



THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN OSTEOPATHY

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the British School of Osteopathy (BSO)'s Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy programme validated by the University of Bedfordshire. This award, which is the first of its kind, sets a new level of osteopathic scholarship.

The programme – which may be completed in either four or five years – is a blend of teaching and self-motivated investigation that also makes extensive use of a range of specialists who are experts across a variety of disciplines. It includes the opportunity to spend time abroad getting first-hand experience of different styles of osteopathy. You will be introduced to subjects that are highly relevant, though not normally associated with osteopathic practice. The programme will give you the opportunity to work at the cutting edge of osteopathic theory and practice and to make your own original contribution to osteopathy.

Professional Doctorates and the traditional PhD

Professional doctorates are different from PhDs because they focus on researching professional practice rather than an academic discipline. The first professional doctorate was awarded in medicine (MD) from Columbia University, USA, in 1767, which was 100 years before the first PhD. Today, professional doctorates are available in most professions, including law, education, business management, engineering and nursing.

Because professional doctorates focus on professions and practices, the emphasis is not just on understanding a theoretical body of knowledge, but on the nature of practice itself, including required skills and awareness of necessary processes. By their nature, professional doctorates are broader and more holistic, blending knowledge and skills with professional competence. It is this complexity and richness that offers so much to doctoral-level research. The questions thrown up by professional practice are often complex and open to a variety of interpretations. We aim to equip you with the skills and knowledge to pursue the best interpretation and so enhance osteopathy's body of knowledge and skill.

Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy

The D.Prof. (Ost) will be an opportunity to investigate some of the key challenges facing the osteopathic profession today. Some of these are unique to osteopathy, but many are also faced by other professions, offering opportunities for collaboration and sharing of experience.

In order to focus most teaching time on osteopathic practice, students are required to have at least four years' post-graduation experience and to be familiar with research methodology and statistics.¹ This is to enable more time to be spent investigating issues such as the nature of osteopathic expertise, palpation, good practice and clinical skills.

Over its 125 year history osteopathy has taken a number of different forms worldwide. How and why these differences have arisen is a central theme of the course. To assist in this, there is an opportunity to spend one or two weeks at the home of osteopathy, Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (KCOM) in Missouri, USA. As well as being able to observe and work with faculty and students there, you will have access to the museum and osteopathic archive which has a vast array of artefacts relating to the development of osteopathy. This is a unique opportunity to visit the birth-place of osteopathy and to investigate primary source material.

¹ A Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methodology is available for students who need to update their understanding of research methodology and statistics.

ORGANISATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme is divided into two stages: the first stage, which covers the first two years, is taught in one, two or four-day blocks and will challenge you to think more deeply and reflectively about the nature of osteopathic practice, the challenges and 'big questions' facing osteopathy, the significance of evidence, experience and intuition, and the implications of the changing understanding of pain and disability. By the end of this stage, you will have clearly identified your research question, leading to Stage 2 where you gather data, analyse and evaluate them, and develop your thesis and generate a portfolio to disseminate it. The culmination is the presentation of your thesis in the *viva* when you have the opportunity to explain and defend your ideas in front of two external examiners.

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN OSTEOPATHY PROGRAMME

YEAR 1

Foundation Units

1. Academic Osteopathy

Doctoral Level Scholarship

- Critical enquiry
- Research mindedness
- Models for osteopathic research

Contemporary Osteopathy

- Issues and directions
- UK osteopathy
The body and back pain *Practice and policy in the UK*
- Osteopathic history, principles, concepts and philosophy

2. Personal and Professional Advancement

Reflection and Reflexiveness

- Models of reflexiveness

Criticality

- Language
- Epistemology
- Uncertainty

3. Expertise, Values and Evidence

Osteopathic Expertise

- Expert palpation
- Expert clinician

Values

- Values-based practice
- Evidence-based practice
- 'Good' practice

Osteopathic Professionalism

- Professional values

WHO IS THE PROGRAMME FOR?

The programme is most likely to appeal to one of three groups:

- Osteopaths working in osteopathic education where career enhancement may be a major motivation for pursuing a D.Prof. (Ost). A professional doctorate in osteopathy will enhance the skills and professional capabilities necessary for participants to move into more senior positions, or to critically scrutinise the quality and effectiveness of current osteopathic educational provision.
- Osteopaths who are interested in research and who wish to follow an academic career in osteopathy without necessarily wanting to teach.
- Individuals who want to take up the challenge of doctoral level study as part of their personal and professional development and for whom the process will be an end in itself.

