



British Orthopaedic Association and SAS Career Development

Staff Grade, Associate Specialist, Specialty (SAS) Doctors are a diverse group with excellent knowledge and a wide range of surgical skills and experience which are fundamental to the successful delivery of T&O services in the UK.

The BOA strongly supports the critical role of SAS in the delivery of trauma and orthopaedic surgery.

The BOA believes that meeting the professional development needs of our SAS colleagues is essential at both an organisational and individual level. Sustaining good quality services for NHS patients requires all surgeons to remain up to date with advances in trauma and orthopaedic surgery and this is as relevant for SAS surgeons as those in training or at consultant level.

There are fundamental basics that should be in place for all levels of SAS and Locally Employed Doctors as they are for other NHS employees.

These should include, at senior level:

- an appropriate induction at the time employment commences
- a job plan and job description that matches the role they perform
- an annual appraisal and personal development plan
- support with revalidation

At a more junior level:

- the opportunity to be involved in the teaching opportunities offered to doctors in training or their equivalent
- annual assessments similar to the annual assessment of other surgeons in training
- access to a study leave budget

Additional activities to support SAS are wide ranging, and research suggests the following are helpful and valued:

- personal development to enable a more active role in teaching and training
- upskilling in broad clinical roles to enable SAS to take managerial and leadership roles within their departments which would form part of their job plans and be subject to annual evaluation
- upskilling to enable SAS doctors to take a greater role in leading clinical services, such as involvement in out of hours work
- opportunities to contribute to the wider educational framework (e.g. course faculty)

Doctors' expectations of their careers are changing, and the traditional approach of progressing through a formal 'linear' training programme is not suited to everyone. Surveys suggest that when making decisions about career pathways students are often unaware of options outside formal

training programmes, and that SAS roles are not promoted as widely as they could or should be. This can be encouraged partly by involving more SAS doctors in the educational process, but also by better promotion across the NHS of the important role that SAS play in delivering health care.

As the Specialty Association that represents all T&O surgeons, the BOA is keen to support our SAS workforce to develop in their roles and to be recognised and valued for their contributions.

We have established a working group to look at the support the BOA can offer to enable SAS doctors. In particular we are looking at:

- Developing a one-day event for SAS, offering sessions on career development, and the opportunity for building networks;
- Providing best practice and career case studies to demonstrate different approaches to career development across the SAS career, including access to CESR;
- Exploring options around support and sponsorship in accessing opportunities that enable doctors to achieve competencies;
- A commitment to involve SAS more effectively as a part of the T&O education process, specifically as educational and clinical supervisors for doctors in training
- Supporting the Surgical Royal Colleges and the AoMRC in considering a more structured career development model for SAS surgeons;
- Developing more effective communications with SAS surgeons;
- Dedicated resources on our website providing advice and information and linking across to other resources.

We will be developing these resources and will communicate developments to our SAS members.