

A meeting of the Council of the General Dental Council

11:00am on Friday 21 April 2023 at the General Dental Council,

37 Wimpole Street, London

Members:

Lord Harris (Chair)

Terry Babbs

Ilona Blue

Donald Burden

Anne Heal

Angie Heilmann MBE

Jeyanthi John

Sheila Kumar

Mike Lewis

Caroline Logan

Simon Morrow

Laura Simons

The meeting will be held in public. Items of business may be held in private where items are of a confidential nature.¹

If you require further information or if you are unable to attend, please contact Katie Spears (Board Secretary) as soon as possible:

Katie Spears, Head of Governance and Board Secretary, General Dental Council

Email: KSpears@gdc-uk.org

¹ Section 5.2 of the General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of Council and Committees 2022

Public Council Meeting

Questions from members of the public relating to matters on this agenda should be submitted using the form on the Council meeting page of the GDC website. When received at least three working days prior to the date of the meeting, they will usually be answered orally at the meeting. When received within three days of the date of the meeting, or in exceptional circumstances, answers will be provided in writing within seven to 15 working days. In any event, the question and answer will be appended to the relevant meeting minute and published on the GDC website.

Confidential items are outlined in a separate confidential agenda; confidential items will be considered in a closed private session.

PART ONE - PRELIMINARY ITEMS

1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council	11:00 – 11:05am (5 mins)	Oral
2.	Declarations of Interest	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council		
3.	Questions Submitted by Members of the Public	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council		Oral
4.	Minutes of Previous Meetings To note approval of the full minutes of the public meeting and the abbreviated minutes of the closed session held on 24 February 2023	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council		Paper
5.	Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List To note any matters arising from the public meeting held on 24 February 2023 and review the rolling actions list	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council		Paper
6.	Decisions Log To note decisions taken between meetings under delegation	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council		Paper

PART TWO - ITEMS FOR DECISION AND DISCUSSION

No	Item & Presenter	Tabled for?	Time	Status
7.	Assurance Reports from Committee Chairs a. Audit and Risk Committee b. Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee	For noting	11:05 – 11:20am (15 mins)	Papers
8.	Improvements to the Specialists Lists Assessed Applications Process Ross Scales, Head of Upstream Regulation Katherine McGirr, Policy Manager	For noting	11:20 – 11:50am (30 mins)	Paper

No	Item & Presenter	Tabled for?	Time	Status
9.	Costed Corporate Plan 2023-2025 Publication Joanne Rewcastle, Associate Director, Communications & Engagement Colin MacKenzie, Head of Nations & Engagement	For noting	11:50 – 12:00pm (10 mins)	Paper

PART THREE - CONCLUSION OF BUSINESS

10.	Any Other Business	Toby Harris, Chair of the Council	12:00-12:05pm (5 mins)	Oral
11.	Date of Next Meeting Friday 23 June 2023 (Wimpole Street)			

LUNCH BREAK – 12:05 – 12:50pm
Before the closed session of Council

Appendix 1 - Items considered via correspondence

Note:

- *These papers will not be discussed during the substantive Council meeting unless there is a request, no later than 24 hours before the meeting, for a specific item to be added to the agenda.*
- *The deadline for comments on papers circulated via correspondence is outlined on the individual item.*

No.	Item	Authors	For	Closed /Public	Deadline
1	Annual Report on the Use of the Seal	Katie Spears	Noting	Public	19 April 2023

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 10:30am on Friday 24 February 2023
in Open Session at 37 Wimpole Street, London**

Council Members present:

Lord Harris	Chair
Terry Babbs	
Ilona Blue	
Donald Burden	
Anne Heal	
Angie Heilmann MBE	
Sheila Kumar	
Mike Lewis	
Caroline Logan	
Simon Morrow	
Laura Simons	

Executive Directors in attendance:

Ian Brack	Chief Executive and Registrar
Gurvinder Soomal	Chief Operating Officer
Stefan Czerniawski	Executive Director, Strategy
Lisa Marie Williams	Executive Director, Legal and Governance

Staff and Others in attendance:

Samantha Bache	Associate Director, Finance (item 8 only)
Clare Callan	Associate Director, Fitness to Practise Case Progression
David Criddle	Head of Business Delivery, Intelligence & PMO (Item 8 only)
Angela Harding	Associate Director, People and Organisational Development (as observer)
Rebecca Ledwidge	Deputy Head of Governance
Joanne Rewcastle	Associate Director, Communications and Engagement
Katie Spears	Head of Governance (Secretary)

Others in Attendance:

Sir Ross Cranston	Chair of the Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC)
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Members of the public attended as observers.

Apologies

John Cullinane Executive Director, Fitness to Practise
Jeyanthi John

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including members of the public who had joined to observe, and noted apologies from John Cullinane and Jeyanthi John.

2. Declaration of interests

2.1 No declarations were made.

3. Questions Submitted by Members of the Public

3.1 No questions had been received.

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

4.1 The full minutes of the public meeting and the abbreviated minutes of the closed meeting held on 16 December 2022 had been **approved via correspondence**.

5. Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List

5.1 The Council **noted** that there were no live actions at present.

6. Decisions Log

6.1 The Council **noted** that one decision had been taken by correspondence since the last Council meeting:

- a. On 22 February 2023, the Council noted the Review of Specialty Curricula.

7. Assurance Reports from the Committee Chairs

7.1 The Council heard from the Committee Chairs in respect of the assurance taken from work conducted in Committee since the last Council meeting.

Audit and Risk Committee

7.2 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) updated the Council that the Committee had met once since the last Council meeting.

7.3 The Council heard that the Committee had scrutinised and received assurance on the timetable for producing and laying the Annual Report and Accounts. A draft would be presented to the Committee at a single-issue meeting in March 2023. The Committee had been pleased with progress in respect of the presentation of the internal audit recommendation tracker.

7.4 The Committee had discussed the continuing issues with resourcing in the Information Governance function and had noted that a plan for recruitment was in place. Mandatory and statutory functions were being delivered, and a prioritised list of wider activities would take place once the team was properly resourced. The Committee had also considered an update on the New Ways of Working (NWOW) pilot scheme, in respect of risks connected to recruitment and retention.

Finance and Performance Committee

- 7.5 The Chair of the Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) informed the Council that the Committee had met once since the last Council meeting.
- 7.6 The Council heard that the Committee had scrutinised the Annual Organisational Performance Report, with a focus on performance issues in Fitness to Practise (FtP) and Registration. The Committee had noted that recruitment and retention in FtP was improving and it had taken assurance that multi-disciplinary reviews were taking place regularly to ensure that there was no risk to patients being 'stored up' in older cases. At its next meeting, the Committee had agreed that it would receive a paper outlining the strategy and tactics for resourcing older and newer cases in due course. It would also conduct an in-depth review of the Dental Complaints Service.
- 7.7 The Council noted that it would receive a recommendation to approve a new corporate project in respect of the review that it had requested take place on the Associates Framework in due course.

