General Optical Council: Equality and Diversity Monitoring Report

Contents

1. Executive summary

1.1. Introduction

We are the statutory regulator for the optical professions in the UK. We are committed to ensuring that in exercising all of our functions we operate 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 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 which feeds into our strategic objectives 2017-20

1.2. Data

The information in this report is based on our in-house datasets on 31 March 2018. Where possible we have provided data over the last five years to help us identify any trends.

In order to comply 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.

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 2017/18

We have continued to make good progress against our equality objectives (from our EDI strategy 2017-20. Key achievements include:

Learning and development of optical professionals:

- Held targeted discussions about EDI at our Council and committee meetings to identify actions
- Considered EDI within the development of our business standards and Education Strategic Review
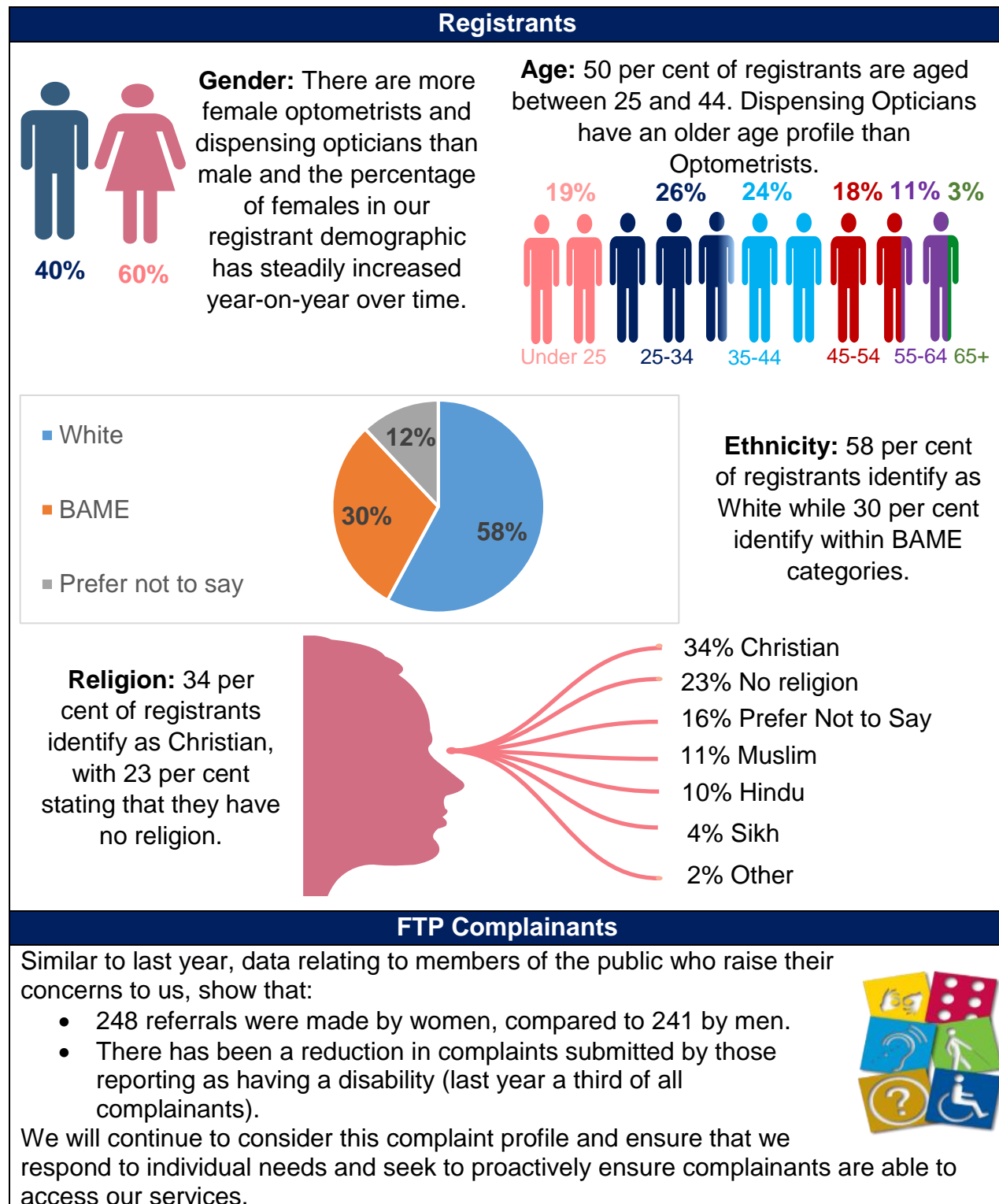
Targeted approach to regulation:

- Further developed our monitoring capabilites to be able to report and analyse our impact by collecting data on all registrant characterics
- Engaged with external stakeholders, such as other regulators, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and appropriate charities
- Considered our approach to consultation
- Considered our approach to supporting vulnerable witnesses

Organisational transformation:

- Raised awareness of EDI as an important component of business planning
- Continued the roll-out of unconscious bias training for employees and members
- Continued our staff engagement activities, linked to issues arising from the staff survey
- Delivered Impact Assessment training for all employees involved in project and policy work
- Considered how we support visually-impaired members of the public in our activities
- Responded to changes in requirements resulting from the Welsh Language Scheme

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.
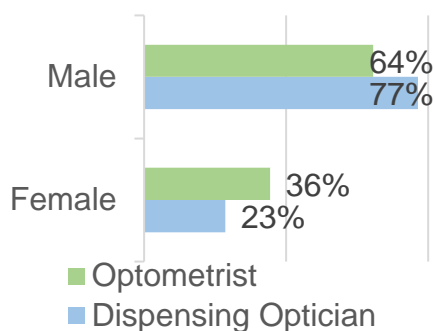
Registrants

Gender: There are more female optometrists and dispensing opticians than male and the percentage of females in our registrant demographic has steadily increased year-on-year over time.

40% **60%**

Age: 50 per cent of registrants are aged between 25 and 44. Dispensing Opticians have an older age profile than Optometrists.

19% **26%** **24%** **18%** **11%** **3%**

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

- White
- BAME
- Prefer not to say

12% **30%** **58%**

Ethnicity: 58 per cent of registrants identify as White while 30 per cent identify within BAME categories.

Religion: 34 per cent of registrants identify as Christian, with 23 per cent stating that they have no religion.

34% Christian
23% No religion
16% Prefer Not to Say
11% Muslim
10% Hindu
4% Sikh
2% Other

FTP Complainants

Similar to last year, data relating to members of the public who raise their concerns to us, show that:

- 248 referrals were made by women, compared to 241 by men.
- There has been a reduction in complaints submitted by those reporting as having a disability (last year a third of all complainants).

We will continue to consider this complaint profile and ensure that we respond to individual needs and seek to proactively ensure complainants are able to access our services.

Registrants referred for Fitness to Practise

The demographic of registrants who received a FTP allegation has remained stable, although there has been a proportional increase in allegations against male registrants.

Professional group:
For both fully qualified optometrists and dispensing opticians a higher proportion of males were referred for FTP investigation than females.

Male 64% / 77%
Female 36% / 23%
- Optometrist
- Dispensing Optician

Gender:
Of the registrants referred for FTP investigation, 67% were male and 33% female. This is disproportionate to the profile of our Register, and consistent with last year's result.
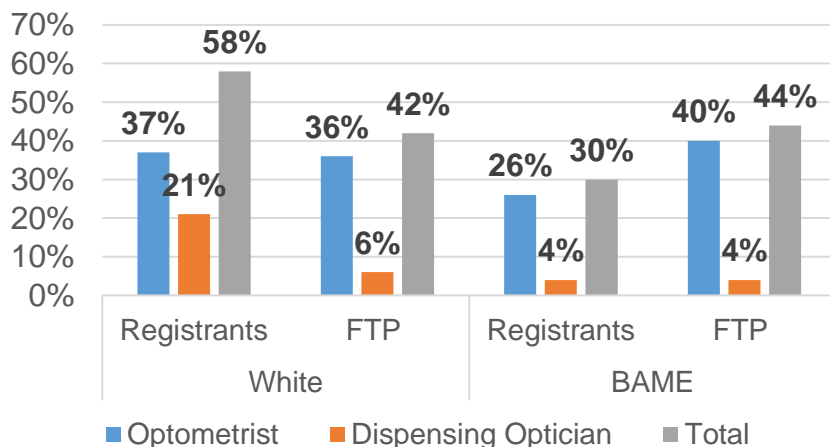
67% **33%**
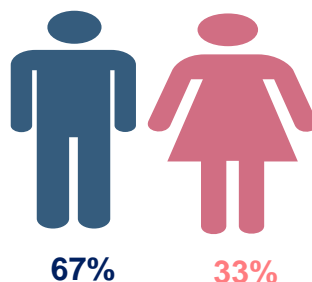
Allegation type:
Male registrants are more likely to be referred for investigation in each category than female registrants.

Outcomes:
A smaller percentage of female registrants were referred to FTPC (11 per cent compared to 31 per cent male).

Age:
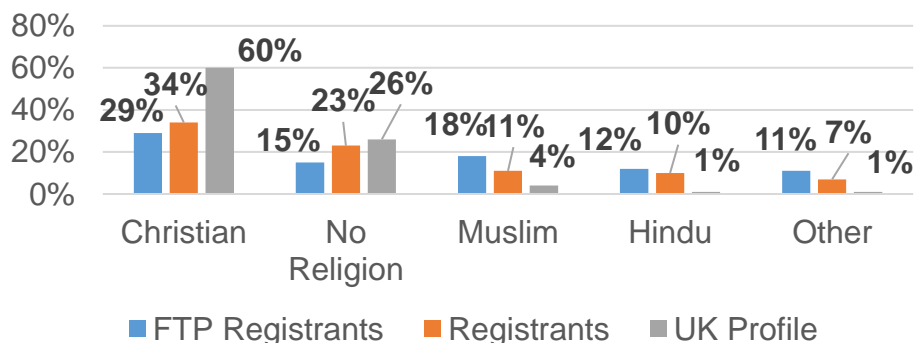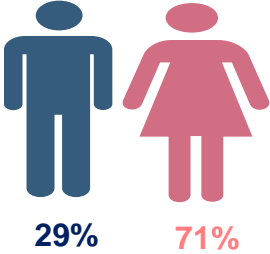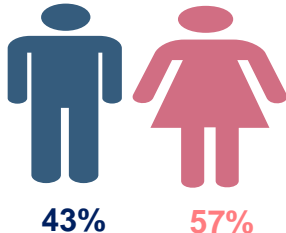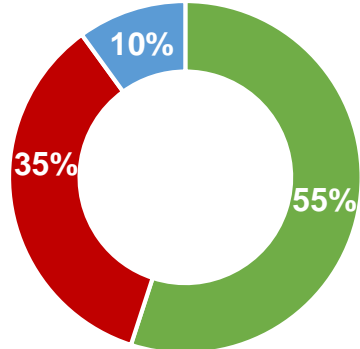The age profile of registrants referred for FTP allegations is in line with our Register.

White — Registrants: 37%, 21%, 58%; FTP: 36%, 6%, 42%
BAME — Registrants: 26%, 4%, 30%; FTP: 40%, 4%, 44%
- Optometrist
- Dispensing Optician
- Total
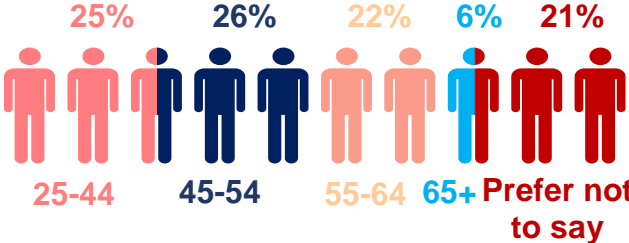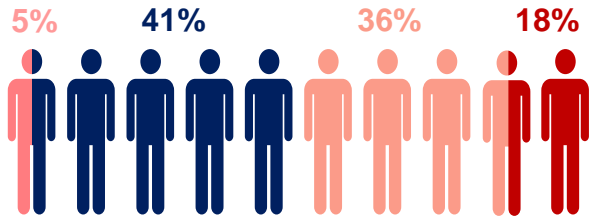
Ethnicity:
A disproportionate number of BAME optometrist registrants (predominately Indian and Pakistani British) are referred for FTP investigation, compared to our registrant profile.

Religion:
Linked to ethnicity, a disproportionate number of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh registrants were referred for FTP investigation.

Christian 29%, 34%, 60%
No Religion 15%, 23%, 26%
Muslim 18%, 11%, 4%
Hindu 12%, 10%, 1%
Other 11%, 7%, 1%
- FTP Registrants
- Registrants
- UK Profile

Employees

Our employee demographic has remained relatively stable over the last three years. Our employees are predominately female.

There continues to be an overall slight increase in female employees each year.

29%   **71%**

10%
35%
55%

■ White ■ BAME ■ Unstated

We have a reasonably diverse workforce in terms of ethnicity.

