



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

# Strategy for SAS and locally employed doctors 2020



## Introduction

This strategy sets out how the College will support SAS (specialty and associate specialist) doctors and locally employed doctors (LEDs). It provides an outline that will lead to the implementation and development of services and governance for SAS doctors.

SAS doctors is the umbrella term for non-consultant career grade doctors not in training programmes. It encompasses specialty doctors, associate specialists, staff grades and a number of other clinical career grades. Specialty doctor is the current and most common job title for a senior career grade doctor, previously known as 'staff grade', which was incorporated into the new grade in 2009.

The College recognises that those working in this grade add value to pathology services. These doctors provide a variety of services depending on their terms of employment, in some cases including autonomous service. Therefore, we aspire to achieve greater inclusion of SAS doctors in our services and governance.

To do this, we will improve the attractiveness and relevance of affiliate member benefits and resources available to those in this grade. The College supports SAS doctors working in pathology who become College members, including by supporting their participation in the CPD scheme. Through College membership and engagement, SAS doctors will have a stronger voice; for example, through inclusion on committees and exam panels.

SAS doctors currently make up just 5% of the College's membership, and many are not yet members of the College. This is a growing workforce and there may be opportunities to encourage them to join the College by improving the services and resources we offer. Table 1 provides details on the membership classes that contain SAS doctors. Appendix 1 details the benefits of each membership class.

## Purpose of this strategy

Three themes underpin this strategy: safety culture, continuous improvement and encouraging engagement. The strategy is intended to complement the College's overall strategic aims, which are to:

- develop and maintain high standards of pathology education, training and research
- promote excellence and advance knowledge in pathology practice
- increase the College's influence through a clear, coherent professional voice
- resource the future of the College.

Through this strategy, the College aims to engage and empower SAS doctors, throughout all stages in their careers. The College will support their development and encourage employing bodies to optimise their potential and contribution to pathology services, with supporting guidance for employers and doctors.\*

We will work in partnership with our membership, specialist societies and external bodies to ensure that the contribution of SAS doctors across all pathology specialties is recognised.

\* Terms and conditions are matters for employers. However, the College believes it is good practice for SAS doctors to have inductions, be part of the revalidation process and to have protected continuous professional development (CPD) time. We will develop guidance and processes relevant to this.

## Develop and maintain high standards of education, training and research for SAS doctors

The College aspires to support the education, training and research of those in the SAS grade. It is important that these staff have access to continuing professional development (CPD) to support the requirements of appraisal and revalidation.

The College will do this by:

- engaging with partners (for example, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the NHS, research funding bodies and industry) and providing professional leadership in this area
- raising awareness among SAS doctors of College services and the membership options available
- supporting the professional development of SAS doctors
- encouraging SAS doctors to train for the FRCPATH Part 1, which, upon passing the examination, confers Diplomateship
- considering the development of opportunities for those SAS doctors who wish to train for the FRCPATH Part 2, which, upon passing the examination, confers Fellowship
- offering guidance to employing bodies on English language testing
- offering advice and recommendations to employers of SAS doctors regarding good practice in supporting this workforce, for example, through:
  - time and funding for CPD
  - ring-fenced study leave time and funding
  - an induction programme
  - professional mentoring
  - a learning and development programme
  - involvement in wider roles, including educational supervision and becoming an appraiser
  - links to specialist revalidation advice provided by the General Medical Council (GMC).

## Promote excellence and advance knowledge among SAS doctors

The College aims to encourage excellence and advance knowledge in pathology practice for SAS doctors.

The College will do this by:

- prompting specialty advisory committee and regional council chairs to co-opt SAS doctors to serve on committees
- considering the establishment of an SAS doctors committee to report to College Council
- outlining opportunities for SAS doctors to make a valuable contribution to, and get involved with, the College by:
  - contributing to the writing of standards and guidelines
  - authoring articles for the *Bulletin*
  - carrying out public engagement activities
  - acting as representatives on advisory appointments committees (AACs) for SAS-grade posts
  - becoming a committee member
  - becoming an examiner or question writer.