Remuneration and Nomination Committee

- 7.8 The Chair of the Remuneration and Nomination Committee (RemNom) informed the Council that the Committee had met once since the last Council meeting.
- 7.9 The Council heard that, in respect of Council Member recruitment, there had been a positive response to both advertised roles. In relation to the role that required less non-executive experience and that would start without a Committee responsibility, there had been a large pool of candidates that offered a range of diverse characteristics. The Selection Panel would meet shortly to conduct the longlisting exercise. The Committee had also reviewed the documentation used in respect of the Chair and Council Member appraisal process and would substantively review that process in 2024.
- 7.10 The Council **noted** the assurance reports.

The Associate Director, Finance and the Head of Business Delivery, Intelligence & PMO joined the meeting.

8. Annual Organisational Performance Report

- 8.1 The Associate Director, Finance and the Head of Business Delivery, Intelligence & PMO presented the paper with the annual report to the Council on organisational performance for 2022. The Council noted that the Executive Management Team (EMT) and FPC regularly reviewed detailed performance reporting and provided assurance to the Council. This was the first iteration of an annual consolidated report. The key themes identified were reward, recruitment, estates and organisational forecasting. The Council was asked to approve the format and discuss the contents of the report.
- 8.2 The Council **discussed** the following:
- a. The FPC had asked the EMT to consider interdependencies between organisational initiatives that were being pursued to address the key issues faced by the GDC. This work would be considered by the Committee in May 2023. The Committee had noted that the external climate was extremely volatile, that staff turnover remained high, and that this created issues in respect of the organisation's ability to accurately forecast.
 - b. 53% of corporate projects were in exception. This was being addressed, where possible, but some elements remained outside of the control of the organisation –

such as legislative change. These issues in respect of project delivery were also disruptive to business-as-usual activities.

- c. In relation to the assessment of applications to the specialist lists, the Specialist Advisory Committees (SAC) had suspended assessment of the specialist list applications. This was said to be due, in part, with their dissatisfaction with the appeals process. A decision had been made to bring this assessment process in-house and would be expedited.
- d. The recent section 60 order amending the legislative framework meant that the route for overseas qualified dentists applying for registration as dental care professionals in the UK would be closed on 8 March. The Registration team were actively engaging with Overseas Registration Exam (ORE) partners to increase capacity for assessments and those candidates who had been impacted by the five-year time limitation due to Covid-19 would be prioritised for the April diet.
- e. In respect of FtP case progression, the new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were helpful and the Council noted that both new and older cases were being progressed appropriately. The FPC would examine this issue on behalf of the Council at its next meeting and report back on its assurance levels.
- f. In relation to retention of staff, the Council noted the importance of celebrating success and ensuring that targets were realistic and achievable, whilst also driving performance improvement. It was noted that staff development would be an increased focus in 2023. In respect of recruitment, the hybrid working model was a useful tool and analysis was taking place to examine any impacts to productivity. It was difficult to segregate the specific impact of the pilot from other factors, such as sickness levels and absence, but the EMT would continue to analyse the available evidence alongside work in respect of the Estates Strategy.
- g. In respect of Registration, the FPC had been assured that elements outside of the control of the organisation had also impacted performance, but the area was recovering well. The Committee had urged the expedition of the paperless office project.
- h. There might be value in the FPC conducting a reflective exercise around projects that had been de-prioritised to ascertain whether there had been significant shifts in their importance, or the declassification or cancellation of projects was due to a refinement in understanding as to whether work required a full project structure, or it was better classified as an operational initiative.

8.3 At 11am, the Council observed a one minute's silence marking the one-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine.

8.4 The Council **approved** the format of the annual report into organisational performance.

The Associate Director, Finance and the Head of Business Delivery, Intelligence & PMO left the meeting.

9. Board Development

9.1 The Head of Governance presented a paper with proposals for a three-year programme of Board development for the Council that were aligned to identified and future strategic challenges. The composition of the Council changed regularly, and the external environment was volatile. A three-year framework of development activities would support the induction and progression of new Council Members whilst supporting the maintenance and enhancement of the skillset of the current iteration of the Council. The

first year would include a session at the Council away day in the summer, two smaller group sessions and self-directed learning. A reflection session would then be planned to evaluate the impact of the learning and any priority focus areas would be built into the rolling programme.

9.2 The Council **discussed** the following:

- a. It was supportive of the work and proposed approach and recognised the impact that the Council could have on the culture, tone and behaviours of the organisation. Building in reflective time for discussion on these topics would be helpful and these themes could be threaded into the sessions in 2023.
- b. The efficient use of the assurance framework – through ensuring that there was minimal duplication of work considered by Committees and the Council – remained a priority.
- c. Self-directed learning would be very important and relevant areas for improvement could be picked up through the appraisal process.
- d. If possible, and if it aligned with the timelines for appointment, incoming Members to the Council could be invited to join the summer development session. Thought would need to be given to ensuring that the Council Member without initial Committee responsibilities was inducted thoroughly without overburdening their time, given the advertised time commitment. Building relationships of trust and providing adequate peer support for incoming Members was vital.
- e. Previous Council Members could also be invited to support the mentoring approach proposed.
- f. Once approved, sessions should be diarised promptly to facilitate Council Members' attendance.

9.3 The Council **approved** the proposed approach.

10. Research Programme

10.1 The Executive Director, Strategy presented the paper which outlined the research work conducted in 2022 and proposed a research strategy for 2023 and beyond. The Council had approved a refreshed approach to GDC research in the summer of 2022, whereby the Council would approve the direction of research by the organisation and its attendant publication would be considered more automatic, save for contentious or significant research findings. The Council was invited to approve the research approach, as outlined in section 5 of the Council paper.

10.2 The Council **discussed** the following:

- a. In respect of primary large-scale research with the public and a population study in respect of registrants, the organisation was keen to develop an understanding of the professional life cycle of dental registrants and how effective current systems were in respect of a safe transition from education to practice. There was a 'long term' intention in respect of this work, but it would not be procured on the basis of a 'long term' contract and value for money would be a key consideration.
- b. There was a need to ensure that research pieces could impact organisational effectiveness and were pragmatic in focus.
- c. The primary focus of the research work was impacting the ability of the organisation to protect the public, and ensure public confidence in the professions. The external impact of the work was of second order of importance

but it was useful to understand whether it would support wider policy development.

- d. The Council requested an update on the work for 2023 at its December 2023 meeting.

10.3 The Council **noted** the update for 2022 and **approved** the proposed approach for 2023 and beyond.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 There was no other business.