77 per cent of employees were aged between 24 and 44, increased from 63 per cent last year. The majority of SMT and heads of department are over 35 years old.

5%   **41%**   **36%**   **18%**

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 74 per cent are female, compared to 57 percent of registrant members.

43%   **57%**

When considering the different roles:

Education Visitor Panel   50%

Hearing Panel   65%

Council   44%

Our members are reasonably split between the age groups, although 21 per cent of respondents preferred not to state their age, making the data less reliable.

25%   **26%**   **22%**   **6%**   **21%**

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

Member appointment:

There were slightly more applications from females than males for lay roles, with a higher proportion of females being interviewed. Applications for registrant roles are equal with 50 per cent of applications received from males, however 37 per cent of those interviewed were male.

1.6. 2018/19 activities

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

Learning and development of optical professionals:

- Consider EDI within the development of our business standards - by completing an impact assessment, including EDI questions in our consultation and including an EDI related standard
- Consider EDI within the development of our Education Strategic Review
- Consider EDI within the changes to our CET scheme - by completing an impact assessment, including EDI questions in our consultation and improving the accessibility of our MyCET scheme

Targeted approach to regulation:

- Consider areas for further research and prioritise according to need
- Further develop our monitoring capabilites to be able to report and analyse our impact
- Engage with external stakeholders, such as other regulators, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and appropriate charities
- Introduce a new consultation platform, CitizenSpace, to make our consultations more accessible

Organisational transformation:

- Continue the roll-out of unconscious bias training for employees and members
- Deliver a second EDI e-learning module for employees and members
- Continue our staff engagement activities, which are linked to issues arising from the staff - including activities to mark International Holocaust Day, LGBT+ month and Women's International Day
- Continue to engage with inter-regulatory groups - such as the LGBT group and Disability Forum to promote LGBT/disability causes within healthcare regulators
- Create a Virtual Tour of the Hearings facility to assist vulnerable witnesses in text and audio (to support visually impaired people)
- Review our member appointments process and advertising strategy, with a focus on attracting diverse applicants, reducing barriers to application and elimiating bias
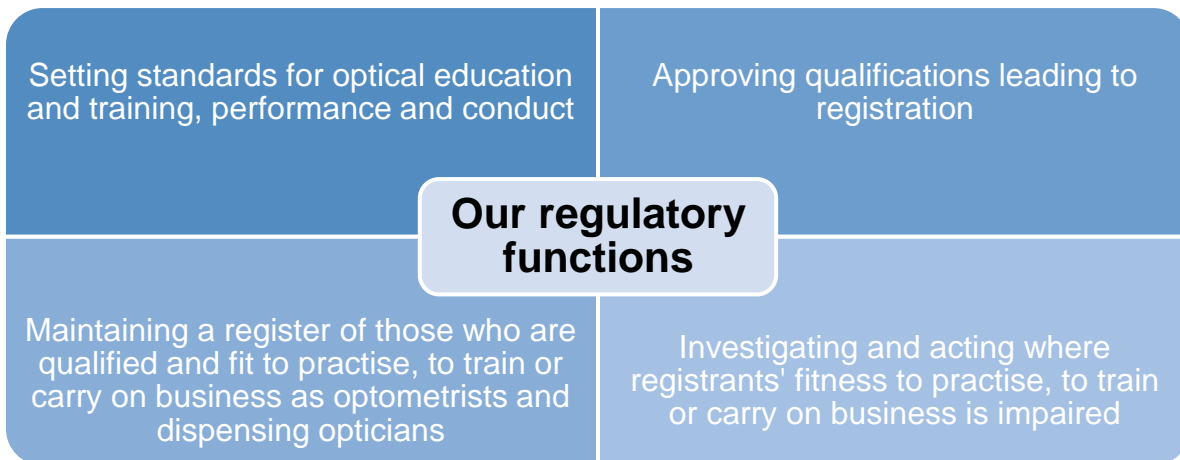
1.7. Feedback, comments and suggestions

We welcome feedback, comments and suggestions from all readers of this report and thank you for taking an interest in the General Optical Council.

Please kindly send any feedback to the Governance and Compliance Team via edi@optical.org or call 020 7307 8851
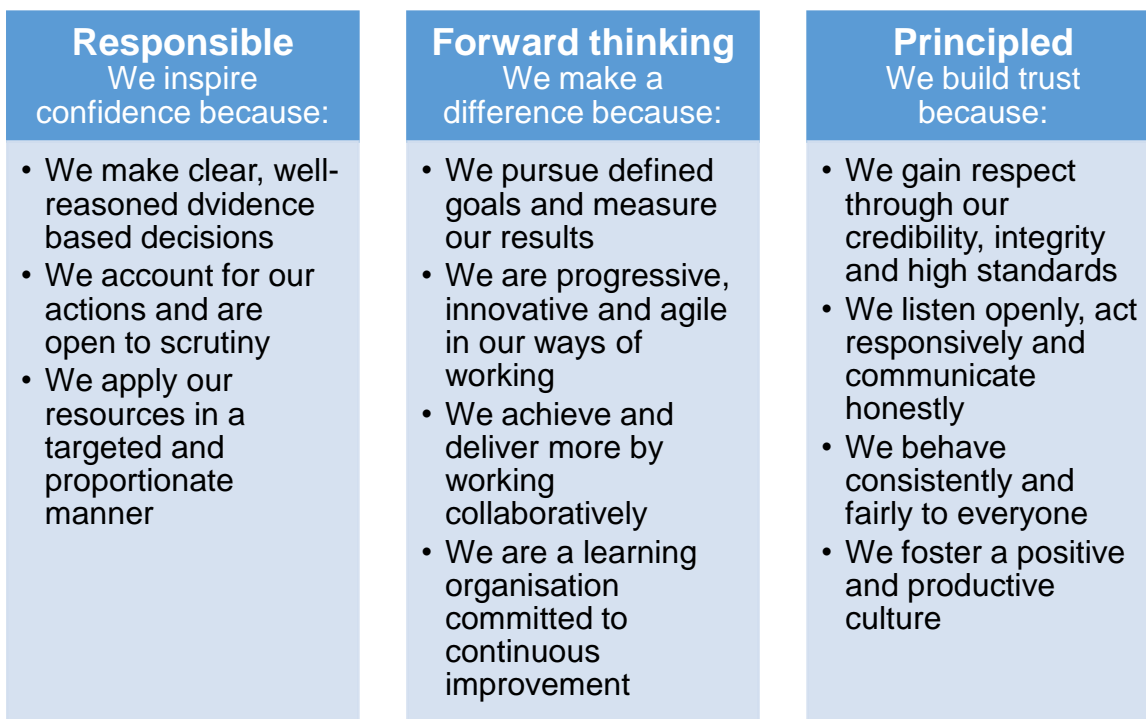
2.   Who are the GOC?

We are one of 12 organisations in the UK known as health and social care regulators, who oversee the health and social care professions by regulating individual professionals. We are the statutory regulator for the optical professions in the UK and 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:	**Forward thinking** We make a difference because:	**Principled** We build trust 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	• 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	• 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 have due regard 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, this report fulfils our duty under the Act.

3.2.   Definitions

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

- **BAME (of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnicity)** – refers to people of non-white descent[1]
- **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[2].

Registrants: The data was extracted from our system at 31 March 2018 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 mid-student year (which runs from 1 September to 31 August). We have 100 per cent of age and gender data. Unfortunately we were not able to integrate the collection of student monitoring data this year as part of our retention process and so the analysis of all other protected characteristics relates to the 85 per cent of qualified Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians who provided data. Data on registrants referred for an FTP investigations was extracted from our system on 31 March and relates to all registrants referred to us for investigation during the year. 15 per cent of registrants did not provide EDI data, in addition - as many as 10 per cent preferring not to state their protected characteristics.

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 team, who also collate information on maternity and pregnancy and marriage and civil partnership. This information was extracted on 31 March 2018 for the purpose of this report.

Members: All applicants for Council and committee member vacancies are asked to complete an EDI monitoring form, this became mandatory from June 2017. This information was extracted from our confidential database on 31 March 2018 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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[1] As described by The Institute of Race Relations.
[2] www.ons.gov.uk
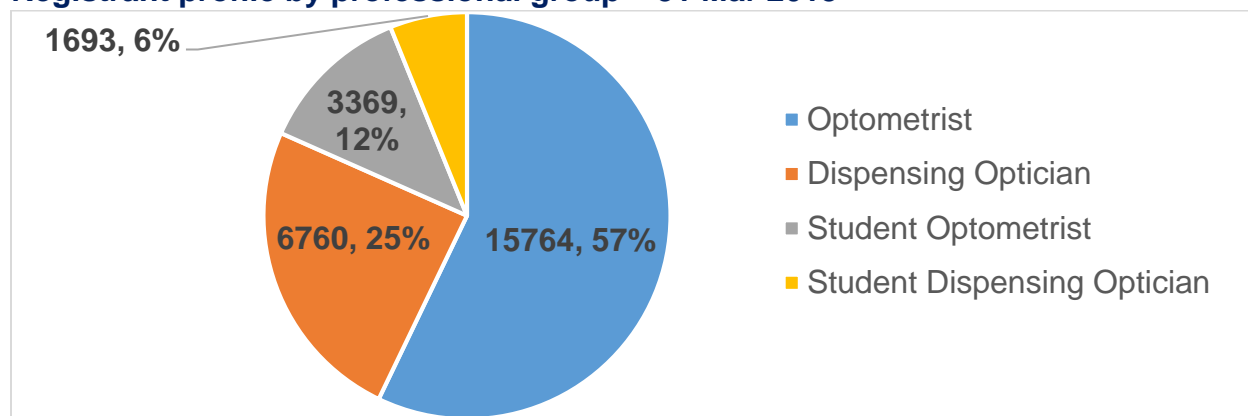
4. Our Registrants

4.1 Registrant Profile

As of 31 March 2018, we had 27,480 optometrists, dispensing opticians, student optometrists and student dispensing opticians on our registers (these figures include less than 150 people who appear on two registers). Of these, 57 per cent are optometrists, 25 per cent dispensing opticians and 18 per cent students. The structure of our register has remained stable during the last five years.

15 per cent of registrants did not provide monitoring data, therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data.

Registration profile by professional group from 2011/12 to 2017/18

Registrant Type	Dec 2013	March 2015	March 2016	March 2017	March 2018	1-yr % change	5-yr % change
Optometrists	13,646	14,354	14,767	15,141	**15,764**	4%	14%
Dispensing Opticians	6,129	6,430	6,527	6,600	**6,760**	2%	10%
Students	4,488	5,903	5,264	5,465	**5,062**	-7%	11%
Total	**24,263**	**26,687**	**26,558**	**27,206**	**27,586**	**1%**	**12%**

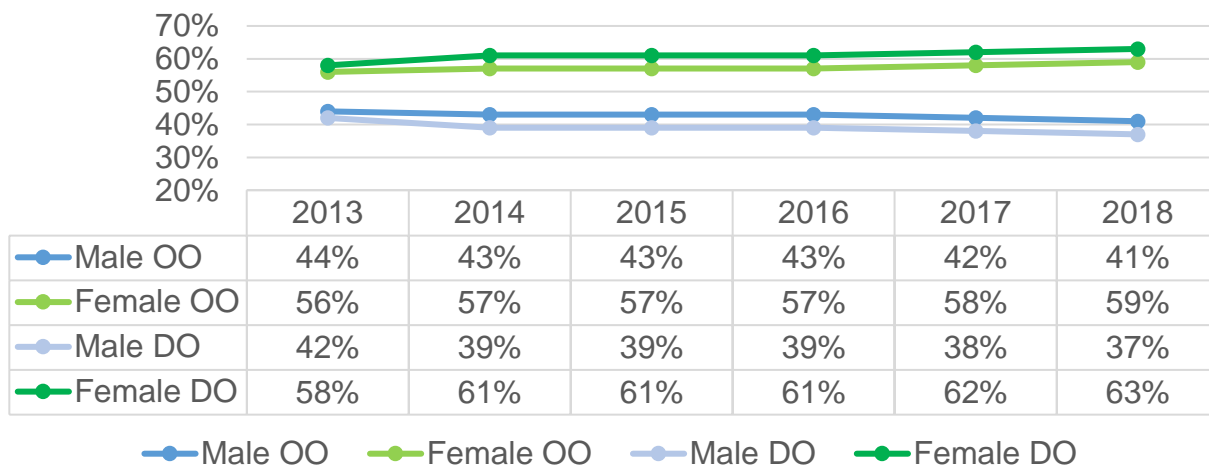### Registrant profile by professional group – 31 Mar 2018

4.2 Gender

At 31 March 2018, 60 per cent of registrants are female and 40 per cent male. This compares with the UK population where 51 per cent is female and 49 per cent male.

