



SAS doctors and Royal colleges Opportunities and support

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There is an ever-growing recognition of the valuable role that SAS Doctors play not only in service provision but also in education and training of other staff and in leadership roles. The recent [GMC survey](#) of SAS/LED doctors and [NHS Employers survey](#) of organisations illustrated some of the challenges faced by these groups of doctors, however, which may be preventing them from reaching their full potential and providing the best quality service to patients and staff that they can.

In terms of the support and encouragement given to SAS Doctors for personal and professional development, there are examples of excellent practice but also evidence of great variability, depending upon local factors such as access to local SAS Development Funding/Tutor and variations in College-related opportunities and support.

To help illustrate and share examples of best practice across the different specialties and Colleges, the Academy SAS Committee has compiled the following table to look at areas where SAS Doctors may experience differing levels of opportunity and support such as representation and voting rights at College Councils, on College Committees, involvement in formal education/examination work and wellbeing/anti-bullying support.

We hope that these tables will act as a resource for information and discussion amongst the Colleges to help us identify and share best practice and learn together how to support and give opportunities for development to all doctors working in our specialties, whatever their job title.



College SAS representation

College	Is SAS Lead a member of Council/ governing body?	If Yes, does the SAS Lead member have full voting rights?	Does the College/ Faculty have an SAS committee?	Are SAS doctors represented in an Education committee?	Are SAS doctors represented in the CESR committee / process?	Are SAS doctors represented in a Workforce committee?
Royal College of Physicians London [RCPL]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh [RCPEd]	No	No	No	Yes	No	—
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow [RCPSG]	Not at present, but there are active plans to have an SAS doctor co-opted to Council	As a co-opted member they would not have voting rights	No	Yes — there is one SAS doctor on the Education sub-group of the Trainees' Committee	CESR matters are discussed at the Education, Training and Professional Development Board — there is currently no SAS doctor on this Board	No
Royal College of Surgeons of England [RCSEng]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	The Joint Committee on Surgical Training (JCST) is responsible for CESR application processing on behalf of the Surgical Colleges, with decisions made by Specialty Advisory Committees. There is no SAS representation on Specialty Advisory Committees	Yes
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh [RCSEd]	Yes	Yes, but no trustee responsibilities	Yes	Yes		Yes
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [RCOG]	Yes — SAS/LED lead post has a seat on Council	Yes	SAS/LED Advisory Group chaired by SAS/LED lead and with SAS/LED representatives from all four nations	Members of SAS/LED Advisory Group sit on Education Board and Professional Development Committee	Member of SAS/LED Advisory Group on Equivalence Committee	SAS/LED lead a member of workforce group
Royal College of Ophthalmologists [RCOphth]	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



Royal College of Radiologists (RCR)	No	—	No — but there are SAS reps in both Faculties	The SAS lead for each specialty is a member of the Professional Support and Standards Board and is also invited to the Specialty Training Board when there are relevant issues to be discussed	No	The SAS lead for each Faculty is a member of the Professional Support and Standards Board which leads for RCR on workforce
Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM)	Yes	Yes	Yes — FASSGEM (Forum of Associate Specialists and Staff Grades in Emergency Medicine)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPsych)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCOA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH)	No	—	No — there are very few SAS members.	No	No	No workforce committee
Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH)	Yes — co-opted onto Council	No — those of co-opted member	Not yet — has been planned for past 18 months	Yes	Yes	No workforce committee
Faculty of Dental Surgery (FDS) (RCS England)	Yes	No	Yes (RCS England)	Yes	—	Yes



Education exam representation

College	Clinical supervision	Educational supervision	Educational supervision training opportunities	SAS doctors as examiners	SAS involvement in Exams	Opportunities in Education
Royal College of Physicians London (RCPL)	Yes, 2018 survey showed 19% of SAS doctors are clinical supervisors	Yes, 2018 survey showed 11% of SAS doctors are educational supervisors. 6% of SAS doctors hold formal academic positions such as clinical lecturers or clinical senior lecturer	Yes, the College runs Educational Supervisor Workshop. Of the 303 attendees in 2018, 10 [3%] were SAS doctors. The College offers the MSc in Medical Education, a part-time programme delivered jointly along with University College London. This course is attended by consultants, trainees and SAS doctors. The College promotes GMC guidance which states that recognised or approved trainers may be GPs, consultants or SAS doctors (https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/education-practice/advice/specialty-associate-specialist-and-staff-grade-sas-doctors)	SAS doctors who are fellows of the College and have the MRCP diploma can be examiners for the MRCP exam. There are currently very few SAS doctors who fulfil these criteria but some of them have expressed an interest and the College hopes by end of next year it will have SAS doctors as examiners. SAS doctors are examiners for physician associates national OSCE exam	Yes	Yes



Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh (RCPEd)	Yes	Yes	<p>The College offers a PG Cert in Medical Education, a part-time programme delivered jointly along with University of Manchester. This course is expected to be attended by consultants, trainees and SAS doctors, the first intake is 2020. The College promotes GMC guidance which states that recognised or approved trainers may be GPs, consultants or SAS doctors</p>	<p>SAS doctors who are fellows of the College and have the MRCP diploma can be examiners for the MRCP exam</p>	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (RCPSG)	No	No	<p>Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College</p>	<p>SAS Grades are eligible to apply for the MRCS question writing panel through the surgical Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Exams (JCIE)</p>	Only through question writing as before	—
Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCSEng)	Yes	Yes	<p>Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College</p>	<p>SAS Grades are eligible to apply for the MRCS question writing panel through the surgical Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Exams (JCIE)</p>	Only through question writing as before	<p>For the SAS surgeons to be surgical tutors, option is being investigated by the officers along with the application process to enable SAS surgeons to apply. In addition SAS surgeons are allowed to be Regional Directors</p>



Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh [RCSEd]	<p>—</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College. The RCSEd has set up a Faculty of Surgical Trainers which SAS Grades are welcome to join as Associates. SAS can apply for full membership or fellowship if they meet the criteria set by the Faculty. Being an SAS grade does not preclude application</p>	<p>SAS Grades are eligible to apply for the MRCS question writing panel through the surgical Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Exams (JCIE)</p>	<p>Only through question writing as before</p>	<p>—</p>
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [RCOG]	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Training opportunities available at regional level</p>	<p>Yes — suitably qualified/ experienced SAS doctors can apply to be examiners in exactly the same way as consultants</p>	<p>Yes — suitably qualified/ experienced SAS doctors can apply to be involved in exactly the same way as consultants can</p>	<p>SAS/LED Advisory Group has representation on RCOG Professional Development Committee and Education Board</p>
Royal College of Ophthalmologists [RCOphth]	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The RCOphth does not determine who is suitable to take the role of educational supervisor, training is provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres.</p> <p>There may be some educational supervisors who are SAS doctors but RCOphth could not identify them from the e-portfolio</p>	<p>Training is provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by the College</p>	<p>SAS doctors can examine at the Refraction Certificate examinations and mark the Part 1 FRCOphth CRQ marksheets</p>	<p>The College has SAS examiners who can contribute to writing exam questions</p>	<p>The SAS group has representation on education committee and Congress programme committee and members of the group run their own education sessions at Congress as well as running RCOphth educational seminars</p>



Royal College of Radiologists [RCR]	Yes	Educational supervisors are appointed by training programmes. The College has never tried to define criteria for who can be a supervisor. The GMC has requirements for supervisors to be “recognised trainers” but these requirements do not limit the positions to any job roles. The Gold Guide defines UK-wide arrangements for postgraduate training and defines supervisor roles	SAS doctors can attend supervisors skills workshop organised by the College	SAS doctors can be FRCR examiners if they are fellows of the College	For one exam RCR accepts draft questions from local question-writing panels. These could include radiologists in any role. There are currently no exam preparation courses. The current RCR SAS rep has contributed to Single Best Answer questions for FRCR-2 4b module and has attended RCR course on Single Best Answer question setting	—
Royal College of Emergency Medicine [RCEM]	Yes	Only to SAS and foundation doctors but not EM trainees	Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College	Senior Associate Specialists on old contract are examiners	No	Yes
Royal College of Psychiatrists [RCPsych]	Yes	No — only for foundation doctors	No	No	No	—



Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH)	Yes	Yes	Yes — SAS doctors are eligible to attend the Effective Educational Supervision (EES) course	<p>RCPCH accepts applications from SAS doctors to become DCH Clinical Examiners and have put one or two through (current DCH Scenario Lead is a SAS doctor).</p> <p>RCPCH is open to applications from SAS doctors applying to become MRCPCH Clinical examiners provided applicants meet College requirements</p>	—	<p>College Tutors: Currently the official College role profile and guidance doesn't allow SAS doctors to be College Tutors. Unofficially there may be some. The College is looking at changing that policy and will discuss with Senior College Tutor and bring a paper to autumn E&T Quality Committee proposing that change to the guidance.</p> <p>Teaching Faculty: There are SAS doctors on the teaching faculty courses.</p> <p>Careers Advisor and Mentor Roles: SAS doctors are eligible</p>
Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCOA)	Yes	Yes	Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College	—	SAS doctors have representation on all relevant committees including examination, curriculum etc	—