11.2 The meeting was closed at 11.55am.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
General Dental Council
held at 12:45pm on Friday 24 February 2023
in Closed Session at 37 Wimpole Street, London**

Council Members present:

Lord Harris	Chair
Terry Babbs	
Ilona Blue	
Donald Burden	
Anne Heal	
Angie Heilmann MBE	
Sheila Kumar	
Mike Lewis	
Caroline Logan	
Simon Morrow	
Laura Simons (via MS Teams)	

Executive Directors in attendance:

Ian Brack	Chief Executive and Registrar
Gurvinder Soomal	Chief Operating Officer
Stefan Czerniawski	Executive Director, Strategy
Lisa Marie Williams	Executive Director, Legal and Governance

Staff and Others in attendance:

Clare Callan	Associate Director, FtP Case Progression
Sam Clements	Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit (item 9 only)
Toby Ganley	Head of Right Touch Regulation (item 8 only)
Angela Harding	Associate Director, People and Organisational Development (as observer)
Rebecca Ledwidge	Deputy Head of Governance
Joanne Rewcastle	Associate Director, Communications and Engagement
Katie Spears	Head of Governance (Secretary)

Apologies

John Cullinane	Executive Director, Fitness to Practise
Jeyanthi John	

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from John Cullinane and Jeyanthi John.

2. Declaration of interests

- 2.1 No declarations of interest were made.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The full minutes of the closed meeting held on 16 December 2022 had been **approved via correspondence**.

4. Matters Arising and Rolling Actions List

- 4.1 The Council **agreed** that the item marked 'suggested complete' should be considered complete.

5. Decisions Log

- 5.1 There were no decisions of the Council to report.

6. Minutes of the meetings of the Non-Statutory Committees

- 6.1 The minutes of the following non-statutory Committees were **noted** by the Council:
- a. The Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC) meeting of 8 December 2022.
 - b. The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting of 24 January 2023.
 - c. The Remuneration and Nomination Committee (RemNom) meeting of 2 February 2023.
- 6.2 The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) on 16 February 2023 would be circulated following the Council meeting.

7. Chief Executive's Report

- 7.1 The Chief Executive provided an update on the following topics: the dental workforce, recent stakeholder engagements, international registration and Executive Management Team (EMT) development.
- 7.2 The Council **noted** the updates.
- The Head of Right Touch Regulation joined the meeting.

8. Professional Standards Authority (PSA) Report on the GDC's Performance for 2021-2022

- 8.1 The Head of Right Touch Regulation presented the paper on the organisational response to the PSA report on the GDC's performance for 2021-2022. The Council heard that the PSA had introduced three yearly cycles of performance review and this first year was a full review. The subsequent two years would be lighter touch.
- 8.2 The Council heard that the organisation had met 16 of the 18 Standards, but that Standards 11 (Registration timeliness) and 15 (Fitness to Practise timeliness) had not been achieved. The GDC considered that these decisions were fair and was already working to tackle the areas for improvement in these areas.

8.3 The Council **discussed** the report and the approach to an organisational response.

8.4 The Council **agreed** that the organisation should provide a formal response to the PSA's report, reiterate its commitment to improvement in relevant areas and address any residual areas of concern in respect of the performance assessment.

The Head of Right Touch Regulation left the meeting.

The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit joined the meeting.

9. Strategic Risk Appetite

9.1 The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit presented the paper on strategic risk management to the Council.

9.2 The Council was asked to discuss and approve the proposed approach to the ownership of the Strategic Risk Register (SRR), the governance arrangements surrounding GDC risk management, the presentation of the risk appetite matrix. The Council was asked to then set its strategic risk appetite for 2023.

The Head of Risk Management and Internal Audit left the meeting.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 There was no other business, and the meeting was closed at 14:45pm.

Decisions Log - Public Council – 21 April 2023

Date decision taken (confirmed)	Decision taken by	Agenda Item	Purpose	Outcome
20/03/2023	Council – by correspondence	Associates Framework Review – CCP Project	To approve the incorporate of a new corporate project into the CCP 2023-2025 – the Associates Framework Review.	The Council approved the incorporation of the project.
19/04/2023	Council – by correspondence	Annual Report on the Use of the Seal	To note the annual report on the use of the Common Seal.	The Council noted the report.

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Assurance Report

Since the last Council meeting, the ARC has met once, on the 27 March 2023.

This meeting was focussed on the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) 2022, but the ARC also considered the progress on actions and received the regular report from the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer which provided updates on Fitness to Practise, Registration and engagement with the Department of Health and Social Care.

At this meeting the Committee:

- **Discussed** the ARA financial considerations in relation to Going Concern, Contingent Liabilities and Pension Valuation Applied and **approved** the recommendations.
- **Discussed** in detail the full draft of the ARA 2022, the National Audit Office (NAO) audit planning report, the haysmacintyre audit completion report, the haysmacintyre audit opinion, and the NAO audit completion report.
- The Committee was advised that five out of the seven areas that been described as outstanding in the NAO Audit Completion Report had been completed since the dispatch of the papers (these were the 'Exit packages and Staff numbers', 'Bank letter', 'Taxation', 'pension asset annuities disclosure', and 'Pension assets confirmation'). The Committee asked to be appraised of progress on the remaining two items ('internal review process' and 'the review of the final version of the ARA') as matters progressed in the lead up to the Council meeting on 21 April 2023.
- The Committee made suggestions and recommendations in relation to the final ARA 2022 paper and **approved** it for recommendation to the Council, subject to the amendments discussed.

Statutory Panellists Assurance Committee (SPC) Assurance Report to Council at its 21 April 2023 meeting

1. SPC met once since the last meeting of the Council on 24 February 2023 in Wimpole Street, London.
2. In addition there continue to be informal conversations between SPC members and between the Chair and the Executive about the implementation of the Committee's priorities. The Chair had visited the Fitness to Practise (FtP) team in Colmore Square, Birmingham.
3. The Committee welcomed Jasvinder Matharoo who attended his first meeting as a committee member.

Adjudication separation

4. The Committee received an update on the continuing Separation of Hearings project, following the launch of the Dental Professionals Hearings Service (DPHS).

Appointment of Fitness to Practise Panel Chairs

5. The Committee received a proposal to approve the appointment of two further panellists to chair fitness to practise hearings. A reduction in hearings and a change in working practises over the pandemic had meant that fewer candidates had been willing to put themselves forward for the role of chair. Chair development training had been put in place to respond to this.
6. The Committee **approved** the appointment of one Dental Care Professional (DCP) and one lay chair to the pool of FtP panel Chairs.

Legal Adviser and Panellist Recruitment Update

7. The Committee received an update on the status of Legal Adviser and FtP Panellist recruitment exercises. Legal Adviser recruitment was on track and interviews were currently being scheduled. FtP Panellist recruitment had been taken inhouse with the People and OD team.

Learning, Development and Performance Update

8. The Committee heard that training on specific topics and online modules were being used by the Hearings Service to address concerns raised at Quality Assurance Group (QAG) meetings.
9. The Committee discussed the current survey for hearings feedback and noted that mandatory 360 review surveys were planned. A separate customer service feedback form for those attending a hearing had also been designed.

