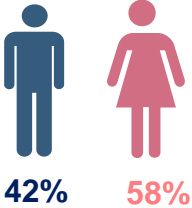

Bar chart (Registrants vs FTP registrants):

- Christian (incl. Catholic): Registrants 29%, FTP registrants 28%
- No religion: Registrants 23%, FTP registrants 13%
- Muslim: Registrants 16%, FTP registrants 26%
- Hindu: Registrants 9%, FTP registrants 11%
- Other: Registrants 7%, FTP registrants 8%
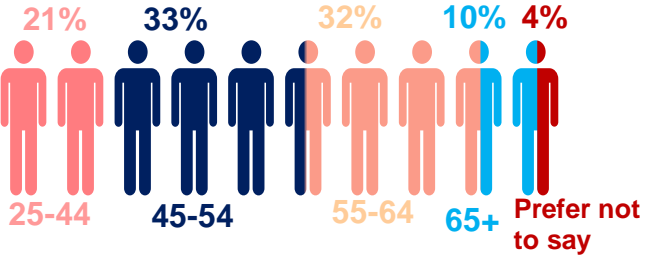
Investigation outcomes

A smaller percentage of female registrants about whom a complaint was received were referred to FTPC (17 per cent compared to 21 per cent male).

Allegation type

Non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up 39% of the register but 44% of referrals to the FTPC. A higher percentage of male registrants were referred to the FTPC.

Bar chart (White British/Irish, Non-White British/Irish, Not disclosed / Prefer not to say):

- Clinical: 45, 52, 14
- Conduct: 10, 24, 45
- Conviction/caution: 12, 6, 19
- Health: 3, 4, 3
- Mix: 12, 17, 12

Employees	Members

Employees

All employees are asked to complete an EDI monitoring form on appointment. The information requested covers gender, age, ethnicity, and disabilities and is managed by our Human Resources (HR) team, who also collate information on maternity and pregnancy and marriage and civil partnership. Our employee demographic has remained relatively stable over the last three years.

Our employees are predominately female. The gender split across all roles remains representative of the overall workforce, although there was an increase in the proportion of male employees in comparison to previous years.

38%   62%

43%   32%   25%

- White EWSNI
- Non-White EWSNI
- Prefer not to say

Our workforce is similar to London's population in relation to ethnicity, with 43 per cent White EWSNI (London 45 per cent).

72 per cent of employees are aged between 25 and 44, a decrease from 77 per cent last year. The majority of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Heads of department are over 35 years old.

6%   41%   31%   23%

Under 25   25-34   35-44   45+

Members

Our member demographic has remained relatively stable over the last three years. The gender profile is fairly evenly split with slightly more female members, this difference is more pronounced in the gender profile of lay members where 69 per cent are female, compared to 56 percent of registrant members. 49 per cent of members are Christian. 82 per cent of members are White.

42%   58%

When considering the different roles:

Education Visitor Panel — 41%

Hearing Panel — 67%

Council — 58%

Our members are primarily from the 45-64 age group (55 per cent).

21%   33%   32%   10%   4%

25-44   45-54   55-64   65+   Prefer not to say

Member appointment:

There were slightly more applications from males for lay roles, with a higher proportion of females being interviewed. With registrant roles, applications were split evenly between males and females, but 61 per cent of interviewees were female.

1.6   2019/20 activities

We have a number of activities that we plan to complete, including:

Learning and development of optical professionals:

o   Complete impact assessments for our Education and CET operational work, Education Strategic Review project, CET Review Programme, and other projects
o   Incorporate EDI factors into the Education Strategic Review project, revised Education Annual Monitoring review process and as part of development of CET exceptional circumstances policy

Targeted approach to regulation:

o   Complete impact assessments for Standards Team operational work, disclosing confidentiality guidance consultation and public sector whistleblowing guidance
o   Explore issues relating to EDI further in our next registrants' survey
o   Develop our monitoring capabilities to be able to further report and analyse our impact
o   Engage with external stakeholders, such as other regulators, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and appropriate charities
o   Improve our FTP EDI analysis, and further develop our longer-term plan to understand how FTP processes impact differently on people of different backgrounds and characteristics, and how we can mitigate these impacts through process adjustments

Organisational transformation:

o   Develop our next EDI strategy as part of our Strategic Plan for 2020
o   Consider how we support visually-impaired members of the public in our activities
o   Complete an EDI impact assessment for our Enquiries Team project
o   Establish a cross-organisation group to review our approach to impact assessments, including considering equality impacts
o   Consider and act on the recommendations of the independent EDI review, including agreeing an EDI action plan
o   Develop a plan to improve leadership on EDI issues
o   Connect the organisations values and behaviours to EDI issues
o   Use collaboration to improve decision-making and promote diversity
o   Put equality at the core of employment and management practices
o   Create safe spaces for staff to talk about fair and equitable treatment
o   Establish a programme of learning and development / professional development to support the EDI action plan and sustain culture change
o   Continue our staff engagement activities, linked to issues arising from our staff survey and EDI action plan
o   Provide unconscious bias training for case examiners, Investigation Committee and Hearing Panel members
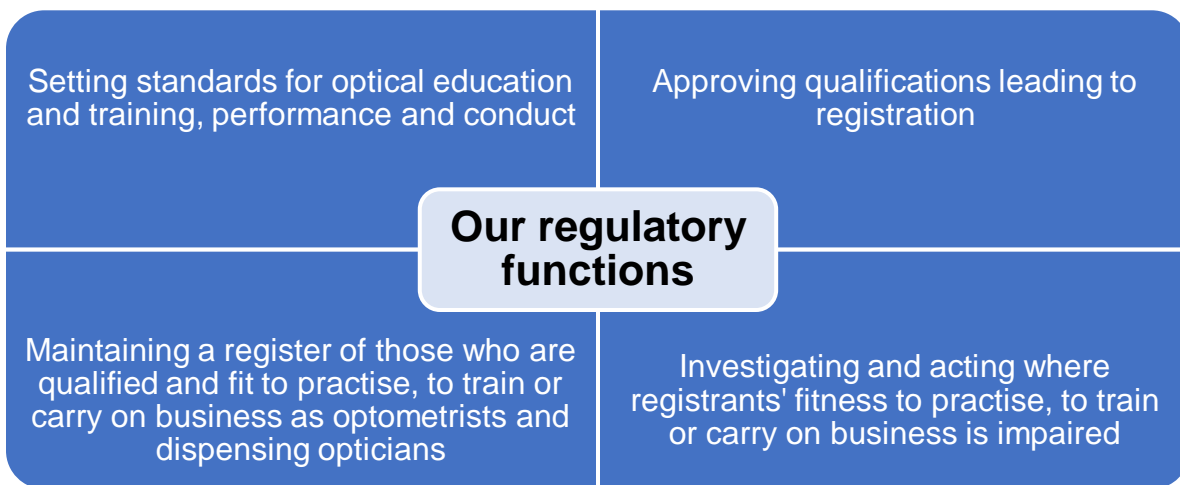o   Report on our gender pay gap in our annual report

1.7. Feedback, comments and suggestions

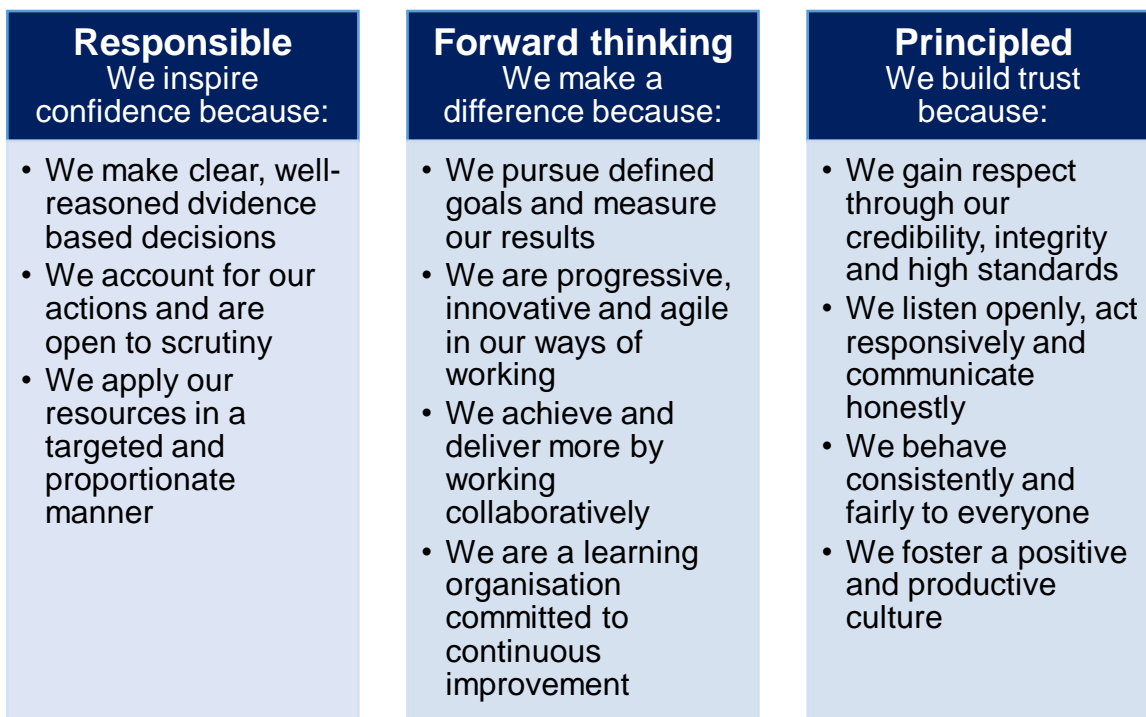We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions from all readers of this report.

Please kindly send any feedback to the Governance and Compliance Team at edi@optical.org or call 020 7307 8851

2.   Who are we?

We are one of 13 organisations in the UK known as health and social care regulators. These organisations oversee the health and social care professions by regulating individual professionals. We currently register around 30,000 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student opticians and optical businesses. We are constituted as a body corporate under the Opticians Act 1989 (as amended). We are registered as a charity by the Charity Commission in England and Wales (charity number 1150137).

