



Advanced Training Review

Implementation Planning

March 2023



This plan sets out the proposals for implementation and transition of the Advanced Training Review including the revised and new Special Interest Training Modules (SITMs), previously known as Advanced Training Skills Modules (ATSMs), Special Interest Professional Modules (SIPMs), previously known as Advanced Professional Modules (APMs), and the updated 2023 subspecialty curricula.

This reflects the College's current thinking on how the proposed changes can be implemented across the UK, as well as the support that will need to be in place to enable a safe and successful transition for all. These plans should be considered alongside the Advanced Training Review proposal for consultation and we encourage everyone to feedback on the proposals for implementation as part of the response to consultation.

1. Background

The Core Curriculum for Obstetrics and Gynaecology is the main programme of training for all doctors wishing to obtain a certificate of completion of training (CCT) in O&G. A new, more adaptable, curriculum was developed to equip specialists with the professional skills, knowledge and attributes that they would need for the future. It was more flexible and more able to be modified to fit future working practice and was implemented in 2019. The advanced modules and curricula in place at the time were reformatted into the new framework there was little change to the content of the Advanced Training Skills Modules (ATSMs) at this time.

The advanced modules and curricula have not been changed fundamentally since their introduction in 2007. Some have been revised piecemeal and in isolation from each other and the core curriculum leaving overlap between the modules and the core curriculum. Technical skills and knowledge have advanced and changed, meaning that some of the content is no longer relevant or appropriate. There is a need for new elements within the special interest curricula to train doctors in emerging skills and modernised ways of working, for example multi-professional networks. Furthermore, the special interest curricula needed to reflect more effectively the needs of women and the service.

The work of the advanced training review has built on the flexibility introduced in 2019 and is proposing changes that continue to meet the principles of Shape of Training. The College is committed to transforming education and training to deliver its mission to improve health care for women, girls and their families.

The key changes proposed are:

- Launch of revised and updated special interest and subspecialty training to equip the profession with all the skills, knowledge and attributes needed for the future.



- Introduction of a fundamental change in the programme, namely that training in special interest areas will commence at the beginning of ST5 and proceed hand in hand with the other aspects of the curriculum (previously known as 'core') until CCT is achieved.
- Curricula and training will be more flexible and able to be modified to fit future working practice, addressing all the key professional elements of being a consultant.
- The revised and updated special interest training and subspecialty component will be delivered through the Training ePortfolio.
- In time, the aim is to move away from describing the various elements of the curriculum as either 'core' or 'advanced'. In future, all the elements will simply be known as 'The Curriculum'. However, for clarity, and during the transitional period, the terms 'core' and 'advanced' curriculum will continue to be used.

2. Implementation planning

2.1 Proposed timelines

Subject to GMC approval, the College is proposing to launch the new curricula and start the transfer from December 2023, to maximise the impact of the 2023 curricula and allow trainees to benefit from the changes. The intention is to manage the implementation in a way that supports the Schools and Training Programmes and enables the majority of trainees to transfer by August 2024.

In summary, ST1-ST4 trainees will carry on as normal until they enter ST5 training, there will be a degree of choice for ST5 and ST6 trainees between ATSMs and SITMs and how they complete advanced training requirements and final year ST7 trainees will complete their training under the old 2019 curriculum. Trainees will need to have early conversations with their Educational Supervisors regarding their preferences.

Implementation must be achievable and practical for all programmes and as such feedback on the viability of these proposals is a key component of the consultation survey.

2.2 Flexibility

The College recognises that there are differences in the way O&G schools deliver the curriculum depending on local circumstances, geography and training opportunities, especially with advanced components of training. There will be a clear need for flexibility in the implementation of the new curricula and the transition of trainees in order to manage the delivery of training programmes and maintain stability of service provision.

To enable the existing plans in place for 2023/24 rotations, as well as ATSM selection and programmes, the College will work with individual schools and their training programmes to manage challenges and barriers to implementation. Where necessary, schools will have



flexibility in the first 12 months to choose when it is most appropriate to complete the transition.

2.3 MRCOG Examinations

There will be no changes to the MRCOG examinations, the syllabus or requirements for attainment as part of the advanced training review proposals.