Quality Assurance Reports

10. The Committee heard that QAG had tasked the legal and policy teams with developing a framework on how discriminatory practices in the workplace should affect a registrant's fitness to practise.
11. The Committee discussed the Professional Standards Authority (PSA)'s learning points update. A decision made by a Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) had been appealed by the PSA.
12. The Committee heard about progress in case management in the Hearings Service and how the hearings service was undertaking a review of how lost, wasted and saved days were reported. It noted that a more robust approach should be encouraged.

The next Committee meeting will be held on 07 June 2023.

Sir Ross Cranston

Implementing improvements to the Specialist List Assessed Applications process

Executive Director	Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director, Strategy
Author(s)	Katherine McGirr, Policy Manager
Type of business	For noting
Purpose	To provide an update to Council on the work to restart and improve the Specialist List Assessed Applications process
Issue	The Specialist List Assessed Applications process has been paused since March 2022. The GDC has been working with relevant stakeholders to restart the process by bringing it under direct administration, and to make broader improvements to streamline the process.
Recommendation	Council is asked to note the contents of the paper.

1. Background

- 1.1 The GDC maintains 13 specialist lists of GDC-registered dentists who have met minimum standards of training, as specified in our legislative framework¹.
- 1.2 In 1980, the GDC was designated as the UK competent authority in relation to orthodontics and oral surgery, the two specialties specifically recognised in European legislation. The GDC has also designated eleven further specialist titles, mostly in 1988, with the current list set by *The General Dental Council (Specialist List) Regulations 2008*².
- 1.3 There are a number of routes by which GDC-registered dentists can apply for specialist listing.
- 1.4 Dentists who have completed a specialist training programme in the UK approved by the relevant Postgraduate Dental Dean, may apply for the award of a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) and entry onto the relevant specialist list.
- 1.5 Registered dentists who do not hold a CCST (and have therefore not undertaken the specific approved specialist training programme) can apply to join a specialist list via other routes, by submitting evidence that they have an equivalent level of knowledge and experience gained in other ways. These are Specialist List Assessed Applications (SLAA) and apply where an applicant:
 - can demonstrate that they have knowledge, skills and experience derived from academic or research work in the specialty in question, and can satisfy the GDC that this knowledge and experience is equivalent to that which the dentist might reasonably be expected to have

¹ The GDC has the power under the Dentists Act at s26(3) to make regulations that prescribe titles for distinctive branches of dentistry and make lists of dentists, supplementary to the register, who are able to use those titles.

² Although the mutual recognition of oral surgery and orthodontic qualifications has fallen away, some of the UK legislation applying the European requirements remains in force. As such, some requirements in the GDC's regulations for orthodontic and oral surgery specialist list applications and appeals remain embedded in European legislation.

acquired if they had undertaken the training required for the award of a CCST in that specialty. Or

- holds specialist dental qualifications awarded outside the UK and can satisfy the Council that those qualifications are equivalent to those required for the award of a CCST in the specialty in question. Or
- [for Orthodontics and Oral Surgery only] is a dentist with a relevant specialist qualification awarded by certain institutions in EEA Member States or Switzerland. Or
- [for Oral Surgery only] is registered as a specialist on the General Medical Council's Register for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and has completed training equivalent to that required for the award of a CCST in Oral Surgery.

- 1.6 SLAA applications are made to the GDC and are processed by the Registration Casework Team which will refer them for external assessment. The GDC has historically had an arrangement with the Joint Meeting of Dental Faculties (JMDF) which covers work undertaken by the JMDF for the GDC. The arrangement primarily covers the administration of assessment of SLAA applications, but also includes other areas of work, such as reviewing the specialty curricula. Payment for this work is made to the Royal College of Surgeons (England) in arrears on an annual basis.
- 1.7 The SLAA assessments are carried out by the Specialist Advisory Committees (SACs), which are intercollegiate bodies within the Royal Colleges that advise on higher specialist training in the dental specialties. SACs will provide a recommendation to the Registrar (via JMDF) as to whether an applicant has demonstrated (from the evidence submitted) an equivalent level of knowledge and experience to a dentist with a CCST and is therefore eligible for specialist listing.

2. The pause in SLAA assessments

- 2.1 There have been longstanding issues in relation to several elements of the SLAA process. In 2019, the GDC established a working group comprising representatives from the SACs, previous applicants, the British Dental Association and training and examination providers, to identify where the SLAA process could be simplified, standardised, and streamlined and to help the GDC and the Royal Colleges implement proposals. During this period, the ongoing work also had to respond to changes to European legislation, and the impact of COVID-19. It's helpful that the majority of proposals from this group were implemented, but some issues remained.
- 2.2 The remaining issues with the SLAA process, in particular those regarding the length of time needed to assess applications, the absence of direct recompense for assessments and concerns regarding the appeals process, resulted in the SACs deciding to pause their assessment of applications in March 2022.
- 2.3 The GDC has continued to receive SLAA applications since the process was paused. This has resulted in some dentists having to wait much longer than normal to receive a decision on their application. This has had a direct effect on the dentists who need to use this route to acquire a specialist listing, particularly where offers of employment depend on having a specialist title, as well as their employers and, ultimately, patients.

3. Restarting assessments

- 3.1 The GDC and the Deans of the Royal Colleges have been in discussion since March 2022 with a view to ending the current pause in assessments. The GDC wrote to the Deans of the Royal Colleges in August 2022, setting out proposals to improve the SLAA process further. The proposed steps and subsequent discussions with the Royal Colleges focussed on a phased approach to improvement which would enable some changes to be delivered more quickly, whilst

allowing time for more significant change to be effectively planned and delivered to reach a more sustainable model over the medium term.

- 3.2 Following discussions with the Deans of the Royal Colleges, it became increasingly apparent that the proposed steps for improvement would not be sufficient to ensure an end to the current pause in assessments. In the interests of all involved, but particularly the applicants who are awaiting a decision, the GDC accelerated the plan to make broader changes, including the introduction of direct administration of the SLAA process.
- 3.3 In addition to ending the ongoing pause on assessments, the move to bring the SLAA process fully in-house will have other benefits. In the previous system, there was no direct contact between the GDC and those undertaking the assessments within the SACs. This resulted in a disjointed user experience - an overly complicated process that lacked structure and accountability and predominantly relied on assessments being undertaken on a voluntary basis on the basis of goodwill.
- 3.4 The GDC is currently recruiting assessors to undertake SLAA assessments on an associate basis, with the additional resource funded from the free reserves. . Assessments will be carried out by specialist list assessment panels comprising three assessors similar to the process applied for registration assessments. We expect to have a number of assessors appointed, trained and starting assessments by August 2023.

4. Broader improvements to the SLAA process

- 4.1 Discussions with the SACs and Deans of the Royal Colleges over the past year have identified further aspects of the SLAA process which require improvement in order to build an effective, efficient and sustainable process.