Setting standards for optical education and training, performance and conduct	Approving qualifications leading to registration
Our regulatory functions	
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

Our Values

Responsible
We inspire confidence because:

- We make clear, well-reasoned dvidence based decisions
- We account for our actions and are open to scrutiny
- We apply our resources in a targeted and proportionate manner

Forward thinking
We make a difference because:

- We pursue defined goals and measure our results
- We are progressive, innovative and agile in our ways of working
- We achieve and deliver more by working collaboratively
- We are a learning organisation committed to continuous improvement

Principled
We build trust because:

- We gain respect through our credibility, integrity and high standards
- We listen openly, act responsively and communicate honestly
- We behave consistently and fairly to everyone
- We foster a positive and productive culture

3.   Our equality strategy

Our desire to embed and promote EDI within our organisation in line with our organisational commitments and activities is included in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2017-20. We commit to continuously developing our capabilities in this area to meet our legal responsibilities as a public body under 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 and those that do not;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- remove or minimise disadvantages and barriers experienced by people due to their protected characteristics; and
- encourage the participation of people with disabilities in public life or in other activities, particularly where their participation is disproportionately low.

3.1.   Meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act')

The Act came into force on 1 October 2010 replacing previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The Act includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force on 5 April 2011 replacing the separate duties towards race, disability and gender equality.

Under the Act, we have a legal duty as a public body to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and foster good relations between key equality strands of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

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. Alongside our EDI strategy and action plan,[2] this report fulfils our duty under the Act.

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[2] https://www.optical.org/en/about_us/equality-and-diversity.cfm

3.2. Definitions

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

- **Disability** – a limiting long term illness, impairment, or disability
- **EDI** – Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- **Members** – refers to Council and committee members, unless otherwise specified.

3.3. Collated data

This section provides an overview of the data we hold as a result of our EDI monitoring of GOC registrants, employees and members. Where comparisons with the England and Wales population have been made, this information was taken from the 2011 ONS[3].

Registrants
The data was extracted from our system on 31 March 2019 for fully qualified optometrists, dispensing opticians, and student registrants. This date is the start of the fully-qualified professional's year (1 April – 31 March), and in the middle of a student's year (which runs from 1 September to 31 August). We have 100 per cent of age and gender data. The analysis of all other protected characteristics relates to the 98 per cent of optometrists, dispensing opticians, and students who provided data. Data on registrants referred for an FTP investigations was extracted from our system on 31 March. We have 100 per cent of age and gender data. The analysis of all other protected characteristics relates to the 89 per cent of optometrists, dispensing opticians, and students registrants referred for an FTP investigations who provided data.

Employees
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. This information was extracted on 31 March 2019 for the purpose of this report.

Members
All applicants for Council and committee member vacancies are asked to complete an EDI monitoring form which became mandatory from June 2017. Data on members and applicants for member roles was extracted from our confidential database on 31 March 2019 for the purpose of this report.

Additional comments regarding the data
We understand that some people may not wish to disclose their personal details for the purpose of diversity monitoring, and that data included in this report is the data that individuals have felt comfortable in disclosing. Due to rounding, percentages may not always to add up to one hundred per cent. The totals will vary between 99 and 101 percentage range. It is important that no sweeping conclusions or assumptions are made on the following data due to the complexity of factors and variables.

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[3] www.ons.gov.uk
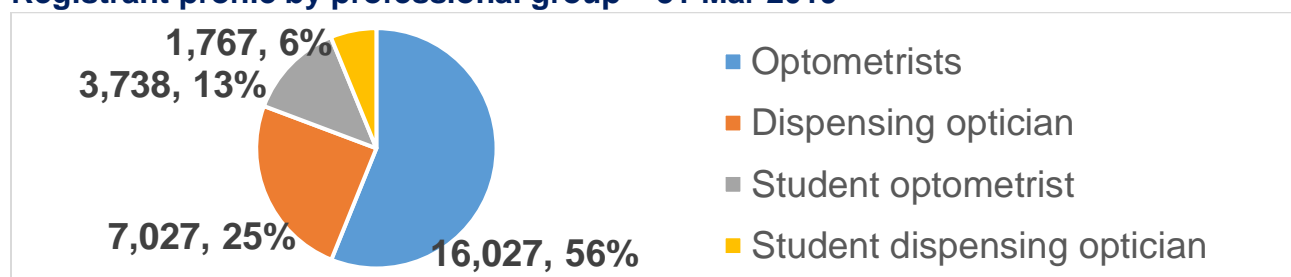
4. Our Registrants

4.1 Registrant Profile

At 31 March 2019, we had 28,559 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student optometrists, and student dispensing opticians on our registers (these figures include fewer than 150 people who appear on two registers). Of these, 56 per cent are optometrists, 25 per cent are dispensing opticians, and 19 per cent are students. The structure of our register has remained stable during the last five years.

Registration profile by professional group from 2015 to 2019

	March 2015	March 2016	March 2017	March 2018	March 2019	1-yr % change	5-yr % change
Optometrists	14,354	14,767	15,141	15,764	**16,027**	+1.7%	+11.7%
Dispensing opticians	6,430	6,527	6,600	6,760	**7,027**	+3.9%	+9.3%
Student optometrists					**3,738**		
Student dispensing opticians	5,903	5,264	5,465	5,062	**1,767**	+8.8%	-7.2%
All registrants	**26,687**	**26,558**	**27,206**	**27,586**	**28,559**	**+3.5%**	**+7%**

Registrant profile by professional group – 31 Mar 2019

1,767, 6%
3,738, 13%
7,027, 25%
16,027, 56%

- Optometrists
- Dispensing optician
- Student optometrist
- Student dispensing optician

4.2 Gender

At 31 March 2019, 62 per cent of all registrants were female and 38 per cent male. This compares with the UK population where 51 per cent is female and 49 per cent male. Over the last four years the proportion of female and male registrants has remained fairly stable across both fully-qualified roles.

Registrant gender profile – 31 March 2019

	Male			Female		
	Total registrants	% of register	% of registrant type	Total registrants	% of register	% of registrant type
Optometrists	6,524	23%	41%	9,503	33%	59%
Dispensing opticians	2,587	9%	37%	4,440	16%	63%
Student optometrist	1,235	4%	33%	2,503	9%	67%
Student dispensing optician	546	2%	31%	1,221	4%	69%
All registrants	**10,892**	**38%**		**17,667**	**62%**	

Registrant gender profile over the last five years (excluding students)

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

Registrant gender profile between 2013 and 2019 by professional group

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Male OO	44%	43%	43%	43%	42%	41%	41%
Female OO	56%	57%	57%	57%	58%	59%	59%
Male DO	42%	39%	39%	39%	38%	37%	37%
Female DO	58%	61%	61%	61%	62%	63%	63%
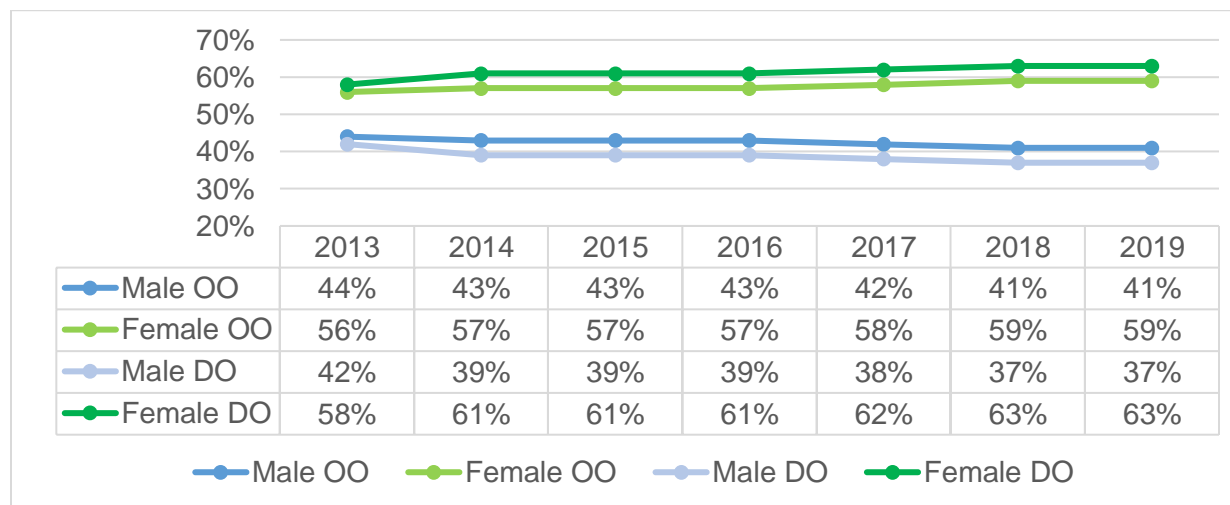
Specialty Registrant gender profile

	Contact Lens Specialty	%	Independent Prescribing Specialty	%	Additional Supply Specialty	%	Supplementary Prescribing Specialty	%
Female	349	68%	427	58%	435	57%	429	58%
Male	161	32%	315	42%	323	43%	314	42%
Total	**510**		**742**		**758**		**743**	

There are more female than male registrants on all four of the specialty registers.

4.3   Age

These ages are taken as of 31 March 2019. 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
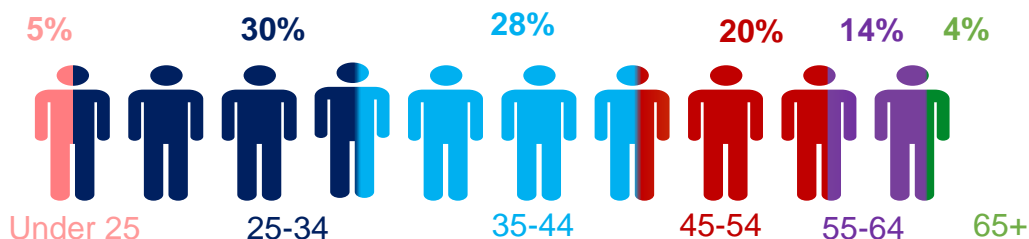
There is a higher proportion of optometrists than dispensing opticians aged below 35. For the 35-44 age group, there is almost no difference in proportion between the two categories. Between 45-64 years old, there is a higher percentage of dispensing opticians than optometrists. This is consistent with last year's data.

