



The ROYAL COLLEGE of  
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

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**To Heads of School, Training Programme Directors,  
Regional Advisors, College Tutors, Educational Supervisors and all  
Ophthalmologists in Training**

**Re: Important OST Curriculum changes**

Reformatting of the OST Curriculum

The Curriculum Sub-committee has been considering for some time an overhaul of the OST Curriculum Study Guide in response to feedback sought from trainees via their Ophthalmologists in Training Group (OTG) representatives. The curriculum reformatting has the dual aim of presenting learning outcomes with improved, shortened descriptors and a more user-friendly layout, as well as decoupling the resources section, which currently has the disadvantage of becoming quickly outdated. Feedback has suggested that trainees are often discouraged to consult the Study Guide because there are often overlaps between the descriptors on the main curriculum page and the information contained within the Guide.

The GMC has now given its approval to the College's proposal to reformat the curriculum in order to improve understanding. This curriculum change takes place with immediate effect <http://curriculum.rcophth.ac.uk/>.

Introduction of the Entrustable Professional Activity tool for managing a cataract operating list (EPA1)

The introduction of the new assessment tool addresses the need for more over-arching competency assessments to demonstrate that doctors in training are able to work as independent practitioners. The EPA1 tool demonstrates that senior trainees (typically OST5 and above) are able to undertake a whole list of cataract operations and manage all ramifications.

The GMC has now given its approval to the College's proposal to introduce the new EPA1, which will emphasise the different set of skills needed to run an entire cataract operating list, as opposed to the level of competency required for a single case.

The EPA1 will be **supplementary** to the OSATS1, which will continue to be used to assess the learning outcome SS4 – Cataract Surgery.

Senior trainees will be expected to complete the EPA1 on two occasions prior to the end of training, ideally twice in the final year. Timeframes will not be prescriptive and, if appropriate, the assessment may be undertaken in earlier years. The requirement will appear twice in the cumulative requirements for Stages 4, 5, 6, 7.

College Tutors will be asked to complete a feedback questionnaire in order to collect qualitative data to determine the impact of the new EPA tool on knowledge, capacity and behaviour.

This curriculum change takes place with immediate effect. Current ST7s may have to take special measures to ensure that they are observed running a list, so that the assessment can be made. They should discuss with their Educational and Clinical Supervisors on starting and, if there are predicted to be any difficulties, discuss with their TPD.

#### Addition of new learning outcome and bespoke DOPS for Biometry Skills (DOPSBi)

The introduction of the new assessment tool for the direct observation and assessment of Biometry Skills addresses the need for ophthalmologists to be able to perform biometry investigations, which is recognised as a high risk area and, as such, must be tested as a practical skill.

The GMC has now given its approval to the College's proposal to introduce the new DOPSBi. The tool will be used to assess a **new learning outcome** PS25 – Biometry Skills.

This assessment is to be undertaken twice during training, once during the ST1 year and again later in training to demonstrate understanding of more complex scenarios. The requirement will appear once in the requirements for Year 1 and once in the cumulative requirements for Years 4, 5, 6, 7.

Heads of School and trainees will be given a feedback questionnaire (the latter via SurveyMonkey) to evaluate both the appropriateness and validity of the new DOPS tool and any issues with delivering or undertaking this assessment at the specified stage of training.

This curriculum change takes place with immediate effect. Only **trainees who started training in or after August 2016** will be required to meet the competence in their first year, but all trainees must complete the second assessment.

Yours sincerely



**Miss Fiona Spencer FRCS (Glas) FRCOphth**  
*Chair – Training Committee*



**Miss Fiona Bishop FRCOphth**  
*Chair – Curriculum Sub-committee*