Improving guidance to applicants

- 4.2 Historically, SLAA applications have been voluminous and time consuming to process. Building on work undertaken by the previous working group, the GDC is working closely with the SACs to improve the guidance to applicants. This includes developing an application template to provide new applicants with a structure for mapping their evidence, which should help them ensure that the evidence they submit is comprehensive but not excessive.
- 4.3 We anticipate that the new guidance and template will be in place for new applicants in July 2023.

Wider reform of the appeals process

- 4.4 The appeals process for SLAA decisions has been a longstanding point of contention for the SACs. Currently, in accordance with *The General Dental Council (Specialist List) Appeals Regulations* (the appeals regulations) unsuccessful applicants may appeal against the Council's decision to an appeal panel. The appeal panel (which does not include a member from the relevant specialty) will reconsider the Council's decision.
- 4.5 The primary concern expressed by SACs is that recommendations made by the experts in the specialism to turn down applications are then overturned on appeal by decision makers who have no relevant expertise (or access to specialist advice) on the requirements and standards for particular specialities. This has led to assessors feeling that they are wasting their time (because their recommendations are not ultimately respected) and, more seriously, inadequately qualified candidates are being allowed to join the specialist lists.
- 4.6 In response to these concerns, the GDC has made the following proposals:
 - a. To provide the appeals panels with advice from a suitably qualified specialist from the specialty in question. There is provision to do this within the current regulations on the

basis that the specialist plays an advisory role, rather than forming part of the decision-making panel.

- b. To scope changes to the appeals regulations to place a limit on how much additional evidence can be submitted or used as part of an appeal and to ensure that significant new evidence is remitted back to the assessment panel for decision. Required changes would be only to the General Dental Council (Specialist List) Appeals Regulations 2009, which can be amended by the Council and are not impacted by retained European legislation.
- c. To work with stakeholders to explore whether there would be benefit in making broader amendments to the appeals regulations to direct appeals to consider the *process* undertaken, rather than the *decision*. Whilst changes to the General Dental Council (Specialist List) Appeals Regulations 2009 are within the gift of Council, requirements regarding the appeals process are currently embedded in retained European legislation. Therefore, it would not be possible in the short-term to extend these changes to orthodontics and oral surgery.

5. Development, consultation and decision trail

- 5.1 EMT has considered and approved the business case for moving to direct administration of the SLAA process. The business case identifies the funding required, which will be subject to separate approval. When the new system is in place and can be robustly costed, Council will be invited to decide whether fees should be set to recover full costs from applicants, in line with other registration processes.

6. Next steps and communications

- 6.1 Scoping work to consider any changes to the appeals regulations will begin in Q3 2023 once the SLAA process has restarted and the revised application guidance and new template is published.
- 6.2 Any future changes to the appeals regulations will require full public consultation and Council approval. We will bring another paper to Council later this year to provide an update on the SLAA improvements and detail on any changes to the appeal regulations we wish to make.

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20 March 2023

Costed Corporate Plan 2023 – 2025 publication

Executive Director	Stefan Czerniawski, Executive Director Strategy
Author(s)	Colin MacKenzie, Head of Nations and Engagement
Type of business	For noting
Recommendation	The Council is asked to note the content of the Costed Corporate Plan (CCP) 2023 – 2025 before it is published.

1. Background and context

- 1.1 The GDC has published a detailed three-year Costed Corporate Plan since 2020.
- 1.2 The 2023 Costed Corporate Plan, that we plan to publish in late April or early May, will cover the period from 2023 to 2025.

2. The content of the 2023 CCP

- 2.1 The structure used in 2022 is retained for the 2023 publication. This includes a foreword from the Chief Executive and Registrar; an update on our new Corporate Strategy, a review of the 2022 achievements; the work programme for 2023 – 2025; and our forecast expenditure and income.
- 2.2 The content for the review of 2022 has been based on the content developed for the Annual Report and Accounts, to ensure consistency of messaging.
- 2.3 The content for the Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2025 is based on the content already published on our website.
- 2.4 To simplify the presentation of the individual projects we have again grouped them by strategic aim and the year of completion only, and not included the start date of the activity, which is less important to an external audience. This makes it easier to report what we have achieved against the original plan and removes the issue of having to explain any project start or end delays within the year.
- 2.5 In total, there are 57 projects on the CCP 2023 – 2025, which have been allocated to the following strategic aims:

#	Strategic aim description	Number of projects
1	Dental professional reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care	13
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning	8
3	Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations	2
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment	34

#	Strategic aim description	Number of projects
TOTAL		57

- 2.6 Of these 57 projects, 27 are due to complete in 2023, 20 in 2024 and five in 2025. There are five projects where the end date is not yet detailed or is after 2025.
- 2.7 As with the 2022 publication we have included the forecast costs and income for 2023 and the total costs for three-year period of the plan, by strategic aim.
- 3. Legal, policy and national considerations**
- 3.1 None of which we are aware.
- 4. Equality, diversity and privacy considerations**
- 4.1 At this stage there are no considerations of which we are aware.
- 5. Resource considerations and CCP**
- 5.1 There is no request or requirement for any additional resource to deliver this work.
- 6. Development, consultation and decision trail**
- 6.1 The following people have been consulted and have contributed to the preparation of this paper:
- a. Louise Piper, Business Planning and PMO Manager
 - b. Samantha Bache, Associate Director, Finance
- 7. Next steps**
- 7.1 Once the content has been noted by the Council, the final version will be designed and published on the GDC website.
- 8. Appendices**
- 8.1 Appendix 1- Final version of CCP 2023 – 2025 publication

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04 April 2023

**General
Dental
Council**

Costed Corporate Plan 2023 – 2025

Published April 2023

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1. Foreword from Chief Executive and Registrar

The GDC is the UK-wide statutory regulator of around 115,000 members of the dental team, with the primary roles of protecting the public and ensuring that they have confidence in the services provided by dental professionals.

Our Costed Corporate Plan (CCP) sets out what we will do over the next three years, the fees that we charge, and includes our forecast of income and expenditure for 2023, as well as reporting on our progress in 2022.

In 2022 we monitored our planned activity to ensure that we continued to deliver our statutory purposes. This was challenging and the delivery of some of our activities was simply too slow in 2022. The main causes of this were shortfalls in staff capacity and capability. We experienced high levels of sickness as pandemic restrictions were lifted, disrupting our work, and found ourselves carrying high numbers of vacancies, particularly in Registration. We took action to address this and filled the vacancies over the year but, whilst we have now trained the staff we recruited, they are less experienced than those they replaced, and it will take time for that experience to develop and for them to become fully effective.

Notable deliveries in 2022 included the launch of the Dental Professionals Hearings Service, to further highlight the independence of the hearings function from our investigation and prosecution functions and to improve the experience for all who attend a hearing. We also consulted on proposed changes to learning outcomes and behaviour expectations for education and training programmes leading to registration, introducing the term 'safe practitioner' to describe newly qualified dental professionals.

To enhance our operational effectiveness and efficiency, we completed the work to replace our finance system, with the new system going live in early January 2023. We also continued to improve and upgrade our IT and telecommunications infrastructure.