Registrant age profile by professional group – 31 March 2019

	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Optometrist	6%	32%	28%	18%	13%	4%
Dispensing optician	2%	24%	28%	24%	18%	3%
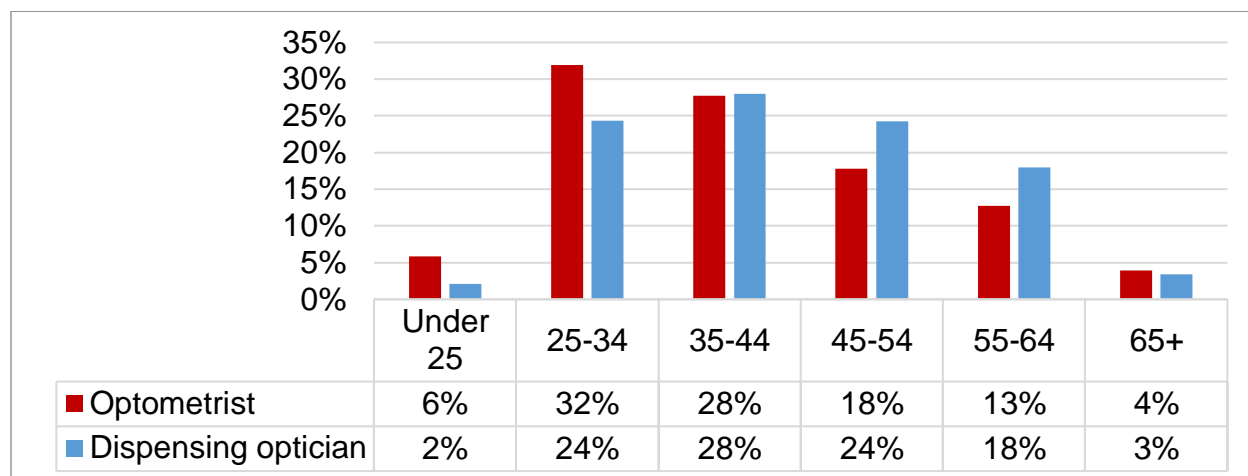
Student Registrant age profile by professional group – 31 March 2019

	Student optometrist		Student dispensing optician		Total	
Under 20	701	13%	108	2%	809	15%
20-24	2,418	44%	628	11%	3,046	55%
25-30	404	7%	583	11%	987	18%
31-40	162	3%	328	6%	490	9%
41+	53	1%	120	2%	173	3%
Total	3738	68%	1767	32%	5,505	

Specialty age profile – 31 March 2019

The 35-44 age group is the most popular among all the specialties. The further away you move from this age group, the smaller the number of registrants.

	Contact Lens Specialty	%	Independent Prescribing Specialty	%	Additional Supply Specialty	%	Supplementary Prescribing Specialty	%
Under 25	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
25-34	93	18%	214	30%	212	28%	214	30%
35-44	226	44%	264	36%	268	35%	263	35%
45-54	111	22%	174	24%	179	24%	173	23%
55-64	63	12%	81	11%	88	12%	83	11%
65+	15	3%	9	1%	11	2%	10	1%
Total	510		742		758		743	

4.4   Ethnicity

The ethnicity of our registrants is diverse, with 48 per cent being White (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Irish), in comparison to the UK (82 per cent). This has reduced from 58 per cent in 2018. The second largest registrant group is Indian/Indian British (18 per cent) in comparison to the UK (2.3 per cent). A total of 39 per cent of registrants are non-White EWSNI/Irish in comparison to the UK (13 per cent), which has increased from 33 per cent in 2018.

Registrant ethnicity profile – 31 Mar 2019
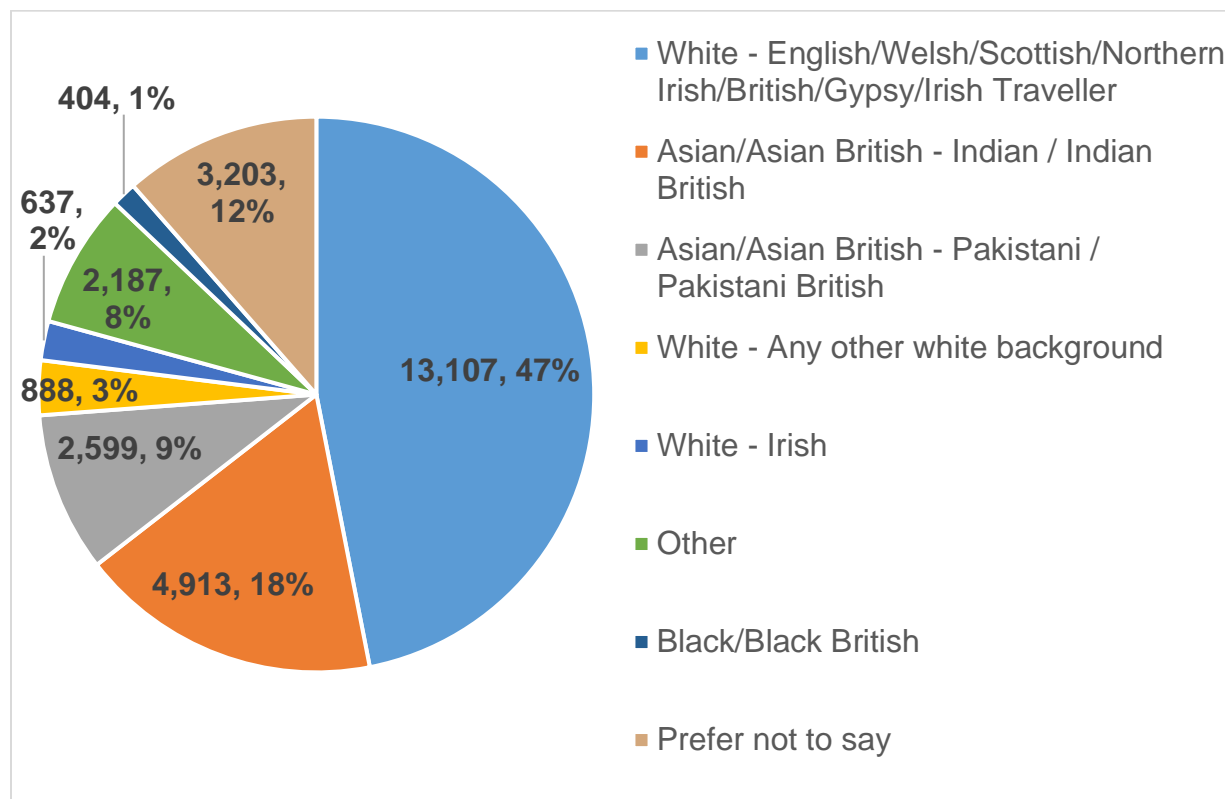
Registrant ethnicity profile over the last two years (excluding students)

	2018				2019			
	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish	
Optometrists	6,538	34%	5,379	28%	7,338	32%	6,665	29%
Dispensing Opticians	3,983	21%	971	5%	4,775	21%	1,271	6%
Total	10,521	55%	6,368	33%	12,113	56%	7,936	32%

Proportionately, non-White EWSNI/Irish optometrists make up a higher percentage of registrants when compared to dispensing opticians. This is largely due to the number of Asian optometrists on our register, who make up 35 per cent of optometrists (increased from 29 per cent in 2018). This is compared to the 13 per cent of dispensing opticians who are Asian (increased from 10 per cent in 2018). This trend is likely to continue to increase as 72 per cent of student optometrists are non-White EWSNI/Irish.

Registrant ethnicity profile 2019 (including students)

|	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		Prefer not to say	
Optometrists	7,338	46%	6,665	42%	1,949	12%
Dispensing Opticians	4,775	69%	1,271	18%	903	13%
Student Optometrists	752	21%	2,519	72%	231	7%
Student Dispensing Opticians	872	57%	543	35%	120	8%
All registrants	**13,737**	**49%**	**10,998**	**39%**	**3,203**	**11%**

Specialty Registrant ethnicity profile

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	%
Contact Lens Specialty	337	12%	105	4%	66	2%
Independent Prescribing Specialty	470	17%	202	7%	70	3%
Additional Supply Specialty	477	17%	206	7%	75	3%
Supplementary Prescribing Specialty	468	17%	204	7%	71	3%
Total	**1,752**	**64%**	**717**	**26%**	**282**	**10%**

4.5 Disability

Registrant disability profile – 31 Mar 2019
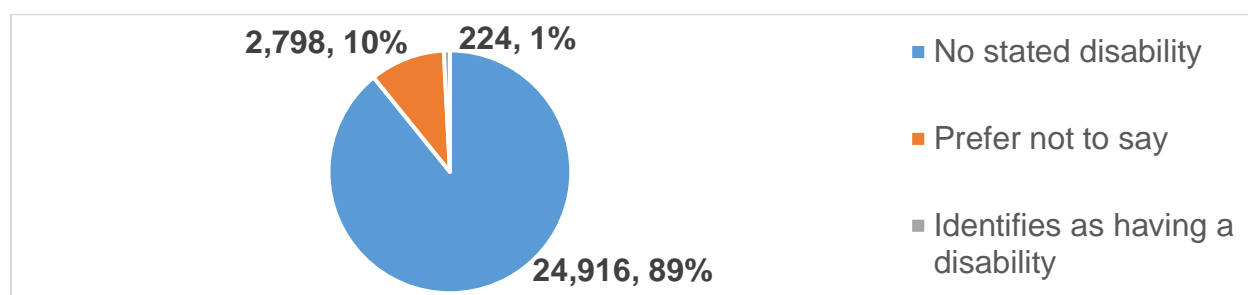
Less than one per cent of all registrants identify as having a disability, which is consistent across optometrists, dispensing opticians, and students, and is consistent with 2018. In the UK, 16 per cent of working age adults identify as having disabilities, of which 46.3 per cent are in employment.

Registrant disability profile over the last two years (2018 data does not include students)

	2018		2019	
Identifies as having a disability	148	1%	**224**	**1%**
No stated disability	17,134	89%	**24,916**	**89%**
Prefer not to say	1,949	10%	**2,798**	**10%**

4.6   Sexual Orientation

The majority of registrants reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual. Two per cent reported a different sexual orientation, which is consistent across optometrists, dispensing opticians, and students, and is consistent with 2018. The majority of the UK population (93.5 per cent) report they are heterosexual or 'straight', with 1.1 per cent reporting to be 'gay' or 'lesbian', and 0.4 per cent reporting to be bisexual.