YEAR 2

Practice and Research

4. World Models of Osteopathy

Osteopathy and Osteopathic Medicine

- USA and UK models
- European models

Clinical Practice

Osteopathic Education

Conventional and Orthodox Medical Practices

5. Portfolio Preparation and Advanced Research Workshops

Research Proposal

- Research ethics
- Proposal writing
- Completing RSI
- Governance

Peer Review

Preparing for Publication

One-to-one and Small Group Workshops

YEAR 3

Data Collection, Project Planning and Development

Presentations/submissions

YEAR 4/5

Generation of Evidence to support claim to have met Learning Outcomes

Research and Development Thesis

- Literature review

Commentary

- Case study

Conference Presentations

Viva voce examination

TEACHING TEAM

The programme is delivered by a highly qualified team and we are particularly pleased to have the input of Professor Christopher Johns from the University of Bedfordshire.

Professor Stephen Tyreman is the D.Prof. (Ost) course leader. He is a practising osteopath and has been involved in osteopathic education at the BSO for over 30 years. His academic interest is the philosophy of medicine and health care. He gained his PhD from the Open University in 2002 with a thesis titled, *The concept of function in osteopathy and orthodox medicine*. In 2007 he became the first UK University-appointed osteopathic professor when the University of Bedfordshire appointed him Professor of Osteopathy and Philosophy.

Steven Vogel is BSO Vice-Principal (Research and Quality) and has worked clinically as an osteopath in NHS settings and in private practice. Steven has been a member of the BSO faculty since 1990 and has a range of relevant research experience, including:

- Lead researcher in a project funded by the GOsC and NCOR investigating osteopaths' attitudes to managing and assessing risk in clinical settings and patients' experiences and responses to osteopathic treatment
- Membership of the NICE clinical guideline development group for the management of persistent nonspecific low back pain
- Membership of the National Council for Osteopathic Research (NCOR)

Jorge Esteves is Head of Postgraduate Studies and Student Research at the BSO. Previously he was a Senior Lecturer in Osteopathy, Acting Programme Leader and Research Lead for Osteopathy at Oxford Brookes University.

He has taught research methods at undergraduate and postgraduate level for a number of years and has supervised dissertation work at undergraduate and masters' level. He is currently reading for a PhD in Education at Oxford Brookes University. His doctoral thesis is concerned with the development of diagnostic expertise in osteopathic medicine. He is also a subject reviewer for osteopathy for the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Professor Christopher Johns is Professor of Nursing at the University of Bedfordshire and enjoys a worldwide reputation in the area of professional reflective practice. He is Director of the School of Guided Reflection and Narrative Inquiry. His primary academic focus is grounded in developing reflective practice from education, research and clinical practice perspectives. His focus also encompasses caring, palliative care and complementary therapies. He has published extensively in these fields. His book *Becoming a reflective practitioner* [third edition] was published in 2009 and a second edition of *Guided reflection: a narrative approach to advancing practice* is currently in production.

In addition, the BSO, in collaboration with the University of Bedfordshire Research Graduate School, has a number of potential thesis supervisors. You will have two supervisors, at least one of whom will have experience of supervising to successful completion of a doctoral award.



ENTRY CRITERIA

You should hold:

- An Honours degree; plus
- A postgraduate qualification demonstrating advanced competence in research methods*; or
- A qualification recognised as equivalent to the above, including some M-level learning.

Applicants must have at least four years' post-graduation experience in clinical and/or education practice and must continue in practice throughout the programme.

* You may undertake a qualification in research methods whilst registered on the D.Prof. (Ost) but must complete this before the end of the second year of the programme. A Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methodology is offered by the BSO.

HOW TO APPLY

For further details relating to postgraduate study at the BSO, or to apply to study please contact **Gayda Arnold** on g.arnold@bso.ac.uk or + 44 (0)20 7089 5315



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The BSO has made every effort to ensure that the information in this prospectus is accurate at the time of publication. However we do not accept liability for any inaccuracies. The BSO reserves the right to change or cancel our courses and services at any time without liability even after students have registered with us.

The BSO is a registered charity (no. 312873) which educates osteopaths, provides treatments for patients and promotes osteopathic research.