Gender profile of registrants over the last five years

	Role	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Male	**Optometrists**	6,114	6,175	6,276	6,331	**6,450**
	Dispensing Opticians	2,555	2,515	2,513	2,494	**2,501**
Female	**Optometrists**	7,652	8,179	8,491	8,810	**9,314**
	Dispensing Opticians	3,546	3,915	4,014	4,106	**4,259**
All	**Total**	**19,867**	**20,784**	**21,294**	**21,741**	**22,524**

Gender profile between 2013 and 2018 of registrants by professional group

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

Over the last five years the proportion of female registrants has increased year on year across both optometrists and dispensing opticians.

4.3   Age

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

19%	26%	24%	18%	11%	3%
Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
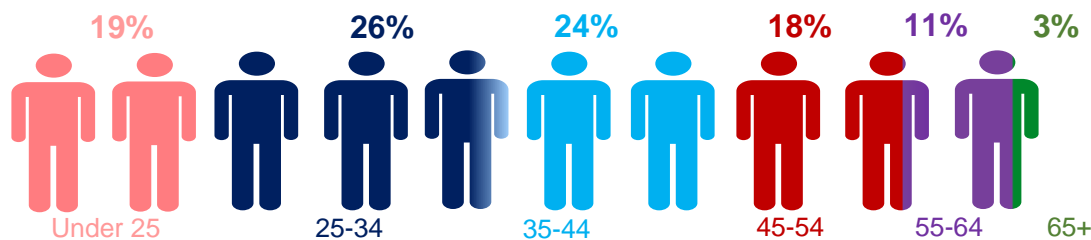
Amongst registrants, there is a higher proportion of optometrists than dispensing opticians aged between 25 and 34, while for the under 25 age group the proportion of optometrists is more than double the proportion of dispensing opticians. For the 35-44 age group, there is no difference in proportion between the two categories. Between 45-64 years old, there is a higher percentage of dispensing opticians than optometrists. For the most part this mirrors the last two year's findings, with the largest percentage change being found in the under 25 category for optometrists, which increased from four per cent in 16/17 to eight per cent in 17/18.
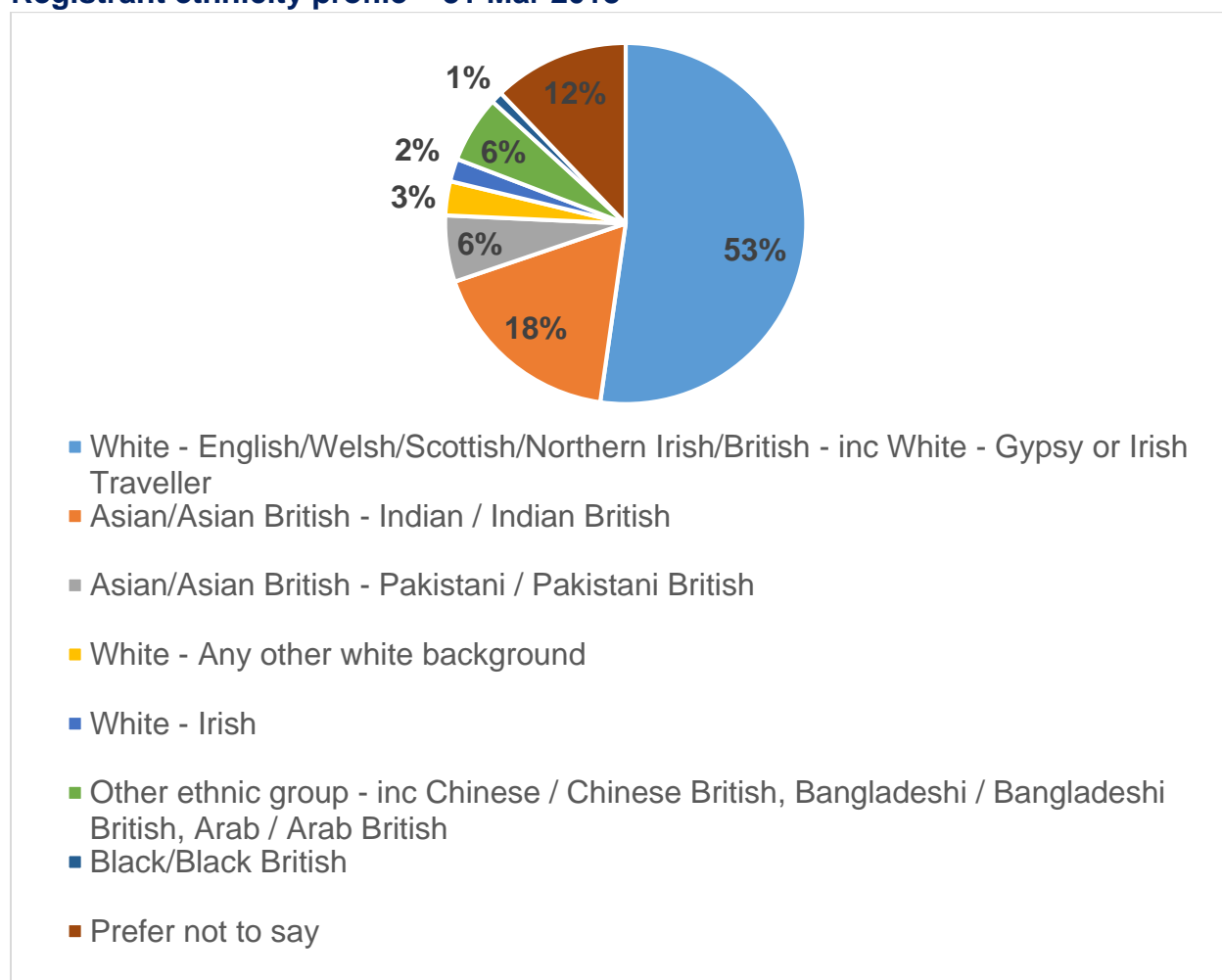
Age profile by professional group

	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65
Dispensing Optician	3%	22%	28%	27%	17%	3%
Optometrist	8%	29%	28%	20%	12%	3%
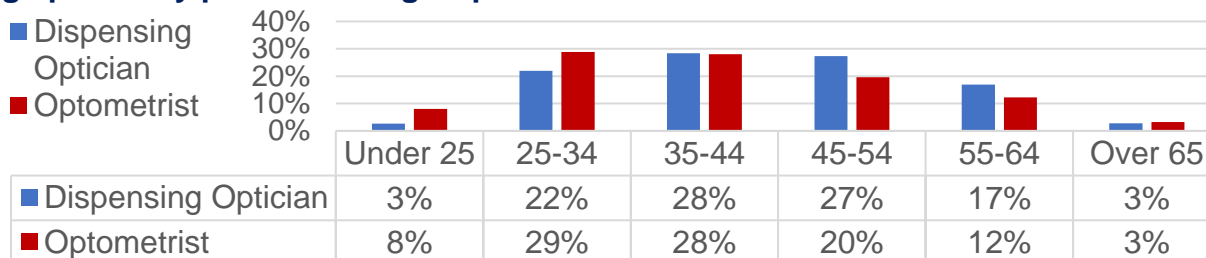
4.4   Ethnicity

27 per cent of registrants have not disclosed their ethnicity (15 per cent did not respond and 12 per cent preferred not to say), therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data. From the data available it appears the ethnicity of our registrants is relatively diverse, with 58 per cent identifying as White, in comparison to the UK (87 per cent). The second largest registrant group identify as Asian - Indian/Indian British (18 per cent) in comparison to the UK (2.3 per cent). A total of 30 per cent of registrants identify as BAME in comparison to the UK as a whole (10 per cent).

Registrant ethnicity profile – 31 Mar 2018

- White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British - inc White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Asian/Asian British - Indian / Indian British
- Asian/Asian British - Pakistani / Pakistani British
- White - Any other white background
- White - Irish
- Other ethnic group - inc Chinese / Chinese British, Bangladeshi / Bangladeshi British, Arab / Arab British
- Black/Black British
- Prefer not to say

Role	White		BAME		Prefer not to say	Total
Optometrists	6,985	37%	4,932	26%	1,591	13,508
Dispensing Opticians	4,101	21%	779	4%	764	5,644
Total	**11,086**	**58%**	**5,711**	**30%**	**2,355**	**19,152**

Proportionately, optometrists make up a higher percentage of BAME registrants when compared with dispensing opticians. This is largely due to the number of Asian optometrists on our register, who make up 25 per cent of optometrists.

4.5   Disability

25 per cent of registrants have not disclosed whether they have a disability (15 per cent did not respond and 10 per cent preferred not to say), therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data. Fewer than one per cent of registrants who responded identify as having a disability, which is consistent across Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians. Compared with the UK where there are 16 per cent of working age adults with disabilities, of which 46.3 per cent are in employment.
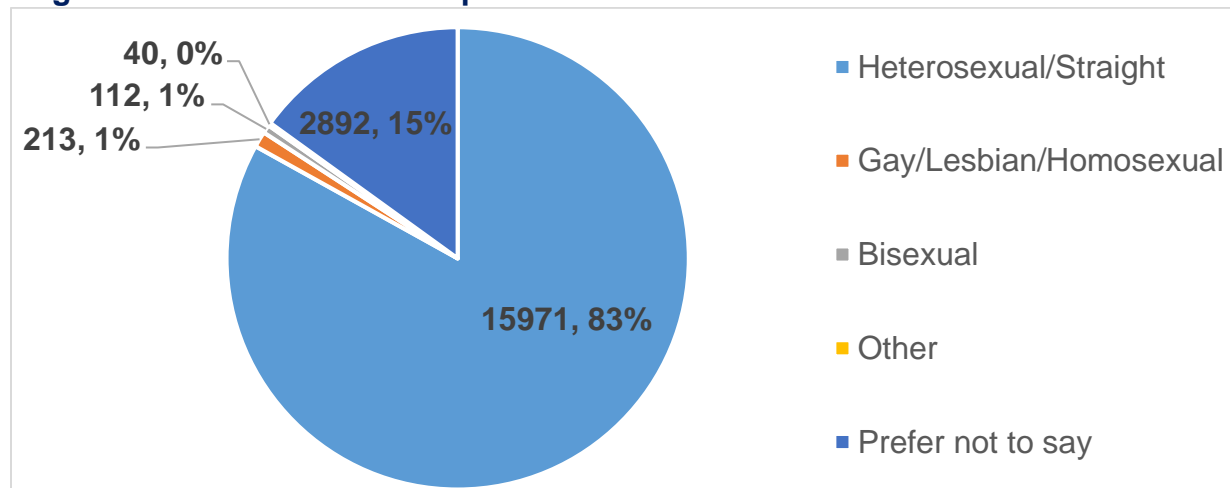
Registrant disability profile – 31 Mar 2018

- No
- Yes
- Prefer not to say

1949, 10%
148, 1%
17134, 89%
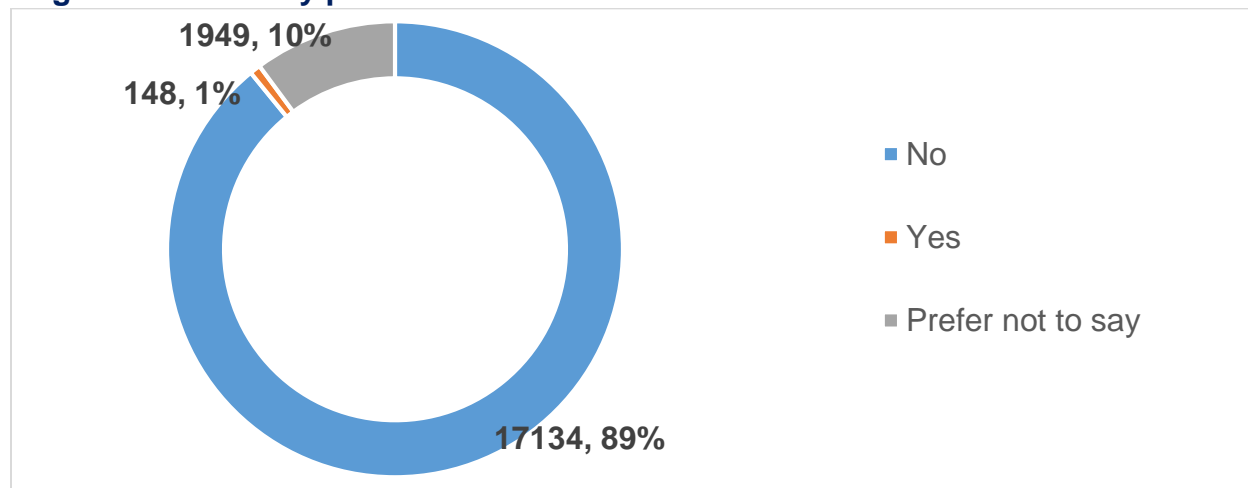
4.6   Sexual Orientation