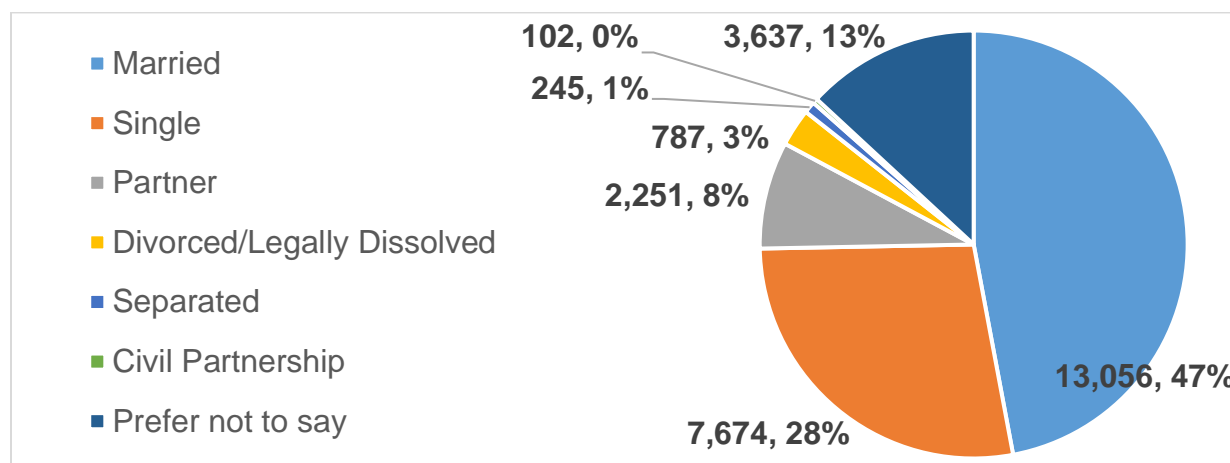**Registrant sexual orientation profile – 31 Mar 2019**

| Heterosexual/Straight | Gay/Lesbian/Homosexual | Bisexual | Other | Prefer not to say |

23,260, 83% — Heterosexual/Straight
313, 1% — Gay/Lesbian/Homosexual
191, 1% — Bisexual
76, 0% — Other
4,098, 15% — Prefer not to say
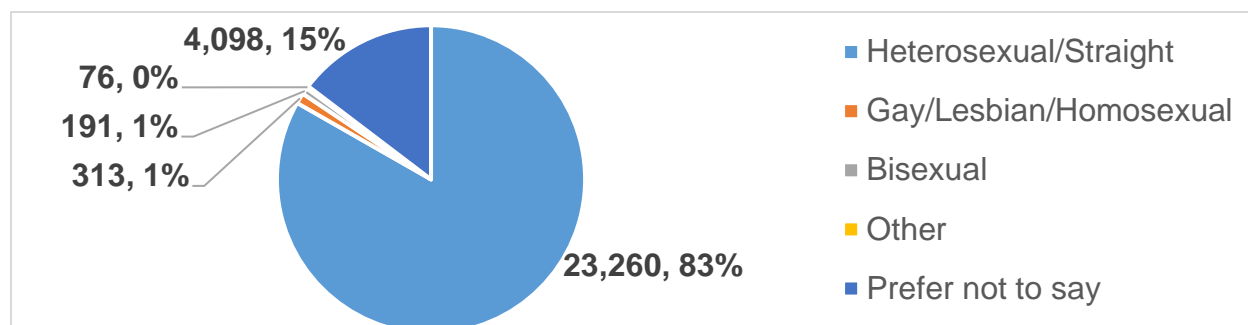
Registrant sexual orientation profile over the last two years (2018 data does not include students)

	2018		2019	
Heterosexual/straight	15,971	83%	**23,260**	**83%**
Gay/lesbian/homosexual	213	1%	**313**	**1%**
Bisexual	112	1%	**191**	**1%**
Other	40	0%	**76**	**0%**
Prefer not to say	2,892	15%	**4,098**	**15%**

4.7   Marital Status

47 per cent of all registrants are married, which is slightly lower than the 2018 profile (56 per cent). However, in 2018 we were not able to include student data, which accounts for this difference. This is in line with the UK, where the marriage rate is 51.5 per cent.

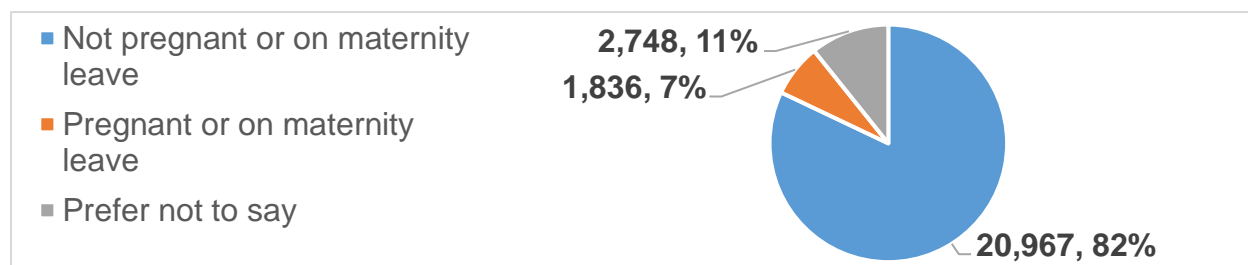**Registrant marital status profile – 31 Mar 2019**

| Married | Single | Partner | Divorced/Legally Dissolved | Separated | Civil Partnership | Prefer not to say |

102, 0%
245, 1%
787, 3%
2,251, 8%
3,637, 13%
13,056, 47%
7,674, 28%

Registrant marital status profile over the last two years (2018 data does not include students)

	2018		2019	
Married	10,751	56%	**13,056**	**47%**
Single	3,197	28%	**7,674**	**28%**
Partner	1,648	8%	**2,251**	**8%**
Divorced/Legally Dissolved	652	3%	**787**	**3%**
Separated	177	1%	**245**	**1%**
Civil Partnership	88	0%	**102**	**0%**
Prefer not to say	2,600	13%	**3,637**	**13%**

4.8 Pregnancy and Maternity

Seven per cent of all registrants were either pregnant or were on maternity leave, a slight decrease from 8 per cent in 2018.

Registrant pregnancy and maternity profile – 31 Mar 2019

- Not pregnant or on maternity leave
- Pregnant or on maternity leave
- Prefer not to say

2,748, 11%
1,836, 7%
20,967, 82%

4.9 Religion Registrant religion profile – 31 Mar 2019

- Christian (inc. Catholic)
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Sikh
- Jewish
- Any other religion / faith
- Buddhist
- No religion
- Prefer not to say

8222, 29%
4521, 16%
2631, 9%
1162, 4%
292, 1%
324, 1%
135, 1%
6337, 23%
4314, 16%
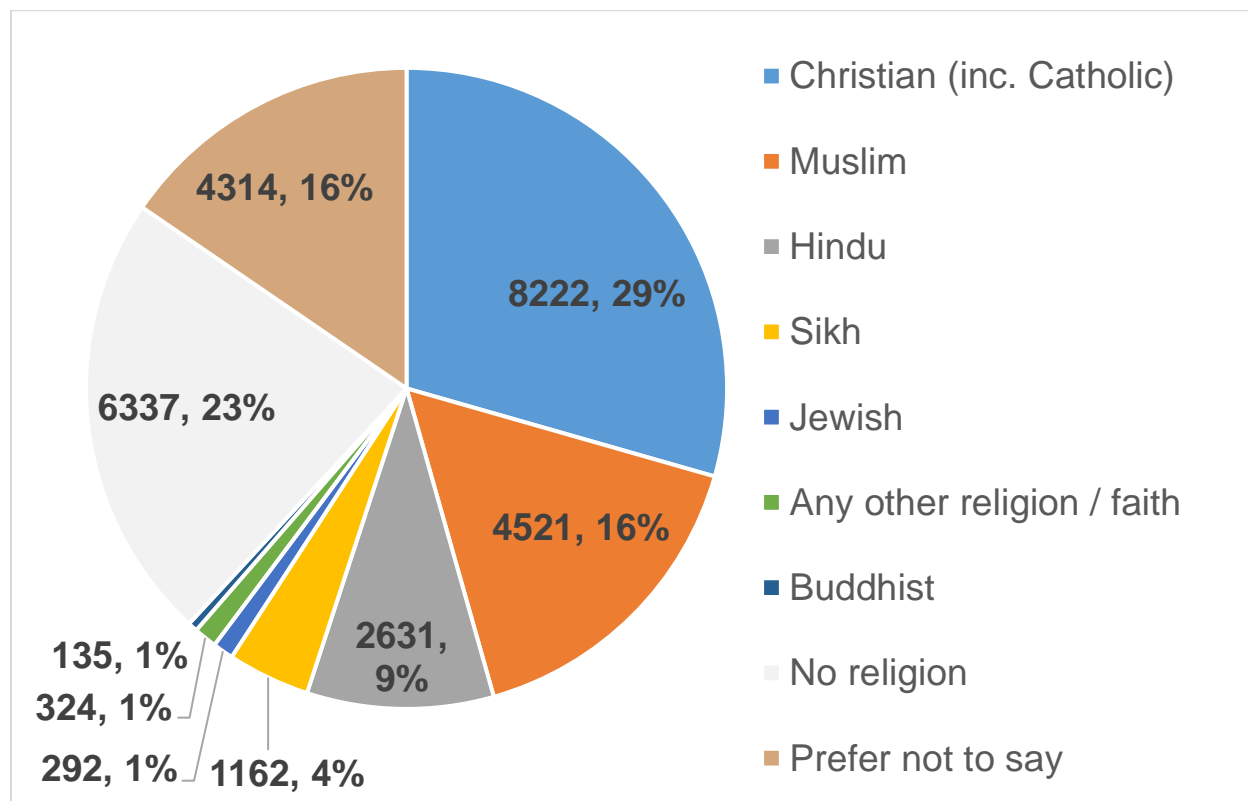
The most common religion that registrants belong to is Christianity (incl. Catholicism) – 29 per cent (34 per cent in 2018). In comparison, 60 per cent of the UK is Christian (incl. Catholic). The next largest groups are Islam – 16 per cent (11 per cent in 2018) compared to 4 per cent of the UK population, and Hinduism – 9 per cent (10 per cent in 2018) compared to 1 per cent of the UK population. 23 per cent hold no religious allegiance (same as 2018), compared to 26 per cent of the UK population.

Registrant religious profile over the last two years (2018 without students)

	2018		2019	
Christian (incl. Catholic)	4,864	28%	**8,222**	**29%**
Muslim	2,058	12%	**4,521**	**16%**
Hindu	1,858	11%	**2,631**	**9%**
Sikh	819	5%	**1,162**	**4%**
Jewish	252	1%	**292**	**1%**
Any other religion / faith	248	1%	**324**	**1%**
Buddhist	90	1%	**135**	**1%**
No religion	4,394	25%	**6,337**	**23%**
Prefer not to say	3,026	17%	**4,314**	**16%**

Registrant religious profile by professional group

	Optometrist		Dispensing optician		Student optometrist		Student dispensing optician	
Christian (incl. Catholic)	4,903	31%	2,433	35%	543	16%	343	22%
Muslim	2,383	15%	353	5%	1,508	43%	277	18%
Hindu	1,859	12%	348	5%	354	10%	70	5%
Sikh	843	5%	120	2%	170	5%	29	2%
Jewish	221	1%	60	1%	8	0%	3	0%
Any other religion / faith	216	1%	76	1%	22	1%	10	1%
Buddhist	81	1%	20	0%	30	1%	4	0%
No religion	2,918	18%	2,281	33%	529	15%	609	40%
Prefer not to say	2,528	16%	1,258	18%	338	10%	190	12%

4.10   Age and ethnicity

In the 25-34 age group, the percentage of White EWSNI/Irish and non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants is similar (43 per cent and 47 per cent respectively). However, under 25 years of age there are 68 per cent non-White EWSNI/Irish and from 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.