## Increase the influence of SAS doctors through a clear, coherent, professional voice

The College seeks to increase SAS doctors' influence in terms of professionalism, culture, behaviours and attitudes.

The College will do this by:

- monitoring the workforce in pathology, including SAS grades
- curating learning and development material relevant to SAS doctors
- developing and providing tailored advice and guidance to SAS members
- developing and providing resources to include support for overseas doctors who aspire to obtain a post in the NHS, presenting the process to follow and signposting routes, for example, for General Medical Council (GMC) registration
- advertising the College's AAC service, which provides representatives to sit on employing bodies' AACs and can be used for SAS doctor appointments
- ensuring that SAS doctors are aware that, as Fellows, they can become College assessors for SAS-grade AACs, which will help to enhance their interview skills
- engaging with the SAS doctor community to seek feedback and identify their needs, enabling us to strengthen the voice of this group
- providing guidance to SAS doctors by suggesting they:
  - mix with colleagues to support the profession and professionalism
  - join a defence union to secure the appropriate cover, as Crown indemnity does not provide legal advice specifically to a doctor in the event of litigation.

## Resource the future of the SAS doctors

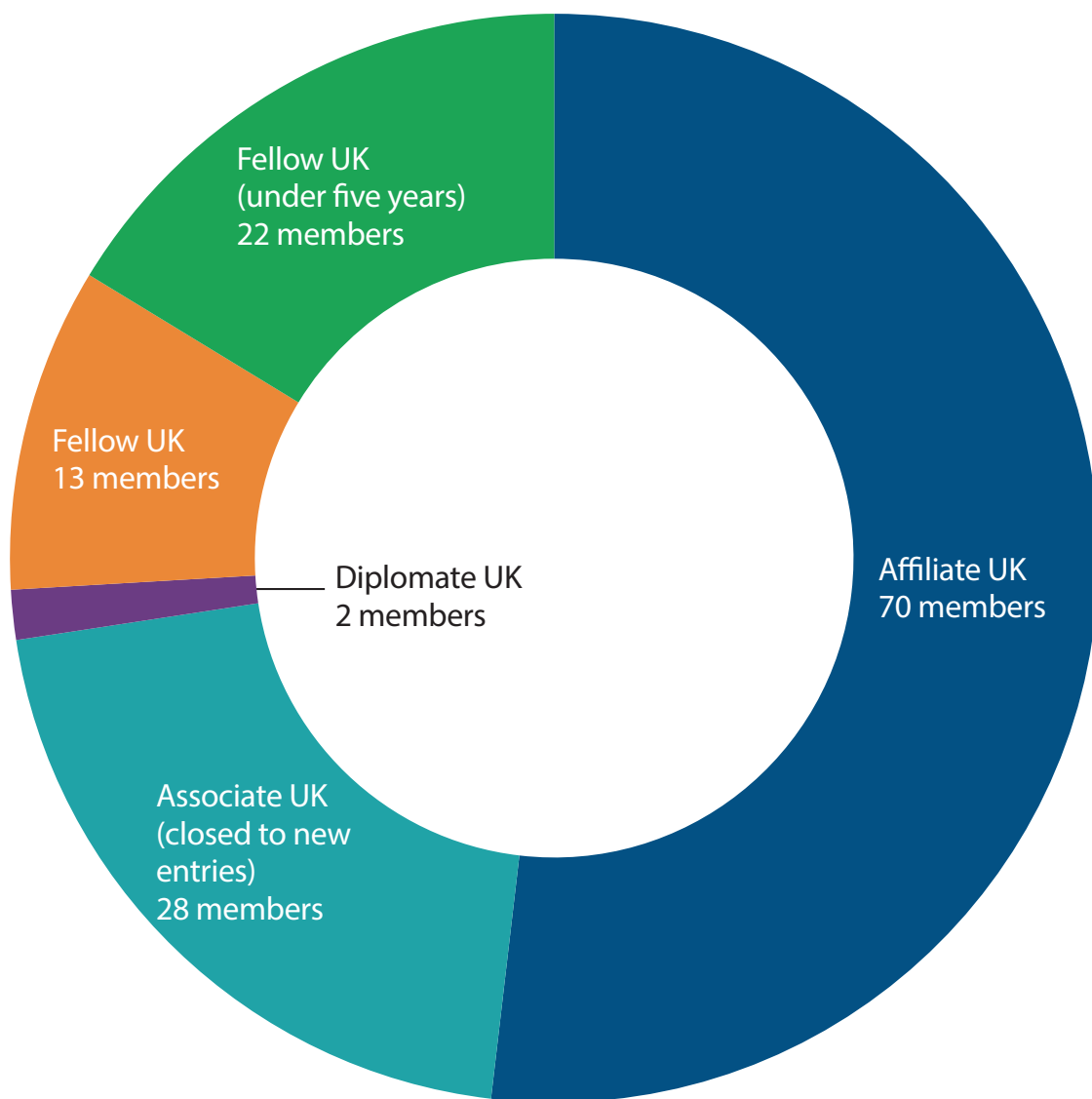
The College aspires to grow its membership and consequently increase revenue. By improving the services and resources provided by the College to SAS doctors and encouraging employers to develop their staff, it is anticipated that more of these individuals may wish to join the College.