15 per cent of registrants have not disclosed their sexual orientation (15 per cent did not respond and 15 per cent preferred not to say), therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data. Most registrants who responded reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual, with two per cent reporting a different sexual orientation. The majority of the UK population (93.5 per cent) report they are heterosexual or 'straight', with 1.1 per cent reported to be 'gay' or 'lesbian' and 0.4 per cent are bisexual.
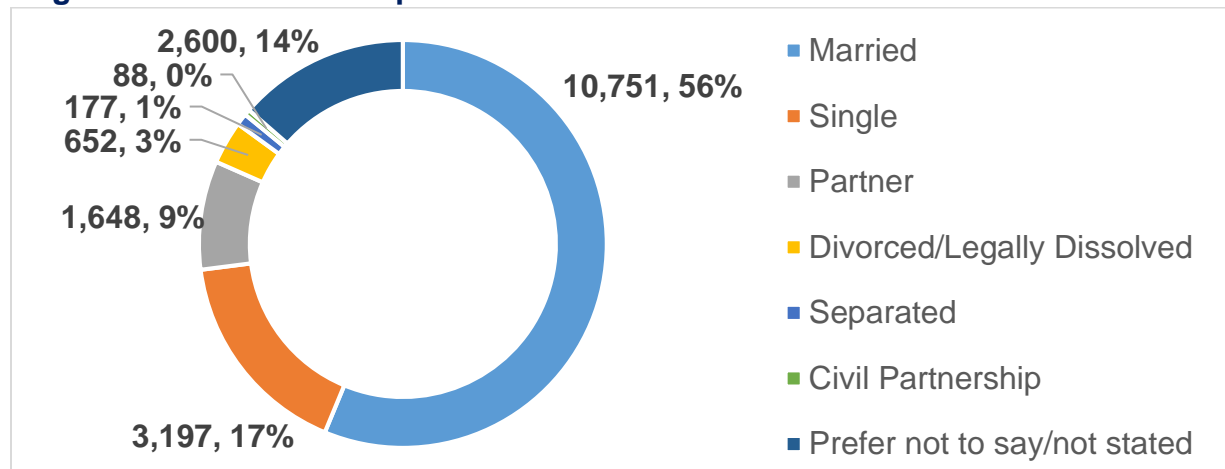
Registrant sexual orientation profile – 31 Mar 2018

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

40, 0%
112, 1%
213, 1%
2892, 15%
15971, 83%

4.7 Marital Status

Approximately half of registrants are married. This is in line with the percentage rate for the United Kingdom, where the marriage rate is 51.5 per cent.
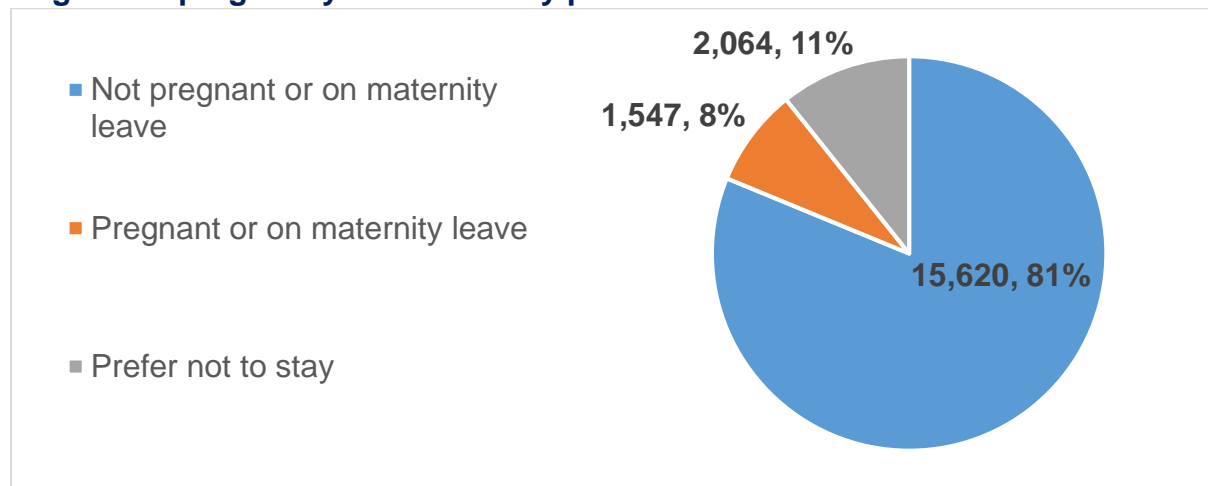
Registrant marital status profile – 31 Mar 2018

Legend:
- Married — 10,751, 56%
- Single — 3,197, 17%
- Partner — 1,648, 9%
- Divorced/Legally Dissolved — 652, 3%
- Separated — 177, 1%
- Civil Partnership — 88, 0%
- Prefer not to say/not stated — 2,600, 14%

4.8 Pregnancy and Maternity

As of 31 March 2018, eight per cent of registrants were either pregnant or were on maternity leave.

Registrant pregnancy and maternity profile – 31 Mar 2018

Legend:
- Not pregnant or on maternity leave — 15,620, 81%
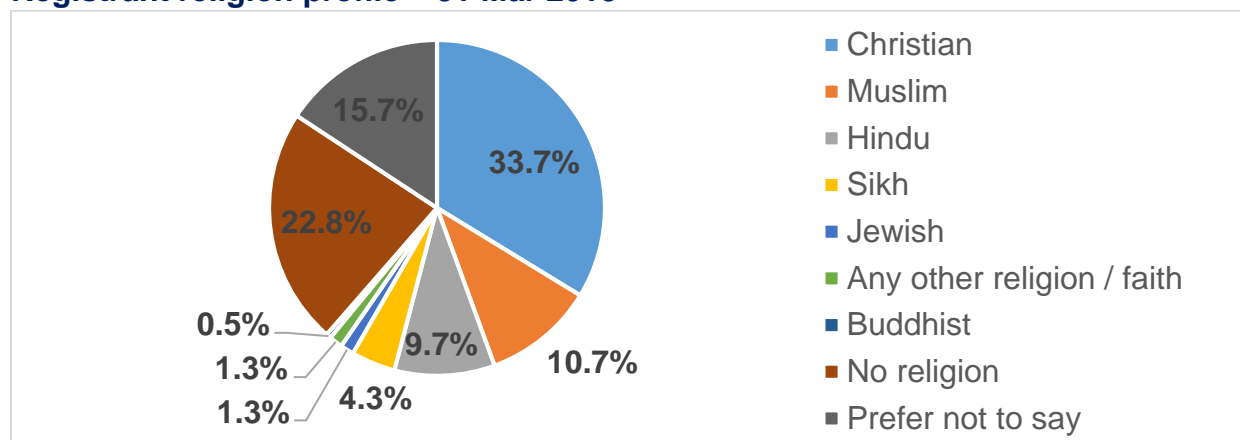- Pregnant or on maternity leave — 1,547, 8%
- Prefer not to stay — 2,064, 11%

4.9 Religion

31 per cent of registrants have not disclosed their religion (15 per cent did not respond and 16 per cent preferred not to say), therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data. From the data available, the most common religion that registrants identify as is Christian (33.7 per cent). In comparison, 59 per cent of the UK profile identify as Christian. The next largest groups are Muslim (10.7 per cent compared to 4 per cent of the UK population) and Hindu (9.7 per cent compared to 1.3 per cent of the population). Nearly a quarter hold no religious allegiance, which is in line with the UK.

Registrant religion profile – 31 Mar 2018

Legend:
- Christian — 33.7%
- Muslim — 10.7%
- Hindu — 9.7%
- Sikh — 4.3%
- Jewish — 1.3%
- Any other religion / faith — 1.3%
- Buddhist — 0.5%
- No religion — 22.8%
- Prefer not to say — 15.7%

4.10 Age and ethnicity

When comparing the age and ethnicity of the registrants we have data for, there is an identifiable trend that older age groups tend to be less ethnically diverse. In the 25-34 age group, the percentage of White and BAME registrants is even at 12 per cent each. However, from age 35 and older there is a higher percentage of White registrants than BAME registrants, with the difference increasing with age. It is worth noting that the Under 25 age group data is unreliable, with a third of registrants choosing not to provide data.

Age Group	White		BAME		Prefer not to say	
Under 25	340	2%	519	3%	63	0%
25-34	2,255	12%	2,194	12%	489	3%
35-44	2,956	16%	1,851	10%	611	3%
45-54	3,022	16%	716	4%	628	3%
55-64	2,006	11%	286	2%	415	2%
65+	453	2%	62	0%	89	0%
Total	11,032	58%	5,628	30%	2,295	12%

This trend is more evident amongst Optometrists.

Age/ethnicity by professional group

Age Group	OO White	DO White	OO BAME	DO BAME	OO Prefer not to say	DO Prefer not to say
Under 25	2%	2%	4%	1%	0%	0%
25-34	10%	15%	15%	3%	3%	2%
35-44	14%	21%	12%	4%	3%	4%
45-54	14%	22%	4%	2%	3%	4%
55-64	10%	13%	1%	2%	2%	2%
65+	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%

5. Fitness to Practise (FTP) complaints

One of our statutory functions is to investigate allegations that 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

When considering complaints made to us during the year, it was found that referrals were made slightly more often by men, which is a change in the trend that has existed for the previous two years. The gap between male and female referrers has dropped significantly, and is almost completely evenly split.

Source of Concern	15/16	2015/16 % of total concerns	16/17	2016/17 % of total concerns	17/18	2017/18 % of total concerns
Male Referrer	80	36%	155	36%	248	49%
Female Referrer	100	45%	217	51%	241	48%
Not known	6	3%	35	8%	10	2%
Other (e.g. referred by company)	37	17%	18	4%	6	1%
Total	223		425		505	

We collect diversity data from complainants on a voluntary basis. For 2017/18, we collected 107 monitoring forms (compared to 33 in 2016/17 and 51 in 2015/16) – which equates to approximately 21 per cent (eight in 2016/17 and 25 in 2015/16) of all known complainants. Whilst this data alone is not enough to rely on, for the last three years there had been a trend of a third of complainants who returned their forms to us reporting to have a disability. However, in 2017/18 fewer than ten respondents reported as having a disability. We will continue to ensure that disability is considered within all our processes, paying particular attention to public-facing processes, such as the FTP complaints process.

5.2. Registrants referred for a Fitness to Practise (FTP) complaint

Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018 we received 505 complaints about the fitness to practise of GOC registrants which is 18 per cent more than the previous year. From these, we opened 263 investigations. This is 9.9 per cent less than the previous year.

Optometrists received higher levels of complaints (78 per cent) than dispensing opticians (16 per cent), compared to the proportion of optometrists (57 per cent) and dispensing opticians (25 per cent) on our Register. Optometrists receiving a higher level of complaints, has been a consistent trend since 2012/13.

Students were referred for 5.5 per cent of the total FTP complaints (0.5 per cent of the number of students in the register), in comparison to last year where students made up 8.9 per cent of the total FTP complaints in 2016/17 (0.7 per cent of the number of students in the register).

31 per cent of the registrants' referred for FTP investigation did not provide their diversity monitoring data, therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data for all characteristics apart from age and gender.

Registrants referred for FTP investigation profile by professional group 2017/18

Registrant Type	17/18	% of total FTP complaints against role	% of complaints against total registrant role	Comparison Total Registrants	% of total registrants
Optometrist	169	78.2%	1.1%	15,764	57%
Dispensing Optician	35	16.2%	0.5%	6,760	25%
Student Optometrist	8	3.7%	0.2%	3,265	12%
Student Dispensing Optician	4	1.85%	0.2%	1,691	6%
Total	216		0.8%	27,480	

In comparison to previous years, the proportion is similar.

Registrants referred for FTP investigation profiled by professional group from 2014/15 to 2017/18

| Registrant Type	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18	
Optometrist	193	69%	158	71%	170	58%	169	64%
Dispensing Optician	31	11%	28	13%	37	13%	35	13%
Student Optometrist	10	3.6%	12	5%	12	4%	8	3%
Student Dispensing Optician	7	2.5%	2	1%	8	2%	4	2%
Subtotal	241		200		227		216	
Business registrant	38	13.6%	23	10%	67	23%	47	18%
Total FTP Complaints	279		223		294		263	

5.2.1 Gender

Excluding business registrants, 67 per cent of complaints we received in 2017/18 were made against male registrants (an increase from 56 per cent in 2016/17 and 62 per cent in 2015/16), compared to 38 per cent of fully qualified registrants who are male.

The gender distribution of registrants referred for FTP investigation differs across fully qualified and student registrants. For both optometrists (65 per cent) and dispensing opticians (77 per cent) a higher proportion of those referred for an FTP investigation were male. For students, the gender distribution of those referred for an FTP investigation was equal.