	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		Prefer not to say	
Under 25	1,223	26%	3,165	68%	275	6%
25-34	3,369	43%	3,705	47%	819	10%
35-44	3,311	50%	2,520	38%	802	12%
45-54	2,957	64%	986	21%	659	14%
55-64	2,263	68%	501	15%	530	16%
65+	614	71%	121	14%	118	14%
All registrants	**13,737**	49%	**10,998**	39%	**3,203**	11%

This trend is more evident amongst optometrists.

Age/ethnicity by professional group – per cent of total register

	Optometrist				Dispensing optician			
	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish		White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Under 25	2%	**2%**	3%	**4%**	1%	**1%**	1%	**1%**
25-34	8%	**10%**	13%	**18%**	12%	**16%**	4%	**5%**
35-44	11%	**12%**	11%	**13%**	16%	**19%**	5%	**6%**
45-54	11%	**11%**	5%	**5%**	17%	**18%**	3%	**3%**
55-64	8%	**9%**	2%	**2%**	11%	**12%**	2%	**2%**
65+	2%	**3%**	0%	**1%**	2%	**2%**	0%	**1%**

5. Fitness to Practise (FTP) complaints

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 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.

5.1. Complainant/Referral sources

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 six per cent (four in 2018, eight in 2017, and 25 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.

Source of Complaint	2017		2018		2019	
	Total complaints	% of total complaints	Total complaints	% of total complaints	Total complaints	% of total complaints
Male referrer	155	36%	253	47%	**227**	**47%**
Female referrer	217	51%	269	50%	**231**	**47%**
Not known	35	8%	8	1%	**14**	**3%**
Other (e.g. referred by company)	18	4%	9	2%	**16**	**3%**
Total	**425**		**539**		**488**	

5.2. Registrants subject to a fitness to practise (FTP) complaint

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, we received 488 complaints, of which 278 (which is 57 per cent) were opened. Last year we received 315 complaints, of which 303 (which is 96 per cent) were opened.

Optometrists received higher levels of complaints (78 per cent) than dispensing opticians (12 per cent), compared to the proportion of optometrists (56 per cent) and dispensing opticians (24 per cent) on our register. This is consistent with the profile of complaints since 2012/13, and is a gradually increasing trend.

Students were subject to 10 per cent of the total FTP complaints in 2019, in comparison to last year where students made up 6 per cent of the total FTP complaints.

Registrants subject to an FTP complaint profile by professional group 2019

	Total complaints	% of total FTP complaints against role	% of complaints against total registrant role	Total registrants	% of total registrants
Optometrist	191	78%	1.2%	16,027	56%
Dispensing optician	29	12%	0.4%	7,027	25%
Student optometrist	15	6%	0.4%	3738	13%
Student dispensing optician	9	4%	0.5%	1767	6%
Total	**244**		**0.9%**	**28,559**	

In comparison to previous years, the proportion is similar.

Registrants subject to an FTP complaint profiled by professional group (including business registrants) from 2016 to 2019

	2016	%	2017	%	2018	%	2019	%
Optometrist	158	71%	170	58%	169	64%	191	69%
Dispensing optician	28	13%	37	13%	35	13%	29	10%
Student optometrist	12	5%	12	4%	8	3%	15	5%
Student dispensing optician	2	1%	8	2%	4	2%	9	3%
Subtotal	**200**		**227**		**216**		**244**	
Business registrant	23	10%	67	23%	47	18%	34	12%
Total FTP Complaints	**223**		**294**		**263**		**278**	

Registrants subject to an FTP complaint profiled by specialism 2019

|	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	5	2%	0.4%	1,206	5%
Independent prescribing specialty	6	2%	0.8%	740	3%
Additional upply specialty	6	2%	0.8%	761	3%
Supplementary prescribing specialty	6	2%	0.8%	744	3%
Total	**23**	**9%**	**0.7%**	**3,451**	**15%**

5.2.1 Gender

Excluding business registrants, 63 per cent of complaints were made against male registrants (a decrease from 68 per cent in 2018). Only 38 per cent of registrants are male.

Gender profile of registrants subject to an FTP investigation by professional group – 2019

	Total	Male			Female		
		Under investigation	% of Register		Under investigation	% of Register	
Optometrist	191	116	61%	41%	75	39%	59%
Dispensing optician	29	19	66%	37%	10	34%	63%
Student optometrist	15	10	67%	33%	5	33%	67%
Student dispensing optician	9	8	89%	31%	1	11%	69%
All registrants	**244**	**153**	**63%**	38%	**91**	**37%**	62%

The gender distribution of registrants subject to FTP investigation differs across fully-qualified and student registrants. For both optometrists and dispensing opticians, a higher proportion of males were subject to an FTP investigation than female (61 per cent and 66 per cent respectively). For students, the gender distribution of those subject to an FTP investigation was weighted even stronger toward male students, with 75 per cent of complaints made against male students.

Gender profile of registrants subject to an FTP complaint by professional group 2015 to 2019
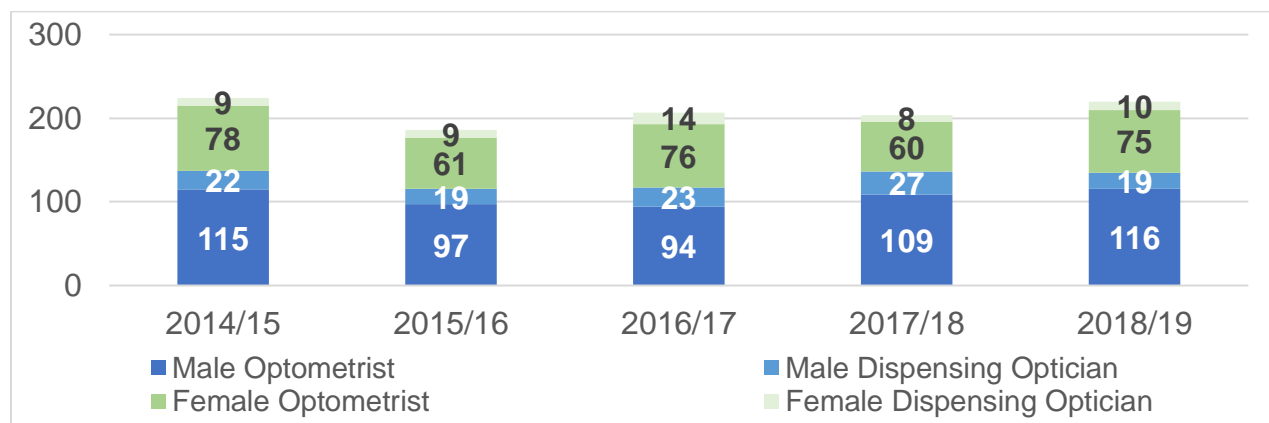
5.2.2 Age

In previous years, the majority of registrants subject to FTP investigation were in the 25-34 age group. From 2016 to 2018 there was a slight change in this trend, as the 35-44 age group received a slightly higher proportion of complaints. This year saw a return to the original pattern, with the 25-34 age group subject to most investigations. Combining the two most common age groups, 25-44-year-olds made up 61 per cent of investigations.

Percentage of investigations opened per age group from 2015 to 2019

	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
Under 25	3	1%	14	7%	20	9%	16	7%	**24**	**10%**
25-34	76	34%	79	40%	62	27%	57	26%	**85**	**35%**
35-44	55	25%	32	16%	68	30%	69	32%	**64**	**26%**
45-54	56	25%	43	22%	43	19%	29	13%	**35**	**14%**
55-64	28	12%	20	10%	28	12%	35	16%	**26**	**11%**
65+	6	3%	12	6%	8	3%	10	5%	**10**	**4%**
Total	**224**		**200**		**229**		**216**		**244**	

The age profile of registrants subject to FTP investigation is largely consistent between age groups. The only noticeable difference is that for dispensing opticians the most common age group for FTP registrants is 35-44, while for optometrists it is 25-34, which is consistent with the register.

	Under 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+	
Optometrist	10	4%	67	27%	50	20%	34	14%	21	9%	9	4%
Dispensing optician	1	0%	8	3%	13	5%	1	0%	5	2%	1	0%
Student optometrist	9	4%	6	2%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Student dispensing optician	4	2%	4	2%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	**24**	**10%**	**85**	**35%**	**64**	**26%**	**35**	**14%**	**26**	**11%**	**10**	**4%**

5.2.3 Ethnicity

There is a disproportionate number of Pakistani/Pakistani British registrants subject to FTP investigation. This ethnic group makes up 9 per cent of registrants but 17 per cent of registrants subject to FTP investigation. Moreover, Pakistani/Pakistani British make up only 2 per cent of the UK profile. 39 per cent of registrants are non-White EWSNI/Irish, but this ethnic group makes up 53 per cent of registrants subject to FTP investigation.

Ethnicity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation

Legend:
- White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British/Irish
- Indian / Indian British
- Pakistani / Pakistani British
- Black / Black British
- Other
- Prefer not to say
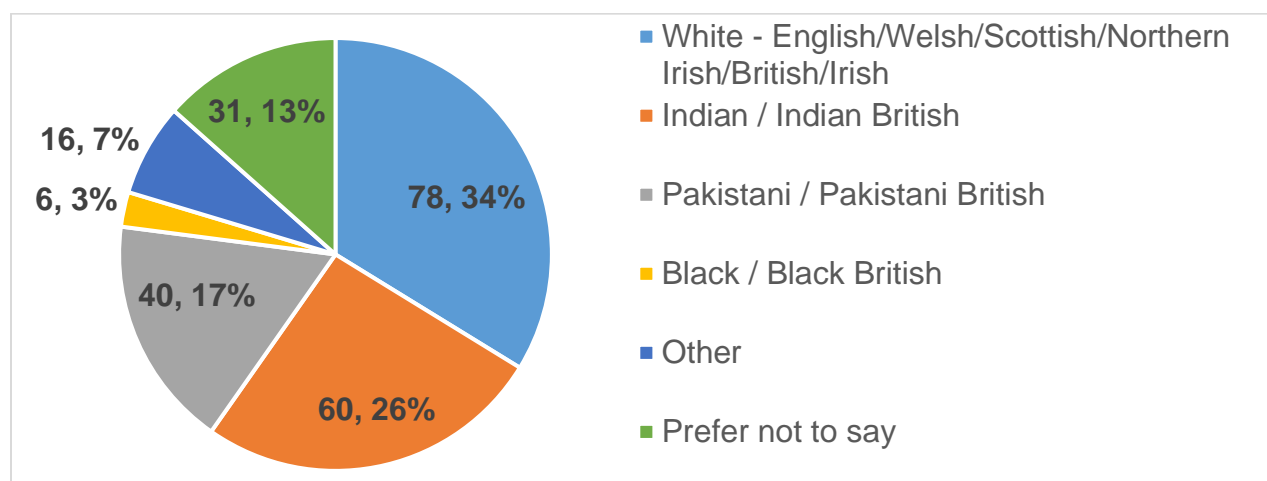
	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish	
Optometrist	58	25%	98	42%
Dispensing optician	17	7%	14	6%
Student optometrist	2	1%	6	3%
Student dispensing optician	1	0%	4	2%
Total	**78**	**34%**	**122**	**53%**