We consulted on our new Corporate Strategy for 2023 – 2025, which was approved by Council in October. All of the activities in the plan have been reviewed and mapped across to the new strategic aims. Council also approved an increase to the Annual Renewal Fee (ARF) which was far below the rate of inflation at the time, and lower than we indicated when we consulted on it.

Despite the changing priorities, we have been able to deliver much of what we set out to do at the start of the year. Our plan for 2023 – 2025 will enable us to continue to deliver against our regulatory remit.

Ian Brack
Chief Executive and Registrar

2. Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2025

Our Corporate Strategy for 2023 – 2025 builds upon the strategic aims and objectives of [Right time, Right place, Right touch](#). We have revisited and clarified those aims to make sure they remained the right priorities in the context of the pandemic and wider landscape.

Our role in public protection remains unchanged, while our strategy recognises that we need to modernise, and improve our performance in some areas.

This Corporate Strategy sets out our further steps to continue to move the balance of our effort towards prevention in a different context of public protection, dental care and regulation. We begin the implementation of this strategy facing a number of challenges:

- The delays and uncertainty over the plans to reform the health professional regulators, which is an essential component to achievement of our ambition.
- Changes to our routes to registration following the UK's departure from the EU.
- Economic uncertainty that affects patient choice, dental businesses, individual dental professionals and the GDC.

Flexibility and adaptability will be essential for us to respond to uncertainty and this strategic plan builds in agility to be able to respond to a changing set of circumstances.

We will continue to press for the opportunities that legislative reform may bring, but it cannot be guaranteed and will not resolve all existing issues. Therefore, we will drive improvements within our current constraints while supporting and empowering the dental team to deliver safe and effective dental care to high standards of professionalism.

Whatever context we face, **our purpose remains constant: to protect the public.**

At the core of what we do is ensuring that the register is maintained so that the public only receives dental care from safe and effective dental professionals. Flowing from this central task are our functions and processes, which we perform on behalf of members of the public and in co-operation with the professions, the sector, and other regulators. We will continue to perform these functions and processes and make them more efficient and effective.

Therefore, while we are building in flexibility into how we achieve our aims, they will be familiar to our stakeholders and reinforce understanding of our role and goals.

Integral to the achievement of our new strategy are our four new strategic aims. All our activity is aligned with one or more of these aims:

Strategic aim	Description
1	Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning
3	Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment

Underpinning the Corporate Strategy are several areas of priority that contribute to the achievement of our strategic aims. These are:

- **Effectiveness of the GDC:** Our approach to ensuring the GDC has the staff, systems and processes to improve our performance and support the achievement of our strategic aims and objectives.
- **Preventative regulation (formerly known as Moving Upstream):** Our approach to moving effort towards prevention of harm through our regulatory functions and processes, use of data, research and intelligence and work with our stakeholders.
- **Communications and engagement:** Our approach to supporting understanding of our role in the dental sector, our priorities and, where appropriate, involving the people affected by our work in the development of our regulatory functions and processes.
- **Evidence, data, and research:** We have two approaches, the first is to use the data we hold more effectively, within the context of our legal obligations. The second, is to use research and evaluation to inform our regulatory functions, processes and improvements to our performance.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion:** Our objectives to foster equality, diversity and inclusion inside our organisation, with the sector we regulate, and with the public.

3. Review of the 2022 Plan

The Costed Corporate Plan (CCP) for 2022 was the last year of the 2020 – 2022 strategy. It was designed to be flexible and to facilitate changes to the detail and profile of the plan throughout the year as priorities changed. Working in a new post-lockdown environment there were several factors that influenced the delivery of our planned work.

We experienced high levels of sickness as pandemic restrictions were lifted, disrupting our work. We also struggled with high numbers of vacancies as staff left the GDC and we continued to encounter significant difficulties in promptly replacing them. We took action to address this and over the year dealt with the staff shortfalls, but the staff we recruited are, of course, less experienced than those they replaced.

Throughout the year we monitored our planned activity to determine whether we continued to deliver our statutory purpose, maintaining patient safety and public confidence. This was challenging and the delivery of some of our statutory processes was impacted in 2022. The paramount causes of this were shortfalls in staff capacity and capability, which had an impact on our ability to deliver business as usual activity as well as projects across the year.

We regularly reviewed and monitored the CCP to ensure that high priority work was resourced, supported and delivered. This resulted in a number of revisions to the plan for 2022 to ensure effective delivery, which are detailed below.

2022 CCP project summary

Status	Strategic aim 1	Strategic aim 2	Strategic aim 3	Strategic aim 4	Strategic aim 5	Total
On track or completed	13	1	9	3	22	48
End date moved	6	0	1	0	6	13
On hold	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stopped	1	0	4	0	9	14
TOTAL	20	1	14	3	37	75

At the beginning of the year there were 73 projects on our workplan for 2022, and an additional two projects were added during the year.

Of these 75 projects:

- 18 projects were completed.
- 30 projects are in progress and remain on track for delivery in 2023 or 2024.
- 13 projects had their end dates moved, due to changes in resource availability, scope and schedule.
- 14 projects were stopped and removed from the plan. Of these five were combined with other projects, two were moved into business as usual activities and seven were cancelled as they were either no longer relevant due to changes in the landscape or deprioritised due to other activities on our workplan.

Unplanned work undertaken in 2022

Whilst the level of unplanned work in 2022 was less than previous years, there were still several areas where we were required to complete significant areas of work that were not planned for at the start of the year. These included:

Specialist Lists Assessed Applications (SLAA) process

Previously, all SLAA applications we received to join a specialist list were referred to the relevant Specialist Advisory Committee (SAC) to assess and make a recommendation on whether the dental professional demonstrated an equivalence to a UK Certificate of Completion Specialist Training (CCST). They would then be admitted to the applicable specialist list.

Due to ongoing issues and delays with the processing of these applications, we decided to move this activity in-house, to improve the overall process and our timeliness. Following stakeholder engagement, work commenced in late 2022 to expedite this process. We aim to start assessing these applications in-house later this year.

Regulatory Reform

Despite uncertainty over both timetable and scope, preparing for regulatory reform continued to require significant staff time throughout 2022. This included working with the DHSC and other regulators. Due to the continuing uncertainty, we initiated work to consider what we could change within the framework of current legislation. This work will continue in 2023.

Achievements and progress in 2022

Detailed below are some of the key areas of work progressed or completed and projects implemented in 2022:

Dental Professionals Hearings Service

We created a new identity and name for our hearings service and launched the Dental Professional Hearings Service in June 2022. This further highlighted the independence of the hearings function from our investigation and prosecution functions and improved the experience for all who attend a hearing. All communications relating to a hearing now come from the Dental Professionals Hearings Service, which has its own dedicated [hearings website](#), where all the information relating to dental hearings can be found in one place

Since its launch we have sought feedback from users and stakeholders, and work continues to make further improvements to the hearings service based on the feedback received. Improvement work completed in 2022 included ensuring that the service was accessible, and that our communications were clear, concise and appropriate in tone to all parties.