Gender profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation by professional group – 2017/18

Registrant category	Males under investigation		Females under investigation		Total
Optometrist	109	50%	60	28%	**169**
Dispensing Optician	27	13%	8	4%	**35**
Student Optometrist	6	3%	2	1%	**8**
Student Dispensing Optician	4	1%	0	0%	**4**
Total	**146**	**67%**	**70**	**33%**	**216**

Gender profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation by professional group 2013/14 to 2017/18
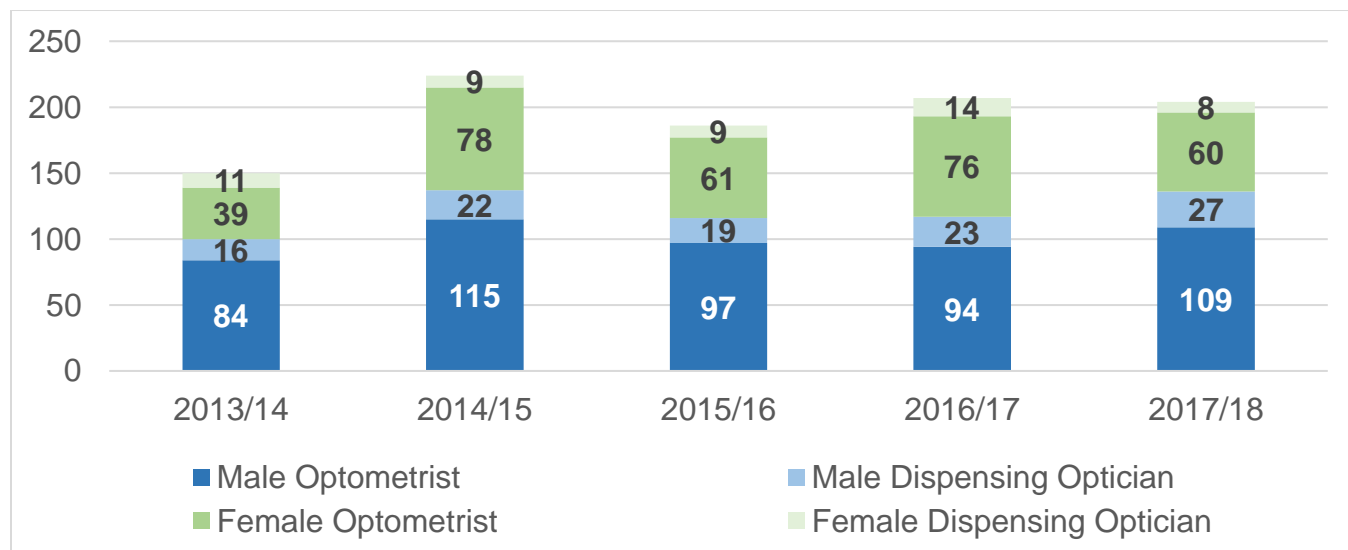
5.2.2 Age

In previous years, the majority of registrants referred for FTP investigation were in the 25-34 age group. In 2016/17 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 continuation of this pattern, with the 35-44 age group receiving the highest proportion of complaints. Although between the two categories they make up 57 per cent of all complaints, compared to constituting 50 per cent of all registrants.

Percentage of investigations opened per age from 2013/14 to 2017/18

	2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18	
Under 25	14	8%	3	1%	14	7%	20	9%	16	7%
25-34	56	34%	76	34%	79	40%	62	27%	57	26%
35-44	37	22%	55	25%	32	16%	68	30%	69	32%
45-54	35	21%	56	25%	43	22%	43	19%	29	13%
55-64	20	12%	28	12%	20	10%	28	12%	35	16%
65+	3	2%	6	3%	12	6%	8	3%	10	5%
Total	**165**		**224**		**200**		**229**		**216**	

The age profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation is largely consistent
between age groups. The only noticeable difference is that for dispensing opticians the
most common age group is 55-64, while for optometrists it is 35-44. However, this is
consistent with the older age profile of dispensing opticians. Students have not been
included in this analysis due to the size of the dataset.

Registrant category	Under 25		25-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+	
Optometrist	6	3%	50	25%	59	29%	22	11%	22	11%	10	5%
Dispensing Optician	2	1%	5	2%	8	4%	7	3%	13	6%	0	0%
Total	8	4%	55	27%	67	33%	29	14%	37	17%	10	5%

5.2.3 Ethnicity

31 per cent of registrants' referred for FTP investigation have not disclosed their
ethnicity and a further 13 per cent preferred not to say, therefore it is harder to draw
conclusions from the data. From those who disclosed their ethnicity, there appears to be
a disproportionate number of Indian/Indian British registrants referred for FTP
investigation. This ethnic group makes up only 18 per cent of registrants but 27 per cent
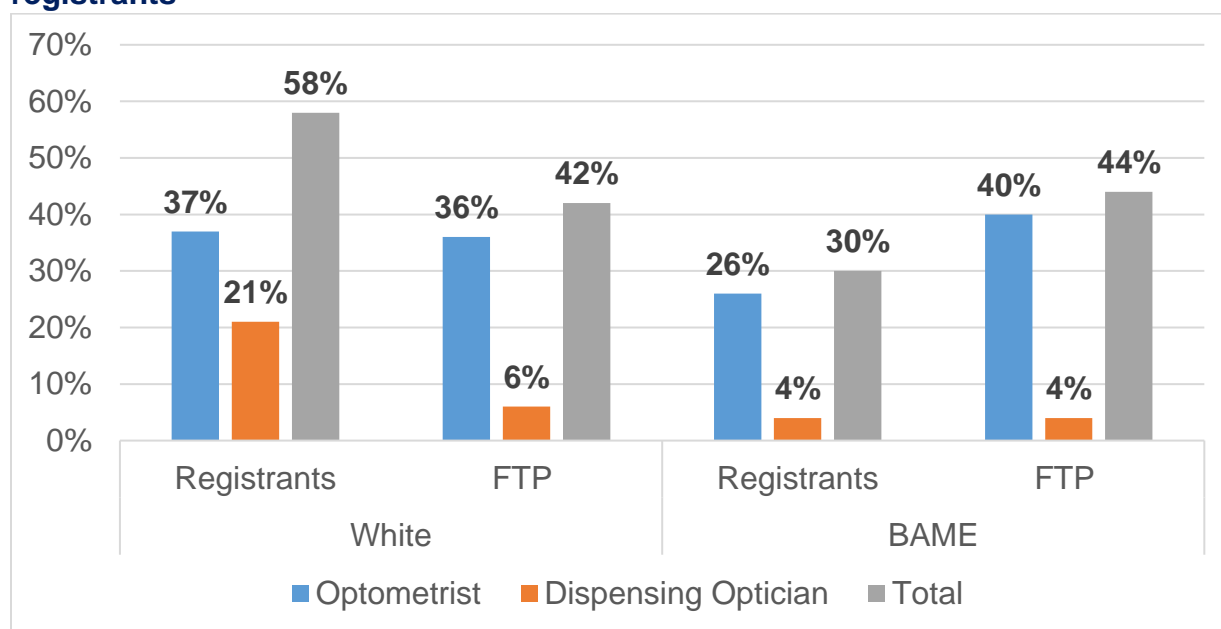of registrants referred for FTP investigation.

Ethnicity profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation
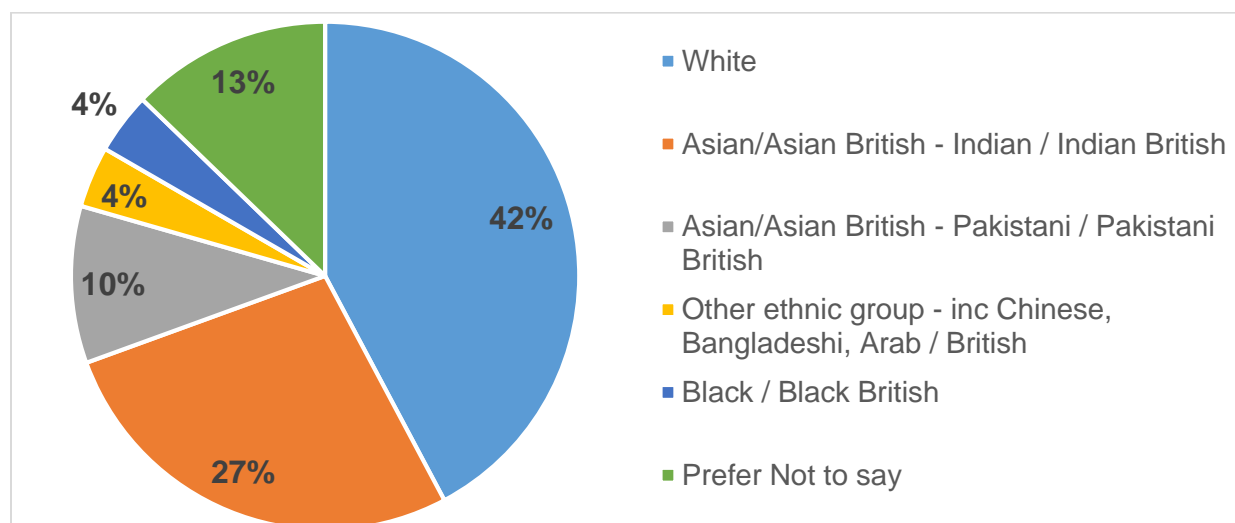
	White British	Indian / British	Pakistani / British	Black / British	Other
FTP Registrants	38%	27%	10%	4%	8%
Registrants	58%	18%	6%	1%	6%
UK Profile	87%	2%	2%	3%	2%

This trend is found across most of the BAME groups. 31 per cent of registrants are BAME, compared to 44 per cent of registrants referred for FTP investigation.

Ethnicity profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation, compared to all registrants

BAME optometrists make up a high proportion of optometrists' referred for a FTP investigation (40 per cent), compared with the proportion of BAME optometrists on the register (26 per cent).

5.2.4 Disability

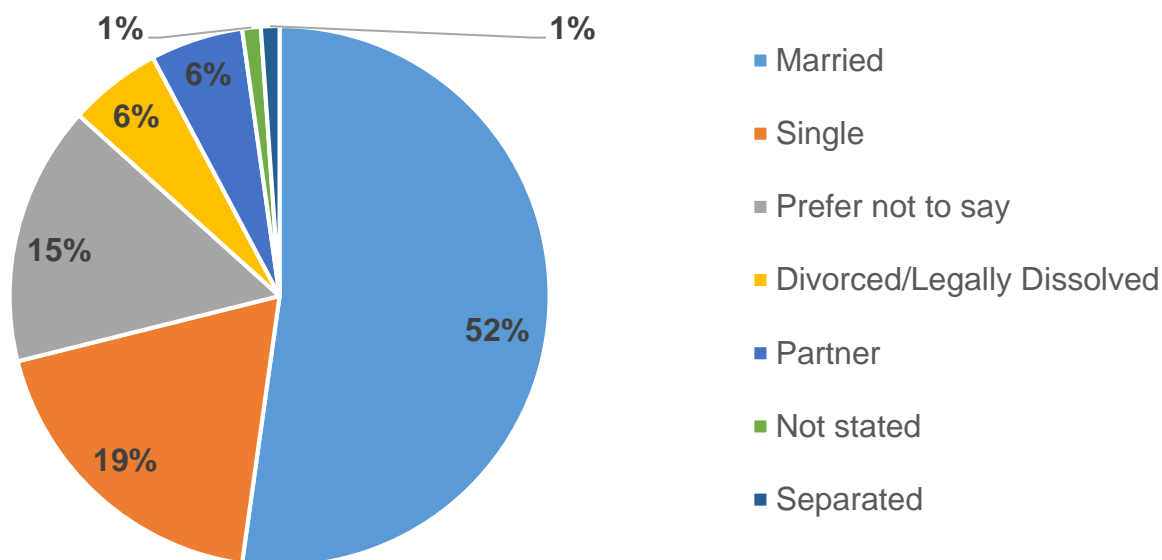Fewer than ten registrants referred for FTP investigation who responded report having any disability.

5.2.5 Sexual Orientation

Fewer than ten registrants referred for FTP investigation who responded report having any sexual orientation other than heterosexual.

5.2.6 Marital Status

The marital status of registrants referred for FTP investigation who responded is in line with the marital status for all registrants.
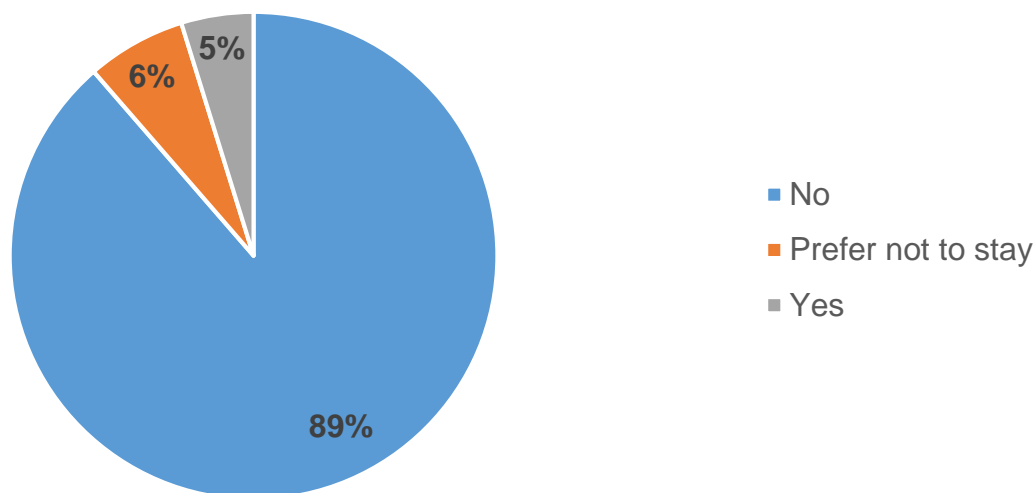
Marital status profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation

5.2.7 Pregnancy and Maternity

The majority of registrants referred for FTP investigation who responded reported that they were not pregnant, nor on maternity leave.

