

Special Purpose Scope of Practice

The Osteopathic Council recognises that osteopathic practice is not limited to the direct provision of clinical services to patients. By recognising that activities other than clinical practice are legitimate applications of professional knowledge osteopaths are permitted to remain on the register with a practising certificate.

Council will be able to acknowledge their contribution to healthcare and allow systems to be developed that do not penalise such individuals by imposing recency of practice requirements, professional development or recertification programmes that are not relevant to their area of professional practice. It is not the Council's intention to create an additional protected title for this scope.

Holders of this scope may be required to engage with a return to practice competency programme if they have not engaged in clinical practice for three subsequent years and wish to return to clinical work. Council will use its discretion to determine how the scope holders activities might have contributed to the maintenance of competence in terms of clinical practice.

Pursuant to section 12 of the Act, the Council has prescribed the following qualifications for registration in the Special Purpose Scope of Practice.

To be granted the special purpose scope a registrant will need to have been previously registered in the general osteopathic scope of practice, or meet the requirements for general registration and satisfy the Council that they have advanced standing or specialist skills in one of the designated areas:

1. Direct non-clinical relationships with patients such as in group exercise programmes, health promotion activities or health care management.
2. Clinical educators / clinical preceptors in pre-professional teaching clinics or practice based settings
3. Research – undertaking or directing research activities
4. Teaching – faculty work in the tertiary sector on professional qualifications that will lead to registration as an osteopath or other regulated health professional and post graduate osteopathic / health science programmes.
5. Health policy development and regulation

In order to be eligible, the registrants will generally be required to demonstrate that they hold qualifications, other than a prescribed qualification for general registration, relevant to their chosen area of special purpose practice, such as a tertiary level or professional qualifications in teaching and learning, research degrees or demonstrate that they are working towards one such as being registered for a PhD.

Council will need to be satisfied that the registrant is applying their professional knowledge in a non-clinical setting for at least 60% of the working week. For example a letter from an employer that the registrant has a 0.6 FTE appointment for the period that an APC is being sought will generally be required and a statutory declaration that clinical practice is limited to 10 hours or less per week.