



The ROYAL COLLEGE of
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Newsletter – Issue 3
20 September 2021

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

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Re: New Ophthalmic Specialist Training (OST) Curriculum

We wrote to you all in [2019](#) and in [April 2021](#) to let you know about changes to the OST Curriculum in the coming years, and the rationale for these changes.

The curriculum is being rewritten to include the Generic Professional Capabilities (GPC) [framework](#) and meet the [GMC standards](#) of curricular design to make training more flexible for doctors and more responsive to patient and health service needs.

The key objective of the proposed new curriculum is to accelerate progression to consultant posts and ensure national standardisation of high-level special interest area training.

Stakeholder consultation

You might recall the public consultation undertaken earlier in the year (April-May 2021), which gave all stakeholders the opportunity to view the proposed new curriculum and comment on opportunities and/or perceived challenges. We wish to thank all who have taken the time to complete the feedback form, as well as those trainees and trainers who joined two webinars to learn more about the changes and take part in a Q&A session.

It should be reiterated here that the difficult-to-navigate layout – the new curriculum was presented as a long and unwieldy pdf document – was for consultation-purposes only. After regulatory approval, the new curriculum will be presented in web-based format to allow users to switch easily between levels, domains and syllabi.

It should also be noted that, although the 4-level structure is intended to remove the necessity for post-CCT fellowships for all ophthalmologists, it is not the RCOphth's intention to remove them from UK hospitals altogether or prevent doctors to undertake them, should they wish to do so.

Some changes to content and adjustments to the length of Level 4 training for some special interest areas have been incorporated as a result of the feedback. The revised draft curriculum

is available [here](#), where you will also be able to view the latest FAQs document and the consultation executive summary.

Timeline

Our final curriculum submission has been delayed by the GMC, due to COVID, until October 2021. Confirmation of approval might not be given until well into the first quarter of 2022.

This gives insufficient time following approval of the curriculum to complete the tender process and have a new e-Portfolio fully developed and ready for our originally intended pilot in August 2022 and full implementation in August 2023. We believe that a one-year pilot is necessary to confirm suitability of training posts for the new curriculum, new assessment tools and the new e-Portfolio, in order to identify adjustments necessary before full implementation.

We will therefore now be submitting the proposal with a start date for the new curriculum of **August 2024** (with a pilot beginning August 2023), which should give us time to ensure the e-Portfolio is fully functional before the launch of the new curriculum.

Preparing for the change

All ophthalmologists in training are strongly encouraged to acquire general competences as early as possible in their training over the next couple of years and make plans to sit the final examinations by the end of ST5 or middle of ST6 year. This will allow a smoother transition to the new curriculum in 2024.

Some might have come across new assessment tools that we are piloting to assess the level that a doctor in training can be entrusted with independent practice. Please contact your Head of School or Training Programme Director (TPD), should you wish to take part in the next iteration of the pilot with a Clinical Supervisor.

Next steps

A project is underway to produce a clear mapping of already collected e-Portfolio evidence and prior ARCP outcomes to the new curriculum. It is planned that each trainee transitioning to the new curriculum will have a one-to-one 'Curriculum Transition' meeting with their Educational Supervisor. This will result in clarity about the high-level learning outcomes that have already been achieved on the new curriculum and a 'gap analysis' for those still to be achieved.

Delivery of training in all domains will be described in a 'Delivery of the New OST Curriculum' document and will include addressing concerns expressed during the consultation process. Structured educational and support packages for the new curriculum will be made available for trainers and trainees on the new curriculum webpage.

The Training the Trainers Sub-committee will construct a programme – working together with the Training Committee and Curriculum Sub-committee – to develop a detailed plan to ensure this can be cascaded in advance of the implementation of the new curriculum by August 2024.

Please continue to keep an eye on future newsletters to keep abreast of key developments. Should you require further information, please send your query to training@rcophth.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,



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Chair – Training Committee



Miss Fiona Bishop FRCOphth
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