Pregnancy and maternity profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation


5.2.8 Religion

31 per cent of registrants' referred for FTP investigation have not disclosed their religion and a further 16 per cent preferred not to say, making the data analysis unreliable. From those who disclosed their religion, there appears to be a disproportionate number of Muslim registrants' referred for FTP investigation in comparison to all registrants. 18 per cent of registrants' referred for FTP investigation identify as Muslim, in comparison with 11 per cent of all registrants.

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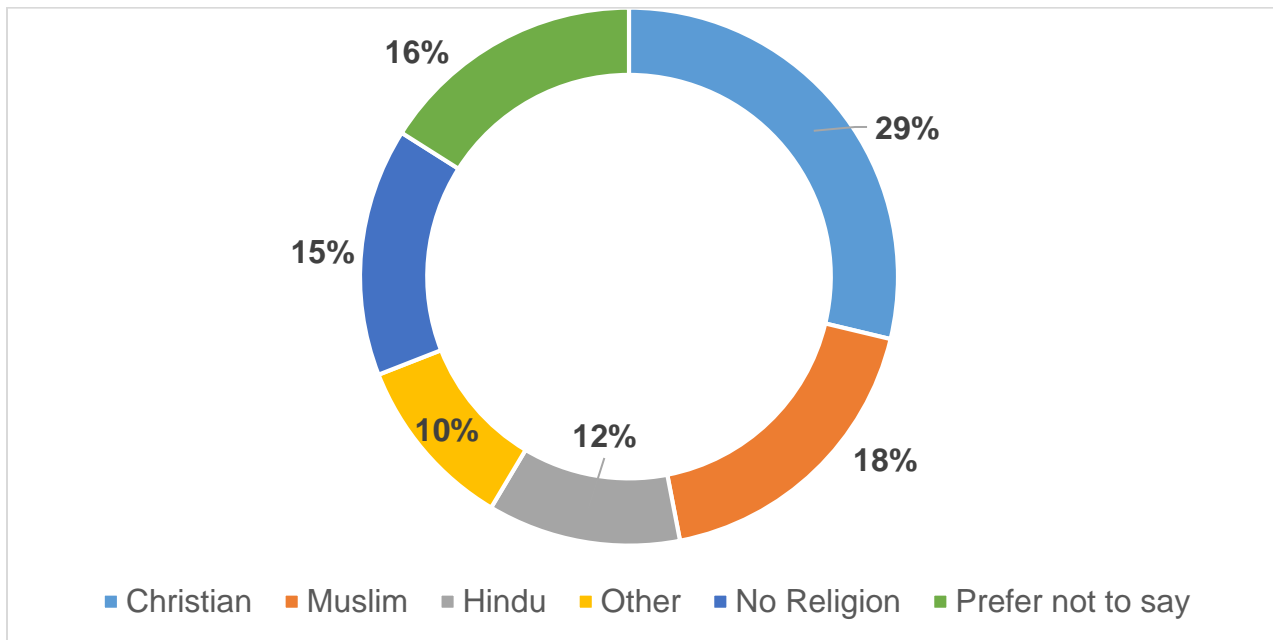
Due to having less than ten registrants' referred for FTP investigation who responded in each of the following categories, it has been necessary to combine the results with the Any other religion / faith category: Sikh, Jewish and Buddhist registrants.

Religious belief profile of registrants' referred for FTP investigation, compared to all registrants and UK profile
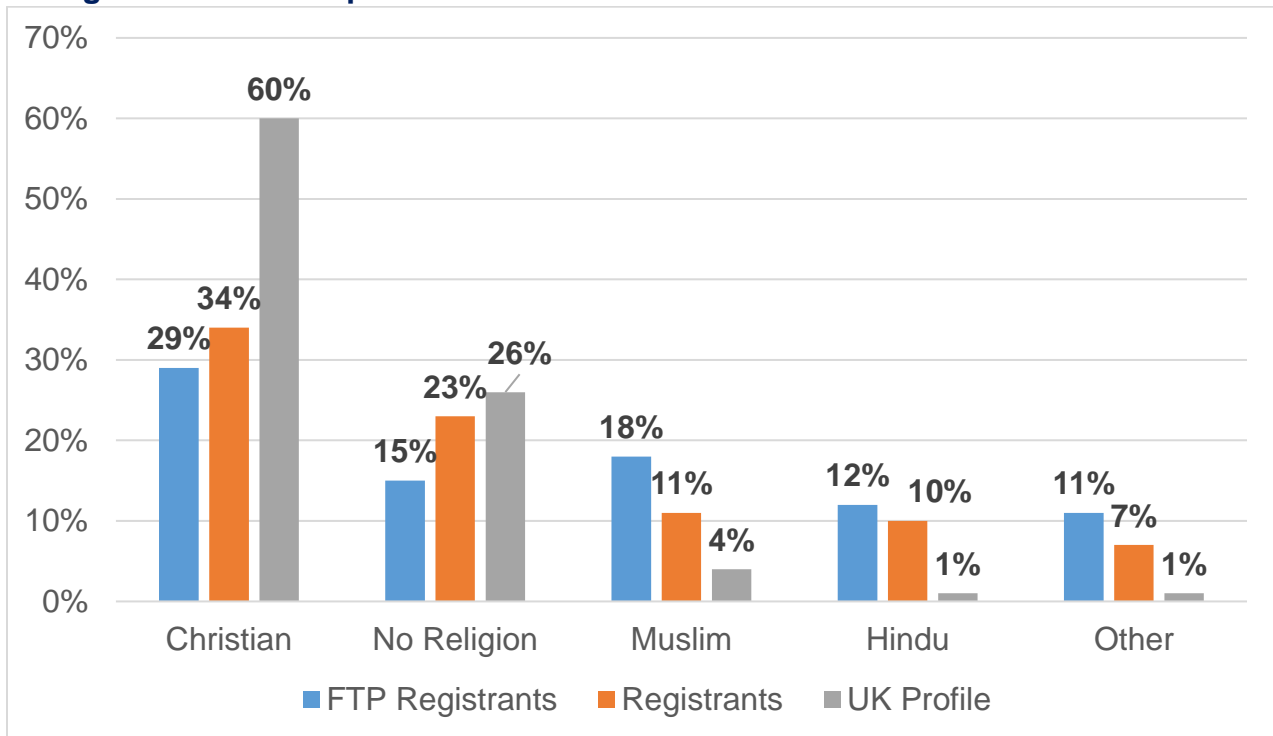
5.2.9 Location

The pattern across the nations in respect of 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.

Location profile of registrants referred for FTP investigation - 2015/16 to 2017/18

|	England	Wales	Scotland	N Ireland
2015/16	81.7%	6.9%	10.6%	0.9%
2016/17	88.4%	2.8%	8.4%	0.4%
2017/18	84.1%	5.5%	10.0%	0.5%
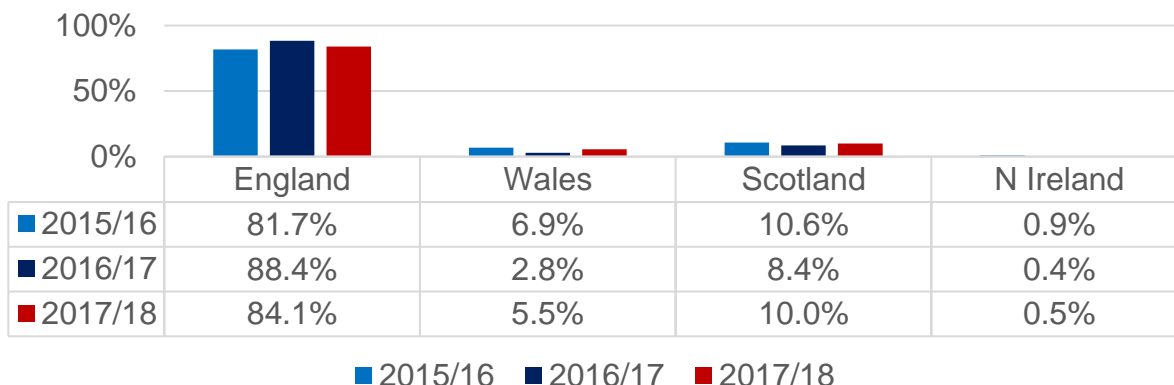
5.3. Allegation type

When we receive a complaint about an individual registrant's fitness to practice; 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 2017/18 males made up a higher proportion in all category of allegations, with the largest difference being in the conviction/caution category. The clinical category is the most common type of allegation against both sexes, and this category is most evenly split, although males still make up 63 per cent of clinical allegations.
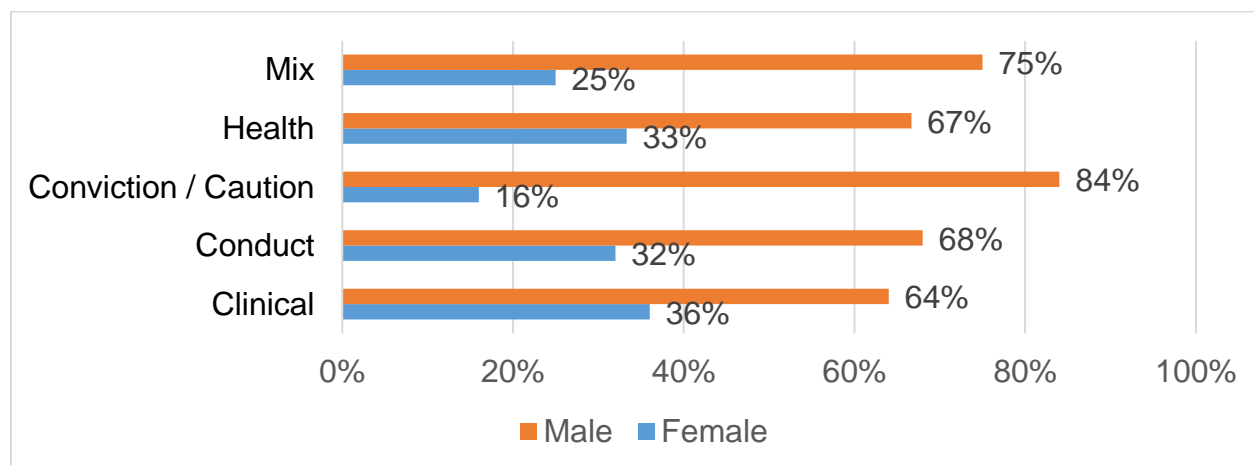
	Female	%	Male	%
Clinical	44	20%	78	36%
Conduct	17	8%	36	17%
Conviction	3	1%	16	7%
Health	3	1%	6	3%
Mix	3	1%	9	4%

5.3.2 Ethnicity

40 per cent of registrants' referred for FTP investigation have not disclosed their ethnicity, therefore it is harder to draw conclusions from the data. Based on the available data, BAME registrants' referred for FTP investigation have a higher proportion of conviction / caution allegations (42 per cent) than White registrants (16 per cent). However, for clinical allegations, white FTP registrants hold 42 per cent of investigations opened compared to the 37 per cent of investigations opened against BAME FTP registrants.