- MRCOG Part 1 will continue to be necessary to progress from ST2 to ST3
- Trainees will be able to undertake STIM training at ST5 without having full MRCOG
- Both MRCOG Part 2 and Part 3 will be required to exit ST5 training and progress to ST6

2.4 Current Advanced Training Skills Modules (ATSMs)

To support the implementation of the 2023 curricula, the current ATSMs will need to be retired. Depending on the stage of training and progress against curriculum competencies, those already undertaking ATSMs will be able to choose whether to transfer to SITMs or complete the ATSMs. Enrolment for the current ATSMs will cease from December 2023, at the point the new curricula are launched.

2.5 Proposed SITM requirements for CCT

- SITMs will have a score of 1 or 2.
- Two completed SITMs will be needed to achieve CCT, with a total score of at least 3
- Only two SITMs can be undertaken at any one time.
- Further SITMs can be undertaken when one is completed, provided the Educational Supervisor agrees there is a reasonable chance of completion before the indicative CCT date.
- Training will not be extended to allow completion of a third or subsequent SITM unless they have only completed two 1- point SITMs and need to complete a third
- Most trainees will register for one 2-point SITM and one 1-point SITM, or two 2-point SITMs.
- Trainees may, however, register for two 1-point SITMs at the outset of advanced training/ST5, with the plan to register for one or more further 1-point SITMs as they complete one or both of their initial choices.
- Trainees may choose, in addition, to undertake an SIPM, but these do not carry a score and do not therefore count towards the total point score.

2.6 Training ePortfolio

Both the revised and new SITM and SST modules will be delivered via the Training ePortfolio. The ePortfolio will be adapted to run both 2019 and 2023 curricula simultaneously in order to support doctors in training at all stages of transition. However, trainees will only be able to enrol on one curricula either the 2019 or 2023.



Requirements for the ePortfolio enhancements have already been gathered and developments scheduled to ensure the system is ready on time for implementation.

3. Transition planning

The GMC sets out the requirements for doctors in training to move to the most recent GMC approved curriculum and programme of assessment, via the [policy statement on the transition of learners to a new curriculum](#). The expectation is that transition should be completed as soon as reasonably possible, taking account of patient and trainee safety whilst also balancing the needs of the service.

3.1 Principles for transition

The College has given careful consideration to how doctors in training will move from the current ATSMs, APMs and subspecialty curricula to the 2023 SITMs, SIPMs and subspecialty curricula.

Subject to approval from the GMC, the new curricula and training structure is proposed to come online from December 2023. Most trainees will be expected to transfer to the new curricula and it is recommended that this occurs at the earliest opportunity.

There will also be associated changes to the 2019 core curriculum that will be introduced alongside the new advanced curriculum and these will need to be recognised and achieved by trainees who undertake the new advanced curriculum.

These principles assume full time training with no statutory leave or out of programme. The College recognises the need for flexibility with the transition and expects pathways will be individualised based on the diverse mix of training programmes and trainees across the O&G profession.

3.2 Transition for trainees

ST1 – ST4 Trainees

- Trainees who have yet to start advanced training will not immediately be affected by the implementation of the SITMs and 2023 subspecialty curricula
- On entering ST5 trainees will start advanced training with the new SITM/2023 subspecialty curricula
- ST4 trainees should use the proposals for the new SITMs when planning their advanced training preferences and should discuss these with their Educational Supervisor and Training Programme Director



- Trainees will need to be aware that the core curriculum key skills and descriptors have changed somewhat and will need to plan how they will achieve the new version of the core curriculum over the remainder of their training time

ST5 Trainees

- Doctors in training starting ST5 at the time of implementation, or after, will undertake SITM/2023 subspecialty curricula
- Doctors in training already in ST5 at the time of implementation should be advised to familiarise themselves with the content of the SITMs *prior* to implementation and be ready to commence SITMs as soon as they are introduced. The content of the SITMs will be accessible prior to their implementation and trainees should be encouraged to collect evidence relevant to their prospective SITMs in advance of this date
- Doctors in training will need to ensure that they are able to evidence over the remainder of their training the core curriculum key skills which have been strengthened
- All trainees will still need to complete MRCOG to exit ST5