Ethnicity profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation, compared to all registrants – 2018 and 2019

	White / White British		Indian / Indian British		Pakistani / Pakistani British		Black / Black British	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
FTP Registrants	38%	**36%**	27%	**26%**	10%	**17%**	4%	**3%**
Total Registrants	58%	**54%**	18%	**18%**	6%	**9%**	1%	**1%**
UK Ethnicity Profile	87%	**87%**	2%	**2%**	2%	**2%**	3%	**3%**

5.2.4 Disability

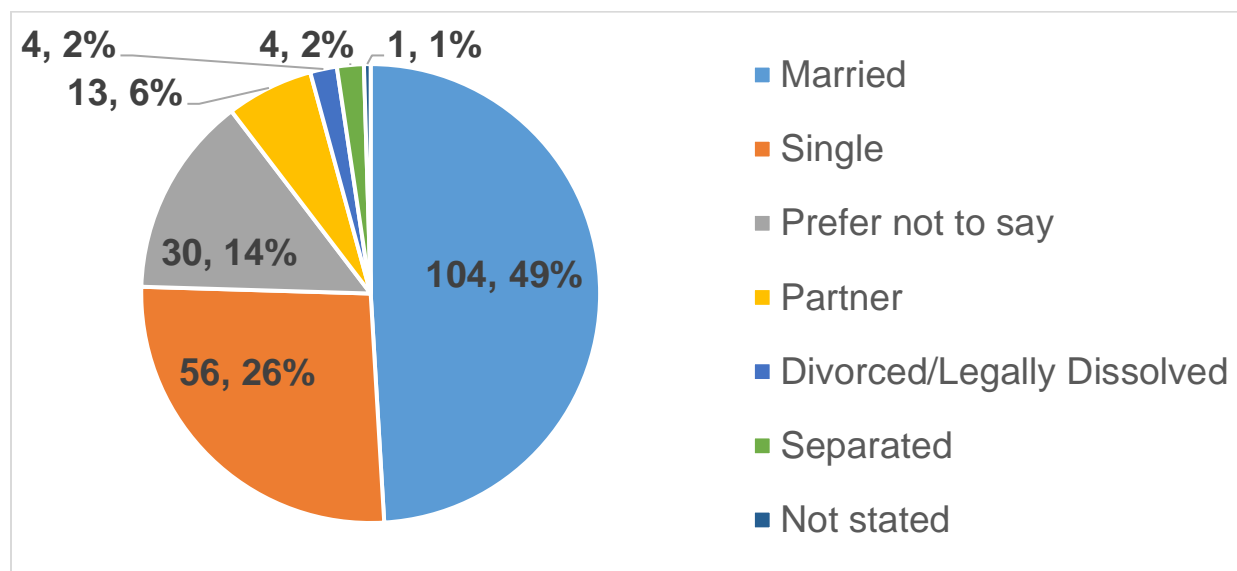Fewer than ten registrants subject to FTP investigation report having any disability.

5.2.5 Sexual Orientation

Fewer than ten registrants subject to FTP investigation report having any sexual orientation other than heterosexual.

5.2.6 Marital Status

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

Marital status profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation

5.2.7 Pregnancy and Maternity

The majority of registrants subject to FTP investigation reported that they were not pregnant, nor on maternity 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
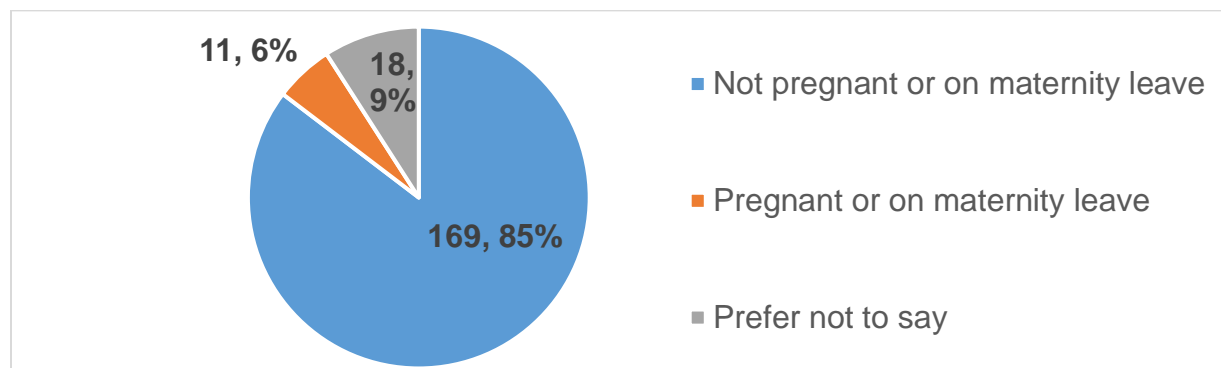
5.2.8 Religion

There is a large disproportion regarding Muslim registrants. 26 per cent of registrants subject to an FTP investigation are Muslim, only 16 per cent of all registrants are Muslim, and only 4 per cent of the UK population is Muslim.

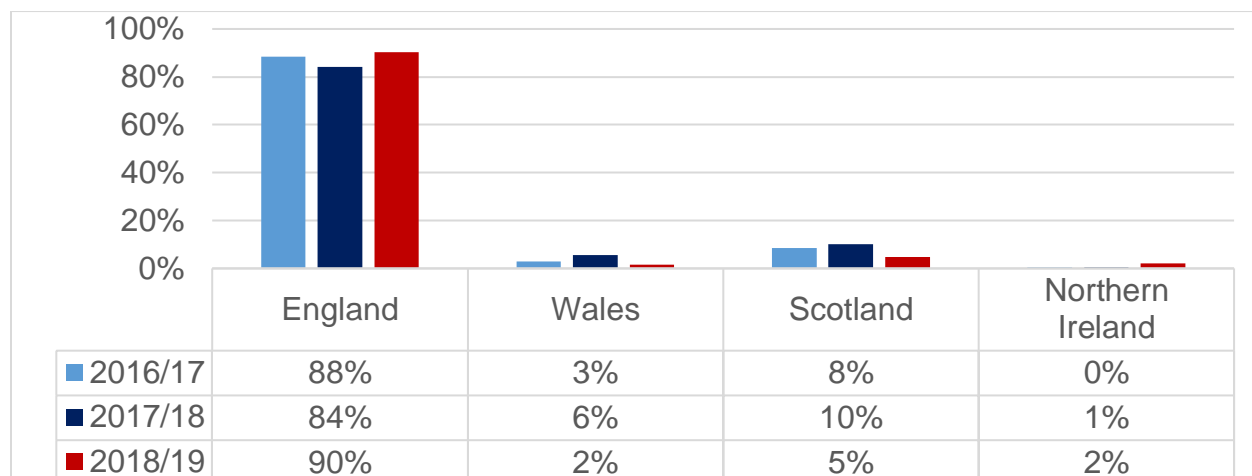**Religious belief profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation**
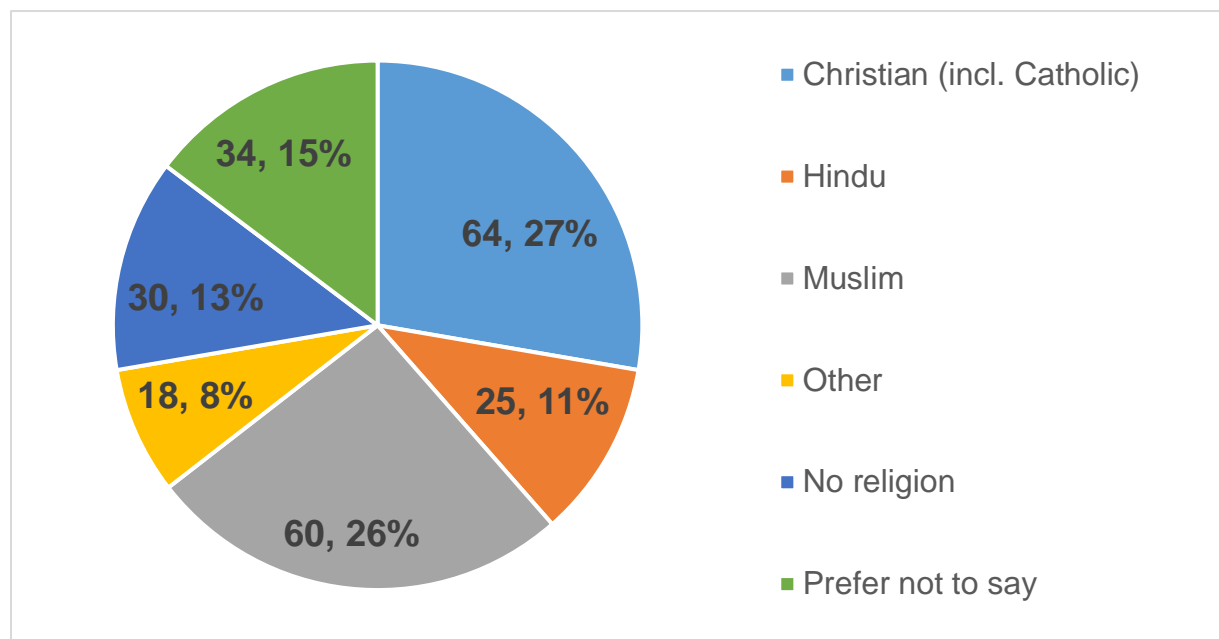
Due to having fewer than ten registrants referred for FTP investigation who responded in each of the following categories, it has been necessary to combine the results with the any other religion / faith category: Sikh, Jewish, and Buddhist registrants.

Religious belief profile of FTP Registrants compared to Full Register

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

5.2.9   Location

Location profile of FTP complaints of 2017 to 2019

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2016/17	88%	3%	8%	0%
2017/18	84%	6%	10%	1%
2018/19	90%	2%	5%	2%

The per cent of FTP complaints made against registrants based in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland has remained fairly consistent over the last three years, although this year saw a greater concentration of complaints coming in England and Northern Ireland, with a reduction in complaints from Wales and Scotland.