Registrant category	White		BAME		Not disclosed/ Prefer Not to Say		Total
Clinical	51	42%	45	37%	26	21%	122
Conduct	19	36%	19	36%	15	28%	53
Conviction / Caution	3	16%	8	42%	8	42%	19
Health	2	22%	2	22%	5	56%	9
Mix	1	8%	6	50%	5	42%	12
Total	76	35%	80	37%	59	27%	215

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 2015/16, although this does not consider the types of allegation received.
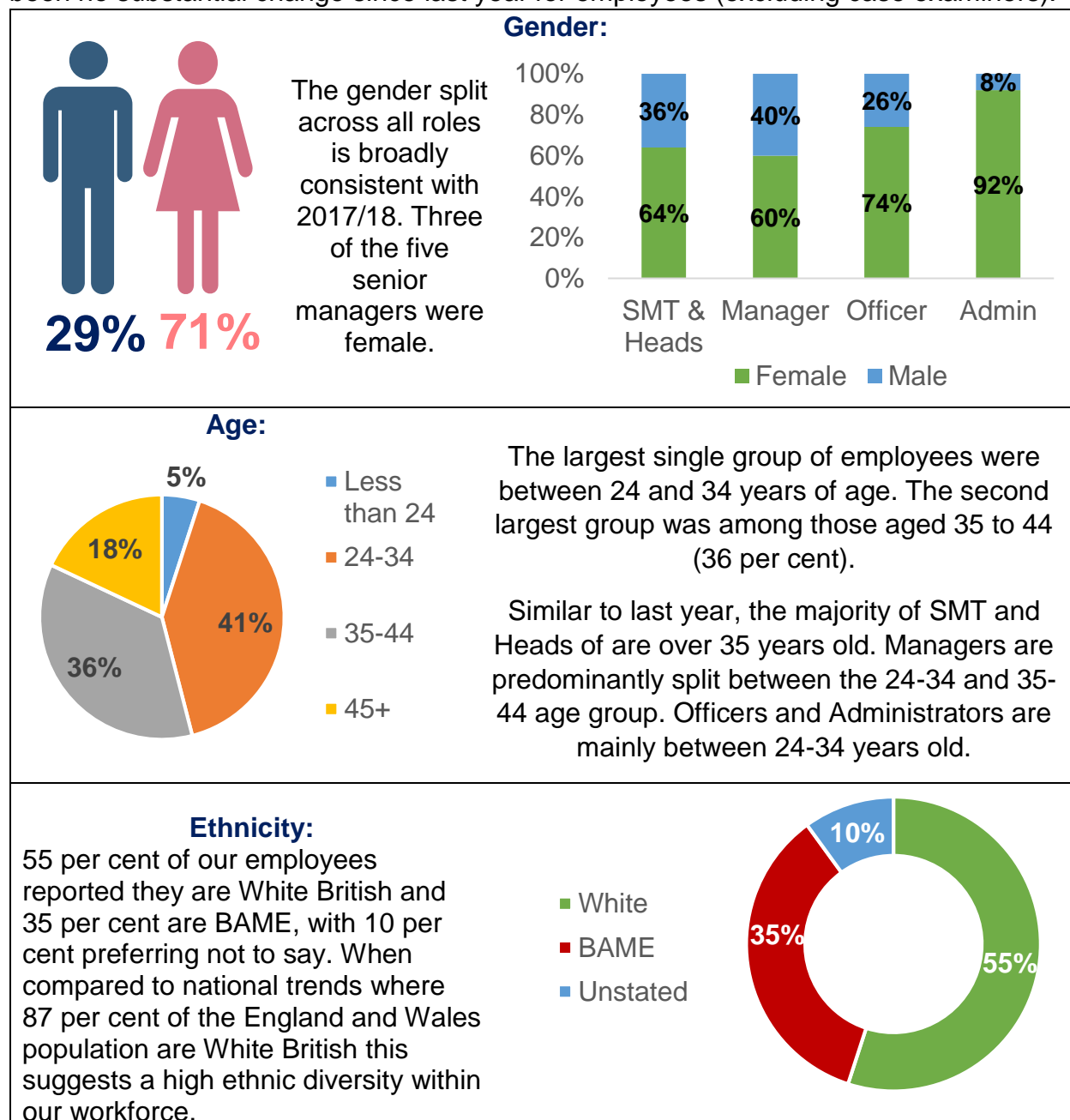
Percentage of total investigation outcomes by gender

Case Examiner decisions	15/16 Male	16/17 Male	17/18 Male	15/16 Female	16/17 Female	17/18 Female
No further action (inc advice/warning issued)	69%	66%	68%	83%	66%	78%
Referral to Fitness to Practise Committee (FTPC)	31%	22%	31%	17%	11%	11%
TOTAL number of decisions	134	50	108	94	38	73

6. Employee Profile

As an employer, we are committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity in all our work. In line with our commitment to being a principled regulator, our objective is to behave consistently and fairly to everyone and to 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 2018)
This year we have included our case examiner monitoring data. However, there has been no substantial change since last year for employees (excluding case examiners).

Gender:

The gender split across all roles is broadly consistent with 2017/18. Three of the five senior managers were female.

29% 71%

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 (36 per cent).

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

Ethnicity:
55 per cent of our employees reported they are White British and 35 per cent are BAME, with 10 per cent preferring not to say. When compared to national trends where 87 per cent of the England and Wales population are White British this suggests a high ethnic diversity within our workforce.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">

Pregnancy and Maternity:

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

We signed up to the Equality and Human Right Commission's Working Forward pledge, which promotes key standards for inclusive policies and processes for pregnant women or those on maternity leave. We also consider the same standards will be applicable for paternity or shared paternal leave.

We have focused on ensuring we have flexible working arrangements. We are considering how new technology could further enhance flexible working within our organization.

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Marital Status:

43 per cent are married, in a civil partnership or have a partner.

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Disability:

Fewer than ten employees reported having a disability.

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6.2. Employee Engagement

We have committed to running an employee engagement survey every year. This covers a range of topics from working environment, to raising concerns, to satisfaction and fair treatment/application of policies. We distribute the findings internally and then identify any recommendations and include them in our organisational development action plan.

As part of our employee engagement work, we launched a staff engagement group in May 2016. This group is responsible for supporting our engagement activities, linked to our annual staff engagement survey. These events generally overlap with Equality and Diversity training and awareness raising, with the intention of upskilling and updating knowledge to improve our communication with those who contact us.

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	5	9	1
Registration committee	**10**	2	4	6	-
Standards committee	**12**	3	4	7	1
Companies committee	**12**	3	2	5	5
Investigation committee	**9**	-	3	5	1
Audit and Risk committee	**4**	4	2	1	1
Remuneration committee	**4**	4	2	1	1
Nominations committee	**4**	3	2	1	1
Hearing panel*	37	-	17	20	-
Education Visitor panel	**14**	-	5	8	1

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 the GOC Council and committees.

7.1 Summary of members March 2018

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 74 per cent are female, compared to 57 percent of registrant members

	All Members	Council Members	Committee Members	Hearing Panel	Lay Members	Registrant Members	Education Visitors
Male	43%	56%	44%	35%	74%	57%	50%
Female	57%	44%	56%	65%	26%	43%	50%

Age:

25% **26%** **22%** **6%** **21%**

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

21 per cent of members did not disclose their age, however from the data we have it is noticeable how much of an even spread of age there is between the 25-44, 45-54 and 55-64 age groups. Compared to last year there has been an increase in the number of members aged 25-44.

Religion:

39 per cent of members reported that they were Christian (compared with 62 per cent in 2016/17 and 49 per cent in 2015/16), followed by 26 per cent reported no religious faith (similar since 2015). Eight per cent reported other religious belief and 27 per cent preferred not to answer this question.

Gender Identity:

Fewer than ten members have disclosed that the gender they currently identify with is not the gender they were born with, and fewer than ten members have declared that they are in the process of reassigning their gender.

Sexual Orientation:

Since 2015 most members have reported being heterosexual (72 per cent, 76 per cent in 2016/17) and 25 per cent preferred not to say.

Ethnicity:

The largest reported ethnicity across members is white (72 per cent), although this has reduced from over 85 per cent in 2016/17. 20 per cent preferred not to state their ethnicity, with the remainder from a variety of different ethnicities. This is similar to 2016/17.

Disability:

The majority of members did not report any disabilities, similarly to 2016/17.

Location:

88 per cent of members are from England. Welsh members make up five per cent of members, Scotland at four per cent, Northern Ireland three per cent and Ireland less than one per cent.

8. Member appointment

The aim of this section is to consider whether the member appointment process attracts applications from a diverse range of people and identify any potential barriers for individuals within our member appointment process.

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 our 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, this data has been aggregated or not published to ensure anonymity.

COMMITTEE	NO. OF ROLES	STAGES OF THE APPOINTMENTS CAMPAIGN			
		ALL APPS	LONGLISTED	INTERVIEWED	APPOINTED
Lay					
Registration	3	15	-	6	3
Standards	2	24	-	5	3
Education	2	20	-	4	2
Investigation	2	88	55	6	2
Hearing Panel	2	103	67	12	2
	11	**250**	**122**	**33**	**12**
Registrant					
Education	1 DO	16	-	7	2
Registration	1 RO	3	-	3	1
Companies	4 BR[3]	11	-	6	3
Investigation	1 DO	7	-	4	1
Investigation	1 OO	21	-	6	1
Hearing Panel	1 OO	47	27	6	1
	9	**105**	**27**	**31**	**9**
Other					
Companies, Education, Investigation & Standards	4 RMP[4]	7	-	5	4
	4	**7**	**-**	**5**	**4**
TOTAL	**24**	**362**	**149**	**69**	**25**

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[3] Business Representatives
[4] Registered Medical Practitioners

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 equality diversity and inclusion (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 88 per cent for our registrant campaigns (note: registrant return rates are lower as some campaigns were run before the introduction of mandatory submission, whereas all lay campaigns were run after the introduction of mandatory submission). As this return rate is over 60 per cent we have published monitoring data this year.

8.3.   Feedback Required

During the year we sent a user satisfaction survey to all those who had used our member appointments process to ascertain their feedback. The analysis showed that;

- 88 per cent agreed we were striving to be as diverse as the public we protect and are committed to equality of opportunity throughout the appointment process;
- 51 per cent of those who attended interview agreed the interview panel was representative of the GOC's aim to be as diverse at the public it protects (there was also a strong recognition from respondents that some protected characteristics are not always visible);
- When asked how satisfied they were that the four principles of a good appointments process were applied at all stages:
  - ✓ Merit – 63 per cent agreed
  - ✓ Fairness – 70 per cent agreed
  - ✓ Transparency and openness – 72 per cent agreed
  - ✓ Inspiring confidence – 56 per cent agreed

We are now reviewing our appointments process (including our application form, advertising and competences), considering the feedback received. We welcome feedback regarding our process and suggestions on how to improve it whilst still ensuring that applications can be fairly selected for shortlisting. Please contact us with any feedback you may have to edi@optical.org.

9.   Lay Member Appointment

9.1.   Summary of lay member appointment

There were 225 applicants (App), 30 interviewed (IV) and 12 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 was a slightly proportion of female lay applicants than male. This pattern is slightly exacerbated at the interview stage, where 63 per cent of interviewed lay applicants were female. This is a reversal from the trend witnessed over the last two years, where only 31 per cent of lay candidates were female in 2017, and 39 per cent in 2016.

	Male	Female
■ App	45%	55%
■ IV	37%	63%
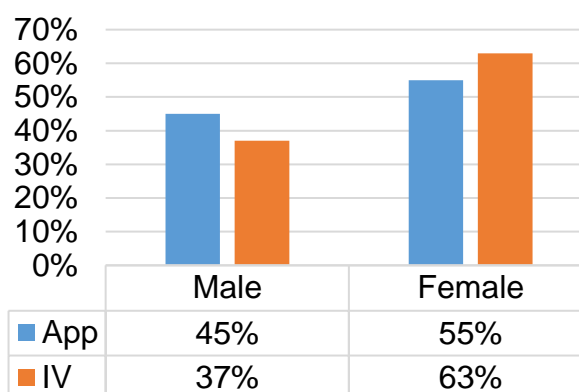
Disability:

Six per cent of lay applicants disclosed a disability, which is a very slight increase from last year (four per cent). This increased even further at the interview stage, where 10 per cent reported a disability.