The College will do this by:

- increasing the value of member benefits
- promoting membership options
- continuing to encourage associate members to consider Diplomateship.

## Appendix 1: Current SAS doctor membership

Figure 1: SAS doctor membership of the College, by member class





**Table 1: Grades of College membership available to SAS doctors**

Grade	Eligibility	Key benefits
Affiliate	Affiliateship of the College is open to those not eligible for any other member category.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to CPD portfolio</li> <li>• Stand for College roles (excluding Council)</li> <li>• Receive the <i>Bulletin</i></li> <li>• Discounts on College conferences and selected medical publications</li> </ul>
Diplomate	Diplomateship of the College can be obtained by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRCPATH Part 1</li> <li>• combined infection or medical genetics</li> <li>• IBMS &amp; RCPATH Conjoint Board Advanced Specialist Diploma</li> <li>• diploma examinations in dermatopathology or forensic pathology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of post-nominals (DipRCPATH)</li> <li>• Access to CPD portfolio</li> <li>• Stand for College roles (excluding Council)</li> <li>• Receive the <i>Bulletin</i></li> <li>• Discounts on College conferences and selected medical publications</li> <li>• Access to RCPATH Research Publishing Gateway</li> </ul>
Fellow	Fellowship of the College can be obtained by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examination (FRCPATH Part 1 and Part 2)</li> <li>• published works</li> <li>• invitation of Council. This is for accomplished medical practitioners or scientists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of post-nominals (FRCPATH)</li> <li>• Access to CPD portfolio</li> <li>• Vote in and stand for College elections</li> <li>• Receive the <i>Bulletin</i></li> <li>• Discounts on College conferences and selected medical publications</li> <li>• Access to RCPATH Research Publishing Gateway</li> </ul>

The Royal College of Pathologists is a professional membership organisation with more than 11,000 fellows, affiliates and trainees worldwide. We are committed to setting and maintaining professional standards and promoting excellence in the teaching and practice of pathology, for the benefit of patients.

Our members include medically and veterinary qualified pathologists and clinical scientists in 17 different specialties, including cellular pathology, haematology, clinical biochemistry, medical microbiology and veterinary pathology.

The College works with pathologists at every stage of their career. We set curricula, organise training and run exams, publish clinical guidelines and best practice recommendations and provide continuing professional development. We engage a wide range of stakeholders to improve awareness and understanding of pathology and the vital role it plays in everybody's healthcare. Working with members, we run programmes to inspire the next generation to study science and join the profession.

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