5.3. Allegation Type

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)'.

5.3.1 Gender

In 2018, males made up a higher proportion in all category of allegations. In 2019, males made up a higher proportion in all category of allegations, except for health, in which there was an even split.

Percentage of allegation types split by gender for 2018 and 2019

	Female				Male			
	2018		2019		2018		2019	
Clinical	44	20%	43	18%	78	36%	67	27%
Conduct	17	8%	18	7%	36	17%	34	14%
Conviction/caution	3	1%	9	4%	16	7%	26	11%
Health	3	1%	5	2%	6	3%	5	2%
Mix	3	1%	16	7%	9	4%	21	9%
Total	70	33%	91	37%	145	67%	153	63%

5.3.2 Ethnicity

39 per cent of registrants subject to FTP investigation are White EWSNI/Irish. This shows a disproportion because White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up 49 per cent of the register. 33 per cent of registrants subject to FTP investigation chose not to disclose their ethnicity, or we have no data on.

Non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants referred for FTP investigation have a higher proportion of clinical, conduct, health, mix, and total allegations.

Percentage of allegation types split by ethnicity for 2018 and 2019

	White EWSNI/Irish				Non-White EWSNI/Irish			
	2018		2019		2018		2019	
Clinical	47	43%	**45**	**42%**	49	45%	**52**	**49%**
Conduct	18	43%	**10**	**13%**	20	48%	**24**	**30%**
Conviction/caution	3	27%	**12**	**32%**	8	73%	**6**	**16%**
Health	2	40%	**3**	**30%**	2	40%	**4**	**40%**
Mix	1	13%	**12**	**36%**	6	75%	**17**	**52%**
All allegations	71	40%	**82**	**39%**	85	47%	**103**	**49%**

5.4   Case Examiner outcomes

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

5.4.1 Gender

A smaller percentage of female registrants were referred to the FTP committee than male, which is the same trend seen since 2016, although this does not consider the types of allegation received and is a reduced differential than in prior years.

Percentage of total investigation outcomes split by gender

	Male			Female		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	66%	68%	**79%**	66%	78%	**83%**
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	22%	31%	**21%**	11%	11%	**17%**
TOTAL number of decisions	50	108	**114**	38	73	**71**

5.4.2 Age

A similar percentage of registrants from all age categories were referred to the FTP committee.

Percentage of total investigation outcomes split by age - 2019

	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	75%	83%	82%	75%	84%	73%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	25%	17%	18%	25%	16%	27%
TOTAL number of decisions	**12**	**54**	**57**	**24**	**25**	**11**

5.4.3 Ethnicity

44 per cent of registrants referred to the FTP committee are non-White EWSNI/Irish. This shows a disproportion because non-White EWSNI/Irish registrants make up only 39 per cent of the register. 31 per cent of registrants referred to the FTP committee chose not to disclose their ethnicity, or we have no data on.

Percentage of total investigation outcomes split by ethnicity

	White EWSNI/Irish		Non-White EWSNI/Irish	
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	60	87%	61	79%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	9	13%	16	21%
TOTAL number of decisions	**69**		**77**	

6. Employee Profile

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.

6.1   Summary of GOC employees (31 March 2019)

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 2018. Three of the five senior managers were female.

36%   64%

Role	Female	Male
Admin	67%	33%
Officer	68%	32%
Manager	53%	47%
SMT & Heads	58%	42%

Age

Pie chart: 41% (24-34), 31% (35-44), 23% (45+), 6% (Less than 24)

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 (31 per cent).

Similar to last year, the majority of SMT and Heads of are over 45 years old. Managers are predominantly in the 35-44 age group. Officers and Administrators are mainly between 24-34 years old.

Ethnicity

Pie chart: 43% (White EWSNI), 32% (Non-White EWSNI), 25% (Prefer not to say)

43 per cent of employees reported as White EWSNI and 32 per cent as non-White EWSNI, with 24 per cent preferring not to say, although the high percentage of employees not disclosing their ethnicity reduces the accuracy of this data. London's population is 45 per cent White British.

Pregnancy and Maternity
Fewer than ten people took maternity and/or paternity leave within the year.

Marital Status	Disability
43 per cent are married, in a civil partnership, or with a partner.	The majority of employees did not report any disabilities and fewer than ten employees reported having a disability.

7.   Member Profile

We hold diversity information on all members in a confidential database. The information on the diversity profile of each member has been gathered as part of the appointment process and annual member declarations.

Number of members (31 March 2018)

	Total Members	**of which there are the following type of members:**			
		Council	**Lay**	**GOC Registrant**	**Other / independent**
Council	**12**	12	6	6	-
Education committee	**15**	4	6	8	1
Registration committee	**10**	2	4	6	-
Standards committee	**12**	3	4	7	1
Companies committee	**7**	2	1	3	3
Investigation committee	**8**	-	2	5	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	-	19	21	-
Education Visitor panel	23	-	7	14	2

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

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.

7.1 Summary of members March 2019

Gender

The gender profile is fairly evenly split with slightly more female members, this difference is more pronounced in the gender profile of lay members where 69 per cent are female, compared to 56 percent of registrant members.

	All Members	Council Members	Committee Members	Hearing Panel	Lay Members	Registrant members	Education Visitors
Male	42%	42%	43%	33%	31%	44%	59%
Female	58%	58%	57%	67%	69%	56%	41%

Age

21% 25-44 33% 45-54 32% 55-64 10% 65+ 4% Prefer not to say

The data this year is far more reliable, as only 4 per cent did not disclose their age, in comparison to the 21 per cent from last year's analysis. There is an even split between the two most common age groups – 45-54 and 55-64. It is also noticeable that there is a 4 per cent decrease in members aged 25-44 and a 4 per cent increase in members aged 65+, but this might be due to the increased dataset rather than a demographic change in members' age.

Religion

49 per cent of members reported that they were Christian (compared with 39 per cent in 2018 and 62 per cent in 2017), followed by 27 per cent reported no religious faith (similar since 2015). 12 per cent reported other religious belief and 11 per cent preferred not to answer this question (compared to 27 per cent last year).

Gender Identity:

Fewer than ten members have disclosed that the gender they currently identify with is not the gender they were born with.

Sexual Orientation

Since 2015 most members have reported being heterosexual (86 per cent, 72 per cent in 2018) and 10 per cent preferred not to say.

Ethnicity

The largest reported ethnicity across members is White (82 per cent), an increase from 72 per cent in 2018. 3 per cent preferred not to state their ethnicity (down from 20 per cent last year) with the remainder from a variety of different ethnicities. The figures are skewed from 2018 results, but this is likely due to the reduction in members preferring not to state their ethnicity.

Disability

The majority of members did not report any disabilities, similarly to 2018.

Location

86 per cent of members are from England. Welsh members make up 4% of members, Scotland 5%, Northern Ireland 4%

8. Member appointment

This section analyses whether the member appointment process attracts applications from a diverse range of people.

8.1.   Data

We encourage all applicants for member roles to complete an EDI monitoring form. This form is kept strictly private and confidential before, during, and after the appointment process. The data is collected and used solely for the purpose of this monitoring report. 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.

COMMITTEE	NO. OF ROLES	STAGES OF THE APPOINTMENTS CAMPAIGN			
		ALL APPS	LONGLISTED	INTERVIEWED	APPOINTED
LAY					
Hearing Panel	4	7	-	6	5
Education Visitor Panel	2	28	-	7	2
Council	1	159	43	11	1
	7	194	43	24	8
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	18	233	43	43	16

The data has been drawn into two categories – Lay and Registrant member appointments – due to the different professional backgrounds that the roles attract.

In 2015 we had an 87 per cent return of monitoring forms from lay applicants and 83 per cent from registrants. In 2016 this dipped to 69 per cent from lay and 77 per cent from registrants. In 2017 just over half of the applicants for registrant roles returned their monitoring forms, which meant that the data was unreliable and therefore we did not report on it last year. We introduced mandatory submission of EDI forms for all appointment campaigns from June 2017. This has significantly improved our ability to produce monitoring data – we received 100 per cent of monitoring forms for our lay campaigns and registrant campaigns.

9. Lay Member Appointment

9.1. Summary of lay member appointment

There were 193 applicants (App), 26 interviewed (IV) and 15 appointed. Due to the number of people appointed, we have analysed the information, however, we are unable to publish it for most characteristics in line with our Approach to EDI monitoring policy.

Gender

There were a greater proportion of female applicants getting to the interview stage (60 per cent), despite the fact that there were fewer female applicants than male (44 per cent female applicants). This is a continuation of last year's trend regarding the interview stage, although this is the first time in three years that more males applied for lay member appointments than females.

	Male	Female
App	56%	44%
IV	40%	60%
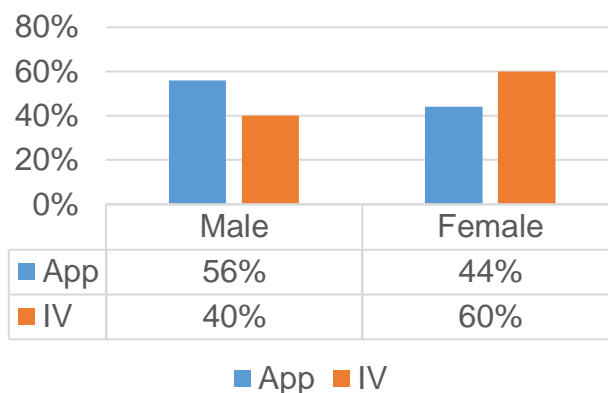
Disability

Eight per cent of lay applicants disclosed a disability, which is a very slight increase from last year (six per cent). This increased even further at the interview stage, where 13 per cent reported a disability (ten per cent last year).