Age:

The majority of lay applicants were aged above 45 (75 per cent), this is an increase from last year (57 per cent) and 2015/16 (54 per cent). This increases further at the interview stage (80 per cent). We are improving the amount of diversity monitoring data we receive from applicants, last year 27 per cent of applicants did not disclose their age compared to four per cent this year. Shown as percentage of applicants in that age group, per stage:

	25-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Unstated
■ App	21%	32%	33%	10%	4%
■ IV	13%	40%	33%	7%	6%
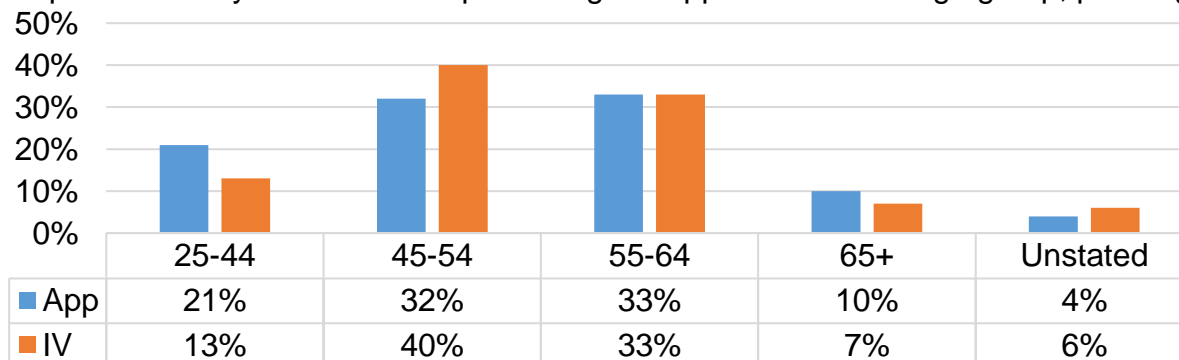
Religion:

The religion of lay applicants was mainly Christian (44 per cent) with 10 per cent unstated. 39 per cent had no religion and 8 per cent stated other religions. At the interview stage, 60 per cent of applicants held no religion, compared to 30 per cent identifying as Christian. This differs significantly from last year, which is likely due to last year's campaign to appoint a Council member from Northern Ireland. This campaign is more in line with previous appointments.
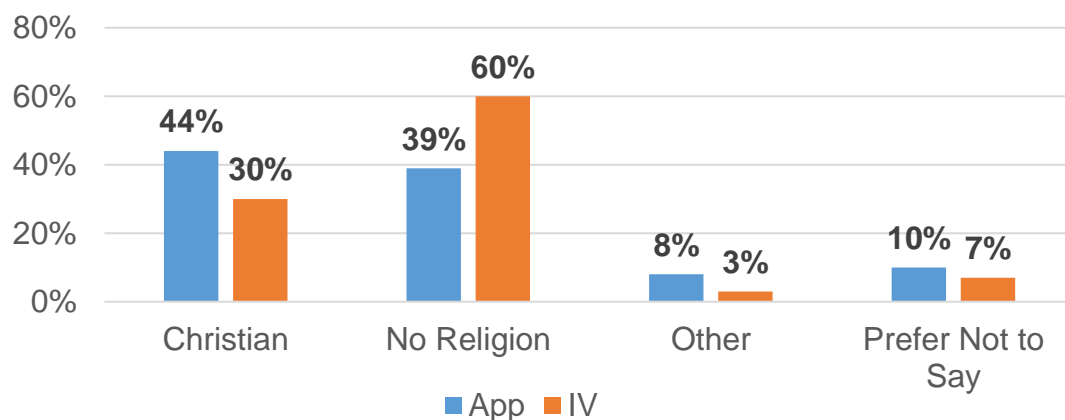
Ethnicity:

80 per cent of applicants identified as White, compared with 69 per cent in 2016/17. BAME applicants made up 12 per cent of all applicants, which is consistent with last year – ten per cent. This pattern is consistent between all applicants and those who were interviewed and appointed.
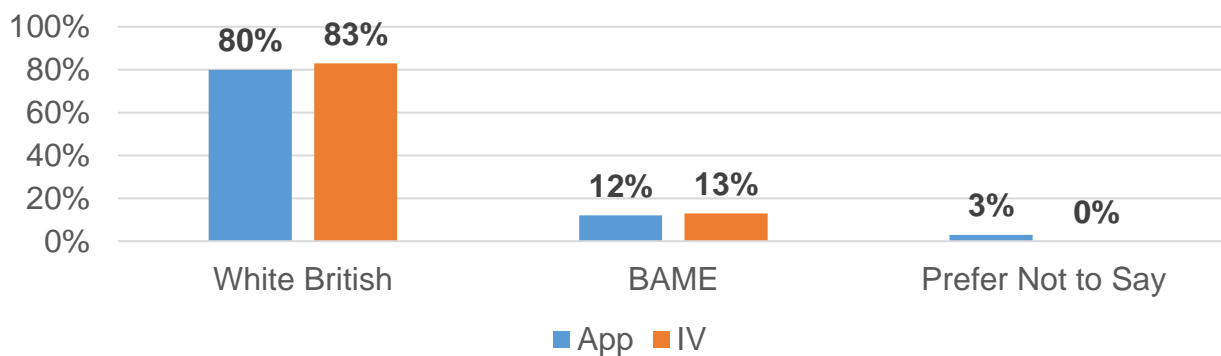
Marital Status:

68 per cent of applicants were married, with eight per cent stating that they were single. Fewer than five 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. 11 per cent of applicants did have carer responsibilities. This was a consistent figure with those who were interviewed and appointed.

Sexual Orientation:

82 per cent of lay applicants stated they were heterosexual, with nine per cent unstated. These weightings remained relatively similar throughout the application stages, with a proportional increase of heterosexuals being appointed (92 per cent). These figures show a higher percentage of applicants identifying as heterosexual in comparison to last year (63 per cent – however 30 per cent were unstated).

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. Wales had a slightly better proportionate rate at interview level in comparison to all applicants.
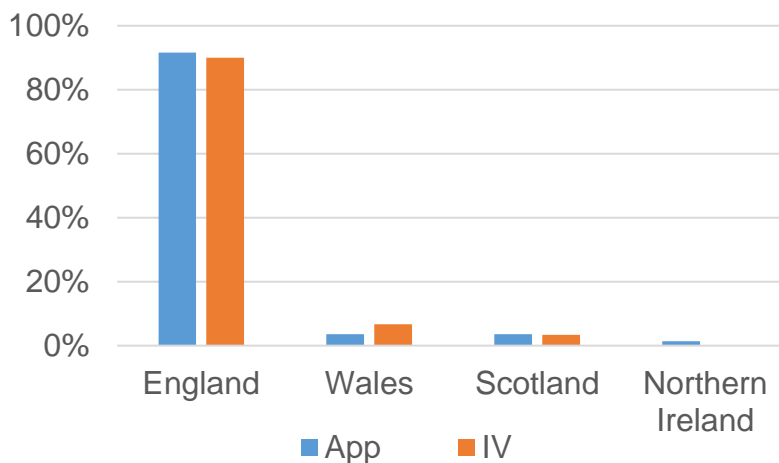
10. Registrant Member Appointment
10.1 Summary of Registrant Member Appointment

There were 107 registrant applications (App), 35 of these were interviewed (IV) and 9 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. It is difficult to cross-reference these results with previous campaigns due to the amount of respondents that did not state their gender (23 per cent last year).
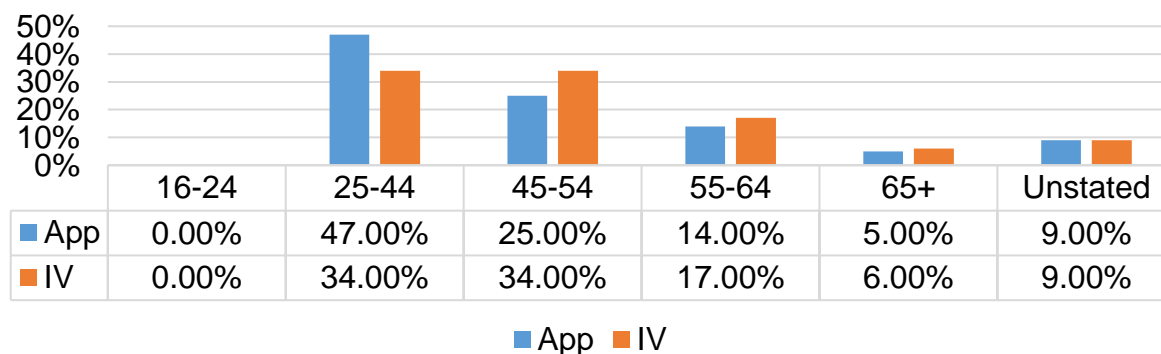
	Male	Female
App	50%	50%
IV	37%	63%
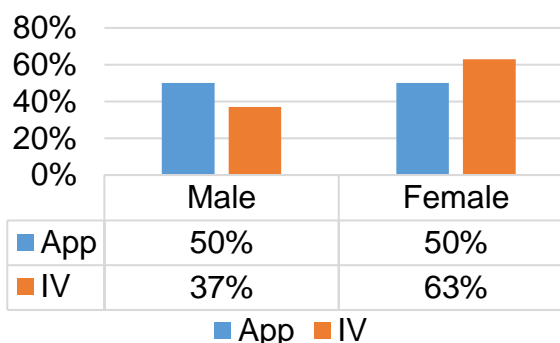
Shown as percentage of applicants in that gender group, per stage.

Disability:

Fewer than ten registrant applicants reported having a disability. We will continue our work to encourage applications from all individuals.

Age:

	16-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Unstated
App	0.00%	47.00%	25.00%	14.00%	5.00%	9.00%
IV	0.00%	34.00%	34.00%	17.00%	6.00%	9.00%

The age profile of registrant applicants is weighted more toward the 25-44 age group. Younger registrants are being encouraged to apply, with 48 per cent of applicants in 2017/18 aged between 25 and 44 age, compared to 32 per cent for the last two years. 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, 70 per cent are males.

Ethnicity:

56 per cent of registrant applicants identified as White and 37 per cent BAME, which is in line with our registrant profile. However, only 25 per cent of interviewees identified as BAME. Last year 61 per cent of applicants identified as White.
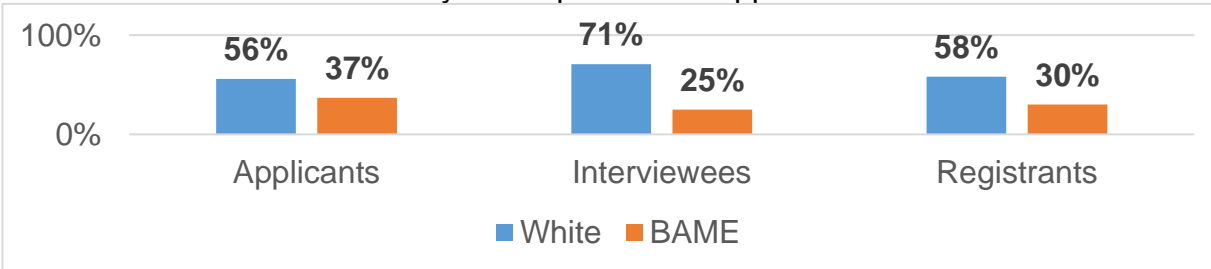
Religion:

The registrant applicants were mainly Christian (32 per cent) with 17 per cent unstated (five per cent preferred not to state, 12 per cent unknown). 14 per cent had no religion and 37 per cent other religious beliefs. This was replicated in the interview stage, and is in line with our registrant profile.
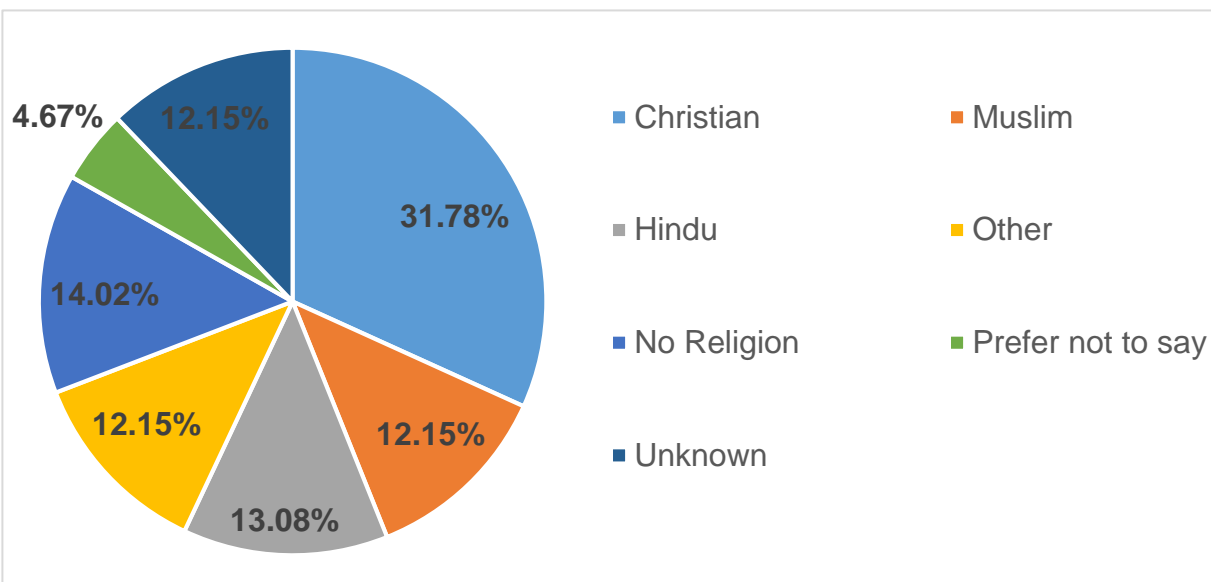
Marital Status:

57 per cent of registrant applicants were married, with 17 per cent stating that they were single. 17 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 only three 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 individual's 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:	**Pregnancy and Maternity:**
83 per cent of applicants stated they were heterosexual, with fewer than ten applicants identifying with any other sexual orientation. This pattern repeats itself at the interview stage.	Fewer than ten applicants stated that they were pregnant or on maternity leave.
Location:	**Gender Identity:**
90 per cent of applicants, and 85 per cent of interviewees were from England.	Fewer than ten applicants stated they identified as having changed gender since birth.