



The ROYAL COLLEGE of
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

CURRICULUM 2024

Postgraduate Medical Training

LEVEL 1-3 REGIONAL POST MAP

Guidance for Training Programme Directors

November 2022

Introduction

1. This document aims to provide guidance on the implementation of Level 1-3 ophthalmology training in the new curriculum (to be introduced from 2024).
2. It is intended as a guide for College Tutors, Educational Leads, College Tutors, Training Programme Directors and Heads of Schools.
3. It has been developed with input from the RCOphth Training Committee Level 1-3 Task & Finish Group and the Curriculum Sub-committee.

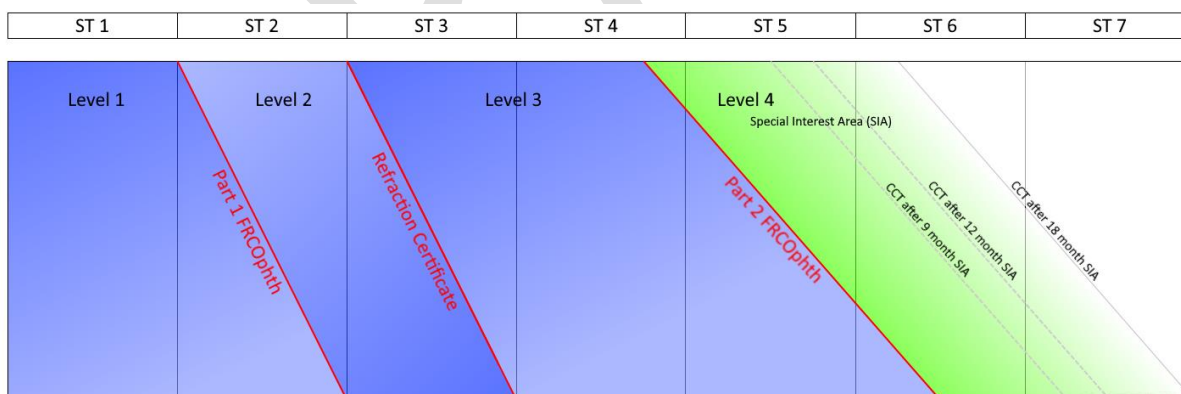
Key concepts and definitions in Curriculum 2024

1. Ophthalmology specialty training will continue to be a run-through training programme. Recruitment will be to OST1 and the indicative training time will be between 5 ½ and 7 years. The three key objectives of the curriculum are:
 - To describe specific professional capabilities that incorporate the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to practice Ophthalmology at consultant level.
 - To set the expected standards of knowledge and performance of professional skills for each stage of training, through a series of Learning Outcomes.
 - To define the critical progression points at which the required standards must be achieved.
2. Curriculum 2024 lists high-level, overarching Learning Outcomes in seven domains framed around the GMC Generic Professional Capabilities (GPC). These describe what an ophthalmologist does and the overall capabilities required in both clinical and generic professional skills. The seven domains are: Patient Management, Health Promotion, Leadership and Team Working, Patient Safety and Quality Improvement, Safeguarding and Holistic Patient Care, Education and Training, and Research and Scholarship.

The Patient Management domain is divided into the twelve Special Interest Areas (SIA) listed below. We would expect Cataract Surgery, Urgent Eye Care and Community Ophthalmology curricula to be delivered simultaneously with the other SIAs, i.e. these three will not require a separate posting.

- Oculoplastics and Orbit
- Cornea and Ocular Surface Disease
- Cataract Surgery
- Glaucoma
- Uveitis
- Medical Retina
- Vitreoretinal Surgery
- Ocular Motility
- Neuro-ophthalmology
- Paediatric Ophthalmology
- Urgent Eye Care
- Community Ophthalmology

3. The seven domains are divided into four 'Levels' of competence ophthalmologists will be expected to achieve at different stages of training. Levels 1 to 3 are:
 - Level 1 – management of low complexity patients
 - Level 2 – management of low complexity patients at appropriate rate
 - Level 3 – management of moderate complexity patients
4. Ophthalmologists in training will be expected to achieve Level 1 by the end of OST2, Level 2 by the end of OST3 and Level 3 by mid-way of OST6 in all domains, including all twelve SIAs in the Patient Management domain as set out in the diagram below.



Progression through the Levels of Competency within the training pathway can occur at varying times, as indicated. Examinations can be taken at any point prior to, or within, training as agreed with the Examinations department, but are required by the boundaries shown above. Transition from one level to the next will be possible after satisfactorily completing the training requirements, which will include the examination as indicated above. For example, progression from Level 1 to Level 2 can occur at any point within ST2, on completion of Level 1 competencies, and attainment of the Part 1 FRCOphth examination.

