



Promoting excellence in Oral Surgery through education,
training and research for better patient care

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Mr Andrew Edwards
Chairman, Tri-Collegiate Specialty Membership Examinations Executive (TSMEE)
Dean Elect of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Glasgow
232 - 242 St Vincent Street
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12th November 2018

Dear Mr Edwards

Re: Regulations of eligibility to sit the Tri-collegiate Membership in Oral Surgery examination

We write on behalf of BAOS to cordially request that the Tri-Collegiate Specialty Membership Examinations Executive (TSMEE) kindly review the current rules regarding eligibility for access to the Diploma of Membership in Oral Surgery (MOral Surg).

This is a matter that we have raised in several forums, after the mechanism that allowed candidates to sit the exam by portfolio application was unaccountably removed in 2012 (section 4.4). We are aware that this change also affected other Dental specialities including Special Care Dentistry and Paediatric Dentistry. There have been two recent pan-Dental Speciality meetings discussing this matter (including the Senate of Dental Specialities meeting in October 2018) which has again led us to request this review of the regulations.

BAOS are fully supportive of formal specialist training in Oral Surgery (OS) to both Specialist and Consultant level. We feel that the development of an increased number of training posts in Oral Surgery (there are currently only 41 across the UK) is the most appropriate way to generate clinicians who will deliver the highest quality care and ensure patient safety at a senior level in the future. This request to review the eligibility for access to MOral Surg is not designed in any way to undermine or devalue the formal training pathway that currently exists.

There is a large cohort of Oral Surgeons, working predominantly in Speciality Dentist and Associate Specialist (SAS) grades who practice at senior levels. They have had neither the opportunity to be grandfathered onto the GDC specialist list in Oral Surgery nor the chance to enter formal Oral Surgery training posts. This group of clinicians not only delivers a large service element (often at senior autonomous level) but are also involved in teaching, training and leadership roles. They frequently drive innovation within their units.

There will soon be a deficit in the OS specialist work force as those who were grandfathered onto the list retire. The problem of manpower planning for both primary and secondary care is also compounded by the small number of current OS trainee posts. The OS SAS workforce are a skilled asset who work in both sectors and who should be given the opportunity to objectively demonstrate the level of knowledge they have achieved.

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Unfortunately, they currently have no way of demonstrating their level of knowledge via a nationally accredited examination - which is becoming increasingly necessary. For example, the Associate Specialist Grade is being reintroduced into many Trusts and as part of any upgrading process individuals must be able to prove an adequate level of knowledge. Passing the MOral Surg examination would demonstrate this.

We strongly feel that successful completion of the exam is not a short cut onto the GDC Specialist list in Oral Surgery but could form part of an individual's portfolio application through the formal GDC mediated entry processes that currently exist. These processes do require academic evidence and again, this would be met by obtaining the MOral Surg examination.


We also recognise that the MOral Surg is a robust examination and that individuals should have to demonstrate that they have sufficient evidenced training and experience to sit (with a portfolio and structured references). We would not advocate a blanket eligibility for the whole SAS cohort to be able to take this examination *carte blanche*. In our view, candidates should be able to demonstrate equivalence to Oral Surgery specialist training standards as a minimum requirement with a rigorously evidenced portfolio.

We would be grateful for your consideration of our request and would be happy to meet and discuss this further.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Rebecca Hierons
President of BAOS



Mrs Pippa Blacklock
BAOS Education Committee

Cc: Miss Maire Morton, Chair of the Tri-Collegiate Membership Examination Board for Oral Surgery
Prof Michael Escudier, Chair of the Senate of Dental Specialties
Mr Peter Dyer, Chair of CCHDS
Dr Alan Mighell, Chair of ABSTD
Dr David Felix, Chair of COPDEND
Dr Christine Goodall, Chair of Oral Surgery SAC
Dr John Rowson, Chair of Oral Surgery SAB
Prof Justin Durham, President of ABAOMS
Mr Patrick Magennis, Chair of BAOMS
Prof Michael Escudier, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery, RCS England
Prof Fraser McDonald, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery, RCS Edinburgh
Professor Graham Ogden, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery, RCS Glasgow
Dr John Marley, Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery, RCS Ireland