Royal College of Pathologists [RCPath]	Yes	RCPath supports SAS doctors in these supervision roles according to the experience and competence, in the same way as consultants - this is down to local education providers to make use of SAS doctors where applicable	Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College	According to the level of experience and qualification, SAS doctors who are fellows are eligible to be examiners and senior examiners. The job descriptions for examiners are being updated to make this explicit	SAS doctors who have passed FRCPATH part 1 are eligible to be exam item writers	Yes
Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare [FSRH]	Yes	Yes — currently there are two SAS Educational Supervisors	—	Yes — SAS doctors could become examiners for the MFSRH, as long as they have passed the exam themselves, or signed an agreement to never take the exam. This is the same criteria for anyone getting involved	Yes — SAS doctors could become question setters if they have passed the exam themselves	—
Faculty of Dental Surgery [FDS] [RCS England]	No	No	Training provided by local deaneries or postgraduate centres, not by College	SAS doctors cannot act as examiners but can be involved as question writers	Question writing	Yes, SAS Dentists can be lecturers and tutors and can have full involvement in FDS Education



SAS wellbeing

College	Does your College provide any pastoral support for doctors including SAS doctors?	Does your College promote any wellbeing campaigns?	Does your College have an anti-bullying policy?
Royal College of Physicians London [RCPL]	Mental health and wellbeing web resource	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh [RCPEd]	Yes	Yes	Addressed within code of conduct
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow [RCPSG]	<p>Pastoral support is provided via an online programme of webinars covering clinical and non-clinical skills: https://rcpsg.ac.uk/college/this-is-what-we-do/clinical-skills</p> <p>https://rcpsg.ac.uk/college/this-is-what-we-do/non-clinical-skills</p> <p>RCPSG SAS doctors, like all members, also have access to a network of UK regional advisors and College tutors and to qualified mentors</p>	<p>Yes — please view website at: https://rcpsg.ac.uk/college/this-is-what-we-stand-for/wellbeing</p>	Yes
Royal College of Surgeons of England [RCSEng]	Yes	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh [RCSEd]	Website signposting only	Yes, active anti-bullying campaign	Yes
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [RCOG]	Yes – regional workplace behaviour champions available to SAS Doctors as well as trainees	Recently published [BMJ Open] RCOG “burnout” survey included SAS Doctors alongside trainees/consultants. RCOG Supporting Our Doctors group, which has SAS/LED representation and hosting of multi-disciplinary Anti-Bullying Days	RCOG/RCM Undermining toolkit resource on website, RCOG Code of Conduct
Royal College of Ophthalmologists [RCOphth]	No	No	No formal policy
Royal College of Radiologists [RCR]	Not aware of any formal programmes	Not known	Yes
Royal College of Emergency Medicine [RCEM]	No	Wellbeing App “87%” and EM-POWER: A Wellness Compendium for EM	Yes — see link to left



Royal College of Psychiatrists [RCPsych]	Yes. PSS service is open to all	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health [RCPCH]	Website signposting	No	No
Royal College of Anaesthetists [RCOA]	—	Signed up to anti-bullying alliance https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/media/417910/antibullying-3april2019-002.pdf	College Code of Conduct but no specific anti-bullying policy
Royal College of Pathologists [RCPATH]	Website signposting. Programme of coaching available.	Signed up to anti-bullying alliance https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/media/417910/antibullying-3april2019-002.pdf	Yes
Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare [FSRH]	No	No	No
Faculty of Dental Surgery (FDS) [RCS England]	Yes	Yes	Yes



Recognition

College	Does your College allow SAS doctors to be fellows (if by election)?	Does your College give awards to SAS doctors?
Royal College of Physicians London [RCPL]	Yes	Yes — RCP Excellence in Patient Care Awards
Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh [RCPEd]	Yes	Yes
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow [RCPSG]	Yes — if they are on the GMC Specialist Register	Yes — including the prestigious President's Medal and Clinical Leadership Award
Royal College of Surgeons of England [RCSEng]	Yes — if eligible	Yes — SAS surgeons can apply for awards if eligible
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh [RCSEd]	Yes	No specific award for SAS Grades, but patient safety poster prize for SAS opened this year
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists [RCOG]	Yes — SAS Doctors can become fellows in exactly the same way as consultants	Yes, SAS doctors can apply for awards in the same way as consultants, if eligible
Royal College of Ophthalmologists [RCOphth]	No — SAS doctors can apply for RCOphth membership but not a fellowship	Yes — they can apply for awards
Royal College of Radiologists [RCR]	Yes — after passing fellowship exams	No
Royal College of Emergency Medicine [RCEM]	Associate fellowship if conditions met. Fellowship by election proposal being considered	Yes
Royal College of Psychiatrists [RCPsych]	Yes — if meet all criteria	Yes — annual award
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health [RCPCH]	Yes	No
Royal College of Anaesthetists [RCoA]	Fellows by examination	Yes — they can be nominated for a number of awards (but rarely are)
Royal College of Pathologists [RCPath]	Yes	Yes — they can be nominated for a number of awards
Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare [FSRH]	Yes	No
Faculty of Dental Surgery [FDS] [RCS England]	No — in theory anyone can be awarded FDS by election but unlikely that SAS grade would be deemed equivalent to Fellow	No specific award for SAS grade