Age

The majority of lay applicants were aged above 45 (75 per cent), this is the same as last year, and an increase from 2017 (57 per cent). This increases further at the interview stage (80 per cent), again the exact same percentage as last year. Shown as percentage of applicants in that age group, per stage:

	25-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Unstated
App	22%	36%	14%	25%	3%
IV	13%	47%	13%	20%	7%
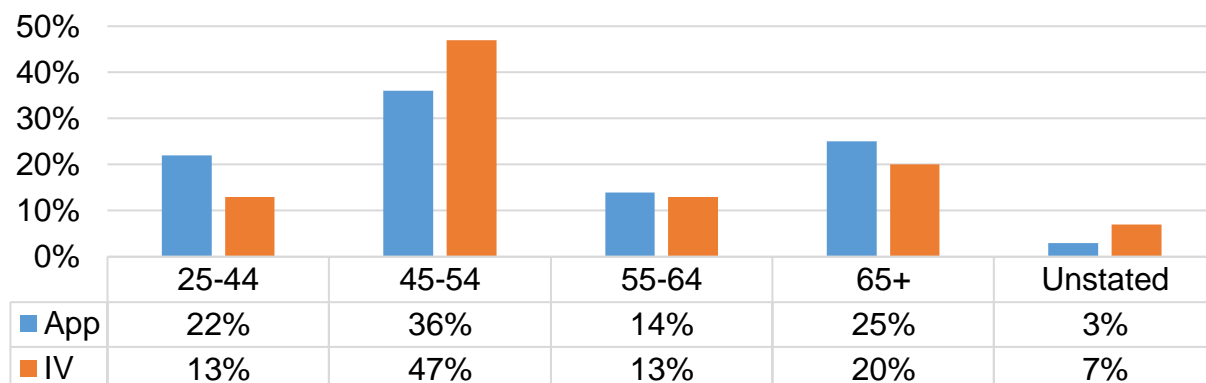
Religion

The religion of lay applicants was mainly from those who held no religion (42 per cent), 33 per cent were Christian and 11 per cent stated other religions. This is a reverse from last year's trend, in which 44 per cent were Christian and 39 per cent held no religion. At the interview stage, 47 per cent of applicants held no religion, compared to 40 per cent identifying as Christian.
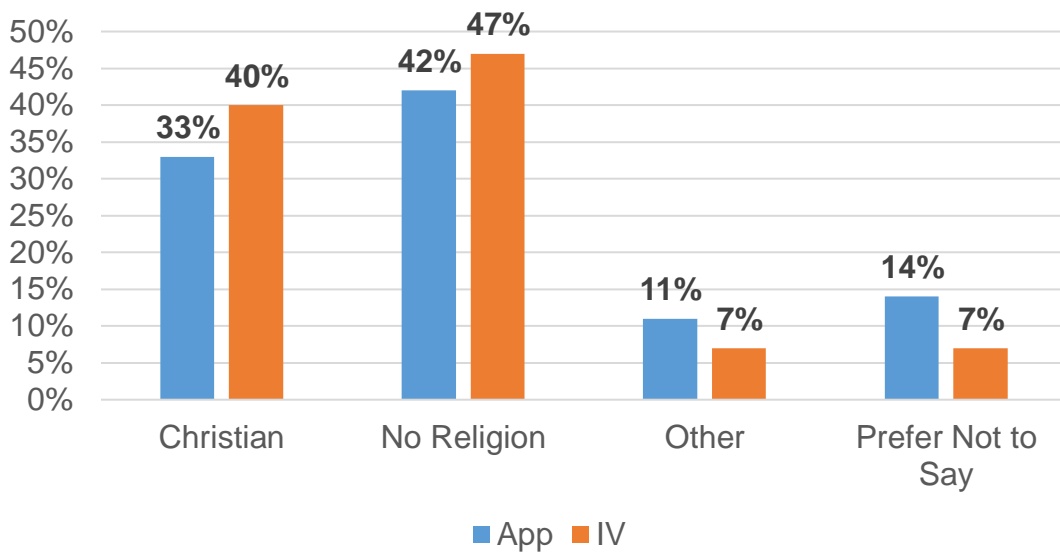
Ethnicity

83 per cent of applicants are White, compared with 80 per cent in 2018. Non-White applicants made up 14 per cent of all applicants, which is consistent with last year – 12 per cent. This pattern is consistent between all applicants and those who were interviewed and appointed.
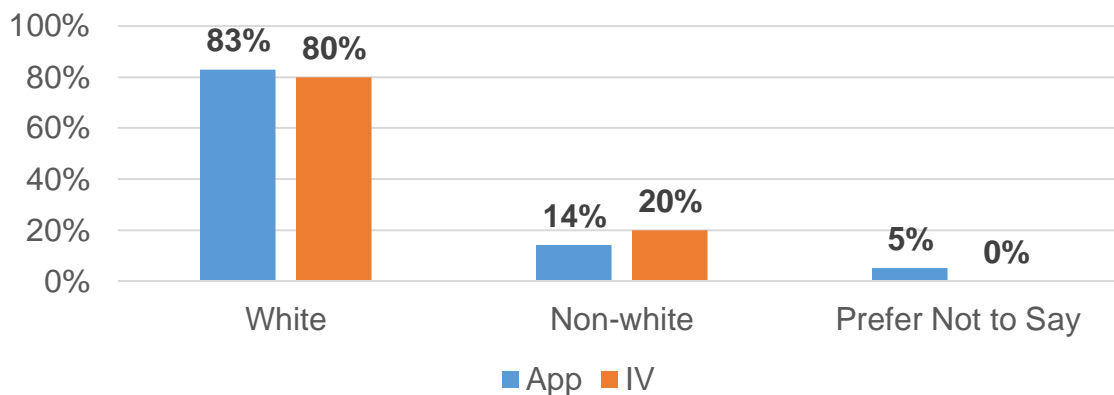
Marital Status

72 per cent of applicants were married, with three per cent stating that they were single. 14 per cent preferred not to state their marital status or left this section of their diversity monitoring form unstated. This pattern was consistent between all applicants and those interviewed and appointed.

Carer Responsibilities

In line with our targets listed in the 2017 EDI report, we now gather data about individuals' carer responsibilities to understand other perceived or real barriers to applying for a member role, which may highlight a need to better communicate the time commitment required for the different roles. 17 per cent of applicants did have carer responsibilities, a figure that increased to 33 per cent at interview stage.

Sexual Orientation

89 per cent of lay applicants stated they were heterosexual, with six per cent unstated. These weightings remained relatively similar throughout the application stages, with a proportional decrease of heterosexuals being interviewed (80 per cent). These figures show a higher percentage of applicants identifying as heterosexual in comparison to last year (80 per cent).

Pregnancy and Maternity

Fewer than ten applicants stated they were pregnant or on maternity leave.

Gender Identity

Fewer than ten applicants stated they identified as having changed gender since birth.

Location

Throughout each stage of the application process, applicants, interviewees and appointees were overwhelmingly from England. Scotland had a slightly better proportionate rate at interview level in comparison to all applicants, but 100 per cent of the appointees were from England, which is the same as last year's lay appointments.

|	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Applied	92%	4%	3%	1%
Interviewed	96%	0%	4%	0%
Appointed	100%	0%	0%	0%

9. Registrant Member Appointment
9.1 Summary of Registrant Member Appointment

There were 38 registrant applications (App), 18 of these were interviewed (IV) and 7 appointed. Due to the number of people appointed, we have analysed the information however we are unable to publish it for most characteristics in line with our Approach to EDI monitoring policy.

Gender

The number of registrant applications received is evenly split across the genders, however, there appears to be a slight gender disproportionality between those being interviewed, with female applicants are more likely to be selected for interview than male applicants. Both figures for applicants and interviewees are in line with last year's report.

	Male	Female
App	50%	50%
IV	39%	61%
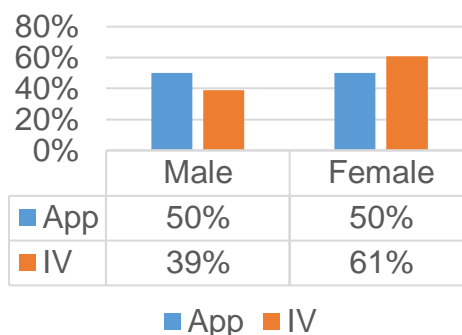
Disability

Fewer than ten registrant applicants reported having a disability.

Age

	25-44	45-54	55-64	65+
App	53%	32%	11%	5%
IV	44%	39%	11%	6%
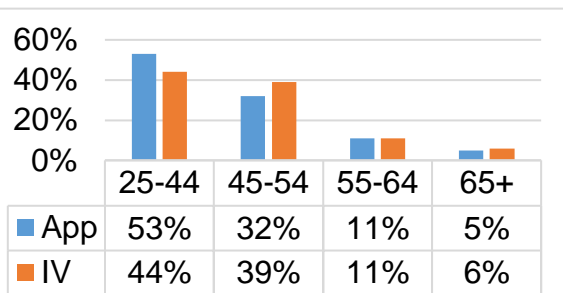
The age profile of registrant applicants is weighted more toward the 25-44 age group, which is an expected result based on this age group range. It can be said that younger registrants are being encouraged to apply, with 53 per cent of applicants in 2018-19 being in the 25-44 age group, compared to 47 per cent of applicants in 2017-18. However, there does appear to be a pattern that registrants aged 45-64 are proportionately more likely to be selected for interview. As seen in previous years, older males tend to be more likely to apply than females in those age groups. For applicants over 55, 65 per cent are males.

Religion

The registrant applicants' religions were mainly Christian (45 per cent) with 11 per cent unstated. 34 per cent had no religion and 11 per cent other religions. This pattern was replicated in the interview stage and is largely in line with our overall registrant profile.

	Christian	No Religion	Other	Prefer Not to Say
App	45%	34%	11%	11%
IV	44%	28%	11%	17%

Ethnicity

The ethnicity of 74 per cent of registrant applicants is White (in comparison to 45 per cent last year). Non-White applicants made up 21 per cent of all applicants (34 per cent last year). 17 per cent of interviewees are non-White (20 per cent in 2018). There is less of a diverse profile of member applicants as opposed to the overall registrant profile, where 56 per cent are White.

Marital Status

61 per cent of registrant applicants were married, with 16 per cent stating that they were single. Eight per cent preferred not to state their marital status or left this section of their monitoring form unstated. This pattern was largely consistent between all applicants and those interviewed, although zero per cent of interviewees stated that they were single.

Carer Responsibilities

In line with our targets listed in the 2017 EDI report, we now gather data about individuals' carer responsibilities to understand other perceived or real barriers to applying for a member role, which may highlight a need to better communicate the time commitment required for the different roles. Fewer than 10 applicants stated they have carer responsibilities.

Sexual Orientation

79 per cent of applicants stated they were heterosexual (83 per cent in 2018), with fewer than ten applicants identifying with any other sexual orientation. This pattern repeats itself at the interview stage.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Fewer than ten applicants stated that they were pregnant or on maternity leave.

Gender Identity

Fewer than ten applicants stated they identified as having changed gender since birth.

Location

90 per cent of applicants, 89 per cent of interviewees, and 100 per cent of appointees were from England. No applicants were from Wales.

	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Applied	89%	0%	8%	3%
Interviewed	89%	0%	11%	0%
Appointed	100%	0%	0%	0%

If you have any questions or feedback about our report, please get in with our Governance and Compliance Team at edi@optical.org or call 020 7307 8851.