Level 1-2 training guidance

1. It is anticipated that:
 - the majority of trainees will achieve Level 1 and 2 training by the end of ST2, but this may be variable

- all Level 2 training must be completed by the end of ST3 to progress
 - Level 1 and 2 competencies will/can be acquired despite a trainee not having rotated through all SIAs.
2. A suitable timetable will need to be devised to allow acquisition of Level 1-2 competencies in the first 2 years of training. Solutions can be developed locally but we suggest that supervised time in acute services, cataract and laser lists would feature.
 3. Some clinics may be identified as being more suitable than others for Level 1-2 training. The focus should be on incorporating a number of General Ophthalmology Clinics and Emergency Eye Clinics (Acute Referral Clinics/ Urgent Eyecare Clinics). See example time-table below.
 4. One Research, Study, Teaching & Audit for Curriculum (RSTAC) session is required weekly in addition to postgraduate teaching at ST1-2 Level.
 5. Out of hours acute services may be supervised by a more senior trainee or remotely - this should be tailored to the experience and capability of the trainee. The number of patients considered reasonable will vary in different SIAs but should fit with the standard clinic booking.
 6. The Head of School and/or Training Programme Director will be in a position to assess the training that can be delivered in different training units and can consider if it is advantageous for a trainee to undertake Level 1 +/- Level 2 training in one unit to allow continuity and better assessment of competencies.
 7. Some trainees may complete Level 1-2 training before the end of ST2 and then may be able to start acquiring Level 3 competencies prior to entering ST3.
 8. An example timetable for Level 1-2 training (ST1 and 2) might be as below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Emergency Eye Clinic (EEC)	RSTAC	Cataract list	General/ Glaucoma clinic	EEC
PM	Laser clinic	General/ Cornea clinic	PG Teaching	EEC	General/ Oculoplastic clinic

Level 3 training guidance

1. The trainee will need appropriate experience in each SIA, attending specialty clinics and theatre/procedural sessions to achieve Level 3. As a guide a minimum of 2 specialty clinics and one specialist theatre or procedure list would be expected.

Therefore the timetable for an ST3 and above trainee will be different to that of a ST1 or 2 trainee.

2. It is acceptable for ST3 trainees and above to have 2 RSTAC sessions in addition to postgraduate teaching. It is expected that these RSTAC sessions will be used to acquire competencies in SIAs and professional domains not otherwise covered in the timetable, for example Community Ophthalmology and Research & Scholarship. It may also be used to 'catch-up' on certain competencies that may not have been acquired in any previous SIA posting. The RSTAC session is essentially a trainee-directed session and each trainee must be encouraged to utilise it fully to gain Curriculum 2024 competencies.
3. A trainee at ST3 and above who requires Level 3 training should be placed in a unit where that training can be provided - therefore the TPD/HoS in each region needs to work with the local College Tutors and Education team to confirm what Level 3 training can be offered in each unit.
4. A checklist should be completed by each ophthalmology training unit in conjunction with the relevant SIA syllabi, to confirm which areas of the SIA can be covered in the unit and to what level. Such a checklist should result in summarising for each SIA, the level of training able to be provided by the unit and the maximum number of trainees that can be accommodated.
5. As 9 SIAs need to be covered during a maximum of 3 and a half years (or shorter if Level 2 is not complete by the end of ST2), local arrangements will need to be made to ensure that this is feasible. This may be done by combining 2 SIAs in one 6 month placement or changing to 4 months placements in each SIA. Examples of possible combinations for 6-month blocks are:
 - Paediatric Ophthalmology and Neuro-ophthalmology
 - Paediatric Ophthalmology and Ocular Motility
 - Neuro-ophthalmology and Ocular Motility
 - Medical Retina and Vitreoretinal Surgery
 - Medical Retina and Uveitis

It is to be remembered that Community Ophthalmology, Urgent Eye Care and Cataract will need to be done in parallel with the others).

6. An example timetable for Level 3 training (ST3-6) would be as below.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	EEC	RSTAC	SIA list	SIA clinic	SIA clinic
PM	Cataract list	SIA clinic	PG teaching	RSTAC	SIA clinic

Resources

1. All documentation relating to the new Curriculum is on the [Curriculum2024 webpage](#).
2. All the syllabi can be found here <https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/training/ophthalmic-specialist-training/ost-curriculum/curriculum-2024/syllabi-patient-management-and-other-domains/>.
3. All Level 1 outcomes are in this document <https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Level-1-LOs-and-descriptors-all-domains.pdf>
4. All Level 2 outcomes are in this document <https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Level-2-LOs-and-descriptors-all-domains.pdf>
5. There is a separate document for each Level 3 and Level 4 SIA. The links to the Level 3 SIA are below.
 - [Oculoplastics and Orbit](#)
 - [Cornea and Ocular Surface Disease](#)
 - [Cataract Surgery](#)
 - [Glaucoma](#)
 - [Uveitis](#)
 - [Medical Retina](#)
 - [Vitreoretinal Surgery](#)
 - [Ocular Motility](#)
 - [Neuro-ophthalmology](#)
 - [Paediatric Ophthalmology](#)
 - [Urgent Eye Care](#)
 - [Community Ophthalmology](#)