GDC Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2025

We developed and consulted on our new Corporate Strategy for 2023 – 2025, which was approved by Council in October 2022. Extensive stakeholder engagement activity took place throughout 2022 to inform our strategic ambitions and priorities. This work was undertaken in tandem with the development of our Costed Corporate Plan for 2023 – 2025 to ensure the work we had planned was aligned with our strategic direction.

Tone of voice of our communications

Ensuring our communications are effective and appropriate for each of our audience groups remains a priority for us. We wanted to ensure our communications were appropriate and relevant to different audience groups, and knew we needed to improve our tone of voice. All GDC staff received training on writing styles, the use of plain English and using different language for different audiences and channels.

This change has been well received, and work will continue in 2023 to further improve our tone of voice, with a particular focus on fitness to practice.

Paperless registration – UK

Work commenced to develop a paperless registration process. This included a review of our existing process, and following an analysis of potential solutions and providers, we sourced solutions to deliver this. We anticipate that this service will be launched in 2024. Once the service is launched for UK applications, we will begin work to understand how we can effectively offer a paperless process for overseas applications.

International registration

We worked closely with the DHSC to progress the legislative changes needed to remove unnecessary constraints on how the overseas registration examination (ORE) is run, and to provide greater flexibility in how we ensure that overseas qualified dental professionals meet the required standards to practise in the UK. The new legislation took longer than we had hoped, eventually coming into effect in March 2023. However, many of the changes will not come into effect or have any impact until after March 2024. This will have consequences for the GDC as the existing arrangement remained in place for longer than we had hoped. Work on this will continue in 2023.

We continued to run the ORE throughout 2022, and worked collaboratively with our providers to ensure we were able to confirm examination dates as soon as it was safe and feasible to do so. This enabled us to prioritise the exam invitations to those candidates who were nearing the end of their five-year window.

Implemented additional back office systems to improve organisation efficiency

Back office systems are critical to our operational effectiveness and efficiency. We implemented several new back-office systems in 2022. We replaced our finance system and continued to improve and upgrade our IT and telecommunications system infrastructure and upgraded our meeting rooms to improve the effectiveness of our hybrid multisite meetings.

Assuring the quality of education and training programmes

In 2022, we carried out reviews and inspections of education and training programmes. During the academic year August 2021 – July 2022 we granted approval to four new programmes, quality assured six dental care professional education providers and six awarding organisations through monitoring, and carried out targeted monitoring of 15 dentist/BDS programmes and 15 dental hygiene and therapy programmes.

Safe Practitioner consultation

In late 2022, we consulted on proposed changes to learning outcomes and behaviour expectations for education and training programmes leading to registration. This was

important as the learning outcomes were last reviewed in 2015, and we have seen significant shifts in both dentistry and wider society since then. The proposed changes reflected these shifts and included the introduction of the term 'safe practitioner' to describe newly qualified dental professionals.

4. Work programme for 2023 – 2025

Detailed below is our work programme for 2023 – 2025.

Our planned activities have been reviewed and mapped across to the new strategic aims. As with last year, whilst we recognise that some projects will contribute to multiple strategic aims, we have allocated projects to a single aim.

A target year is provided for each project, indicating when it is scheduled to be completed. These timings are based on the information available during the planning period (Q4 2022) and are subject to a changing external environment and organisational priorities.

There are 57 projects in the 2023 – 2025 work programme, with 52 projects on the workplan for 2023. Of these 52, 32 are 'flow through' projects that started in previous years, and 20 are new projects that will start in 2023.

Of the 57 projects on the work programme, 27 are due to complete in 2023, 20 in 2024, five in 2025 and five where the end date is not yet detailed or is after 2025. Three of these projects have yet to have start dates determined, as these are reliant on legislative change and subject to external timelines.

We continue to focus on ensuring that dental regulation is efficient and effective and adapts to the changing external environment (new strategic aim four). This aim is focused on the organisation and how we perform, ensuring we have the right systems, processes, and technology in place. Improved effectiveness and efficiency should free capacity and enable us to shift more of our resource towards upstream regulatory efforts which anticipate and address potential public protection issues before they become problems.

It should be noted that the CCP only details the project work we plan to complete and does not include all our normal business as usual (BAU) activity that we undertake to ensure that we are able to deliver against our regulatory remit of ensuring public safety and public confidence in dental services. The cost of this BAU activity is included in the financial information, detailed in section 5.

This BAU activity includes our Registration and Customer Service teams, Fitness to Practise functions, Strategy, and the wider support functions. The costs for these BAU activities have been allocated to the relevant strategic aim, along with the project costs to provide a total cost breakdown, by strategic aim, for all the planned work and activities over the next three years.

Details of the forecast expenditure by strategic aim can be found in section 5.

Details of individual projects on the 2023 – 2025 workplan, by strategic aim and year of completion

Strategic aim 1

Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care

#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2023
1.1	Expectations of a safe practitioner
1.2	Revise and approve specialty curricula
1.3	Specialist list assessed application
1.4	CPD audit
1.5	Annual Renewal - DCP and dentist annual renewal projects

#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2024
1.6	Principles of professionalism
1.7	Develop our understanding of the impact of differing indemnity models on regulation
1.8	Scope, develop and implement revised international registration processes
1.9	Develop and implement revised Standards for Education

#	Strategic aim 1 projects due to complete in 2025
1.10	Outcome-focused model for lifelong learning

Strategic aim 2

Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning

#	Strategic aim 2 projects due to complete in 2023
2.1	Complaints resolution
2.2	Fitness to practise (FtP) KPIs redesign
2.3	Regulatory seriousness research
2.4	Strengthen the separation of the adjudication function
2.5	Using data to embed improvements

#	Strategic aim 2 projects due to complete in 2024
2.6	Provision of legal services in relation of FtP cases
2.7	Software for empanelment and hearings procedure

#	Strategic aim 2 projects due to complete in 2025
2.8	FtP decision making guidance

Strategic aim 3

Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations

#	Strategic aim 3 projects due to complete in 2023
3.1	Tone of voice of our communications phase 3

#	Strategic aim 3 projects due to complete in 2024
3.2	Digital communication improvements

There are no strategic aim 3 projects due to complete in 2025

Strategic aim 4

Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment

#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2023
4.1	Effective associates
4.2	FtP management of and process improvement related to FtP policies
4.3	GDC data strategy
4.4	Implement new GDC data warehouse and self-serve reporting for CRM data source
4.5	Implement new procurement and contract management process
4.6	IT systems analysis 2023
4.7	Optimisation of GDC estate
4.8	Paperless registration operations - phase 1
4.9	Records management - information audit
4.10	Replace credit card processing systems
4.11	Update financial processing and management systems
4.12	Upgrade of project online
4.13	Associates review
4.14	CCP planning process - CCP 2024 – 2026
4.15	Re-tender for external legal advisors
4.16	Annual Report and Accounts

#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2024
4.17	Banking provider tender
4.18	Case Management and operational improvements to hearings process

4.19	Expand GDC data warehouse and self-serve reporting for additional data sources
4.20	Improving communications and support
4.21	IT Hardware, infrastructure & peripherals upgrade
4.22	Operational review of finance system following system implementation
4.23	Paperless registration operations - phase 2
4.24	Review and improve the intranet
4.25	SharePoint document management
4.26	SharePoint upgrade
4.27	Total reward
4.28	UK registration paperless
4.29	Windows 11 upgrade rollout

#	Strategic aim 4 projects due to complete in 2025
4.30	Applications fees review for strategy cycle
4.31	Non-UK registration paperless
4.32	Workforce development

There are five projects that will be started in the 2023 – 2025 period but do not at this stage have their planned completion dates confirmed or will complete after 2025. These are:

Project name	Strategic aim
Operationalise CPD reforms	1
ORE Part 2 tender	1
ORE post legislation	1
Response to legislative data protection changes	4
DB Pension scheme buyout	4

Projects added to the 2023 workplan - March 2023

Three additional projects were added to the original 2023 workplan following a review of our activity in Quarter 1 2023.

The projects added to the plan following this review are included in the projects detailed above and are Associates review (4.13), Optimisation of GDC estate (4.7) and Tone of voice of our communications phase 3 (3.1)

One project was removed from the plan which was the IT systems analysis.

5. Forecast expenditure and income

Forecast expenditure by strategic aim 2023

The total forecast expenditure for three year period from 2023 to 2025 is £125.8m, compared with the agreed budget for 2022 of £124.2m, which is an increase of 1.3%. This is due to the increased resource requirements across our support services as part of our ensuring compliance and inflationary pressures.

The total 2022 provisional outturn is £37.8m, which is an underspend of £3.5m. The reasons for this underspend are:

- Additional income received from an increased volume of registration applications received over the course of the year.
- An underspend in our staff cost budget due to unplanned staff vacancies and increased recruitment lead times throughout the year. This further impacted on our ability to deliver planned work.
- An underspend in our legal team activity as a result of the deferred activity in the Fitness to Practise process, which was due to staff vacancies that resulted in lower levels of referrals to our ILPS and ELPS teams.

The breakdown of forecast spend by strategic aim includes both the CCP project activity detailed previously, in addition to the normal business as usual work and operational activities that are completed across the GDC throughout the year.

We are unable to compare the 2023 forecast by strategic aim with 2022 as the strategic aims have changed. We will be able to provide this information in future reports.

The forecast budget for 2023 is £42.4m.

#	Strategic aim	Initial 2023 forecast (£)	% of total
1	Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care	11,802,718	27%
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning	26,602,602	62%
3	Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations	1,065,804	3%
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment	3,551,652	8%
TOTAL		43,022,776	100%

Forecast expenditure by strategic aim over next 3 years (2023 – 2025)

#	CCP 2023 – 2025 Strategic aim costs mapping	Total cost (£)	% of total
1	Dental professionals reach and maintain high standards of safe and effective dental care	36,226,852	29%
2	Concerns are addressed effectively and proportionately to protect the public and support professional learning	73,226,852	58%
3	Risks affecting the public's safety and wellbeing are dealt with by the right organisations	4,515,598	4%
4	Dental professional regulation is efficient and effective, and adapts to the changing external environment	11,174,732	9%
TOTAL		125,809,334	100%

The three-year expenditure forecast, by strategic aim, for 2023 to 2025 is £125.8m.

Income projections

Our income forecast for 2023 is £41.4m, with 91.4% of income forecast to come from the ARF.

2023 forecast income	Value (£'s)	%
ARF	37,846,783	91.4%
Registration application fees	1,478,318	3.6%
Specialist fees	490,224	1.2%
ORE	1,587,728	3.8%
Total	41,403,053	100%

The three-year income projection for 2023 to 2025 is £124.2m.

Annual Retention Fee (ARF)

The ARF level has been set to align to our forecast of activity, expenditure and reserves. We have worked to ensure that we have removed cross subsidy, where possible, so that the cost of regulation is borne by those most closely associated with that activity.

Our fee-setting policy established three key principles:

1. Fee levels should be primarily determined by the cost of regulating each registrant group.
2. The method of calculating fee levels should be clear.
3. Supporting certainty for registrants and the workability of the regulatory framework.

In October 2022 Council set the ARF levels for the next three years, subject to any unforeseen circumstances:

- Dentists £690
- Dental care professionals £114

Council will consider, in October 2023 and October 2024, whether circumstances have arisen which require the ARF level paid by dentists and DCPs and the application fees to be reviewed.

First registration application fees

This is made up of two parts, a processing fee currently set at £36.33, with an additional variable rate dependent on the complexity of the application assessment.

Specialist fees

We apply a fee for initial applications for entry to specialist lists, which is £345 (per specialty). There is then an annual specialty retention fee of £72 (per specialty).

Overseas Registration Exam (ORE)

The ORE is an exam that overseas qualified dentists have to pass in order to register with the GDC. It is made up of two parts, a written exam and a clinical exam.

Reserves policy

Our [reserves policy](#) has been designed to ensure that we retain our financial viability to maintain our statutory purpose and functions. It recognises our financial risk exposure and ensures that we have adequate levels of working capital throughout the year.

We have aligned our budget expenditure, income and reserves target to our corporate strategy. Our reserves policy is reviewed annually by Council and was last considered in October 2022.

Use of the GDC Seal – Annual Report

Executive Director	Lisa Marie Williams, Executive Director, Legal and Governance
Author(s)	Sarah Scott, Governance Manager Katie Spears, Head of Governance
Type of business	For noting
Purpose	In line with clause 16 of the GDC Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of the Council and Committees 2022, to provide the Council with an annual update on use of the Common Seal by the GDC in 2022.
Issue	To provide the Council with the Annual Report of the Use of the Seal 2022.
Recommendation	The Council is asked to note the Annual Report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of the Council and Committees 2022 make provision for the use of the Common Seal and require the Registrar to keep a record of the affixing of the Seal and report its use to the Council.
- 1.2 The Seal is required to execute a certain class of document and thereby bind the Council. The documents are sealed in the presence of two authorised individuals, usually the Chair and the Chief Executive, who then sign the register of seals.

2. Documents sealed during the period of this report

- 2.1 The table below sets out the documents that have been sealed between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2022.

Date Seal used	Title/Description of the document
04 July 2022	The General Dental Council Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business of the Council and Committees 2022.
21 October 2022	The General Dental Council Dentist Fees Regulations 2022.
21 October 2022	The General Dental Council (Professions Complementary to Dentistry) Fees Regulations 2022.

3. Next steps and communications

- 3.1 The Council is invited to **note** the use of the Seal from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

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