ST6 Trainees

- ST6 doctors in training who have commenced ATSMs at the time of implementation will have the choice to either stay on the ATSMs or move to the equivalent SITM, provided they can complete the SITMs without extending their current CCT date.
- If the doctor in training decides to move to the SITMs, they should have a discussion with their ATSM supervisor, based on the key skills and descriptors of the relevant SITM as to what the doctor in training has left to complete to meet the requirements of the SITM and whether this is feasible in the training time left.
- The ATSM Educational Supervisor and the doctor in training should make a record of this discussion on the ePortfolio.
- The doctor in training will need to link the relevant evidence to the SITM.
- It is anticipated that this group of trainees will be permitted to complete a combination of ATSMs and SITMs provided that at least two are completed, and without needing to extend the predicted CCT date.
- Agreement to transfer to the SITM from the related ATSM needs to be declared and recorded in the ePortfolio.
- Doctors in training who move to SITMs and away from ATSMs will need to ensure that they have suitable evidence by the end of training for the core curriculum key skills which have been strengthened



ST7 Trainees

- Those trainees in their last year of training will remain on the 2019 core curriculum and the 2019 ATSMs until CCT

Less than full time training (LTFT)

- The transfer principles will need to be interpreted on an individual basis for LTFT trainees depending on their stage of training, percentage of LTFT and curricular coverage.
- Training remains competency based rather than time based and so progress against the curriculum will be an important consideration.
- Early conversations with Educational Supervisors and TPDs to discuss individual circumstances and personalised plans will be important.

3.3 Transition for Subspecialty training

Doctors in training starting SST after implementation

- Doctors in training who commence subspecialty training after implementation will need to follow the 2023 SST curriculum

Doctors in training who have started SST prior to implementation

- Doctors in training who are already undertaking subspecialty training have the choice to either stay on the old SST curriculum or move to the new 2023 SST curriculum, as long as they can complete subspecialty training without extending their indicative training time
- If the doctor in training decides to move to the new SST curriculum they should have a discussion with their STPS, based on the key skills and descriptors of the relevant new SST curriculum as to what they have left to complete to meet the requirements of the new SST curriculum and whether this is feasible in the training time remaining
- The STPS and the doctor in training should make a record of this discussion on the ePortfolio.
- The doctor in training will need to unlink the relevant evidence from the old SST curriculum and link to the new SST curriculum.
- Agreement to transfer to the new SST curriculum needs to be declared and recorded in the ePortfolio. Subspecialty doctors in training who move to the new SST curricula will need to ensure that they have evidence for the core curriculum key skills which have been strengthened



Doctors in training within 12 months of completing SST

- Those doctors in training in their last year of subspecialty training will remain on the 2019 subspecialty curriculum and the 2019 core curriculum until CCT.

3.4 Transition for SAS and LED doctors

- CESR applicants will have the option to apply with the current ATSMs or use the new SITMs during the transition period of 2 years.
- Once the transition period finishes CESR applicants will have to apply with the SITMs as part of their CESR application.

4. Educational Supervision

The principles of the 2019 curriculum will not change. High level learning outcomes within Capabilities in Practice (CiPs), incorporation of the Generic Professional Capabilities as required by the GMC, and the assessment processes introduced in 2019 are not going to change with the revised Special Interest Training Modules (SITMs) and 2023 subspecialty curricula. The changes apply only to the content of the SITMs and subspecialty curricula.

Educational Supervisors for the SITMs and subspecialty training will need to familiarise themselves with the SITMs and 2023 subspecialty curricula. Guidance which will be produced to support the roll-out of the SITMs and 2023 subspecialty curricula which will highlight to trainees and their supervisors the changes made to the curricula.

The educational governance structures that are currently in place will remain. For most SITMs, it will be clear who the module supervisors will be because so many of the SITMs relate very closely to the previous ATSMs. However, there are SITMs with content not previously covered by the ATSMs and schools of obstetrics and gynaecology will need to determine where these SITMs can be offered, and by whom. ATSM directors will become SITM directors, but their role will remain the same.

5. College support for implementation

The College will be working with trainees, supervisors, Heads of School, Training Programme Directors, Trusts and Deaneries to rollout these important changes once GMC approval is received.

Education Board and the Specialty Education and Advisory Committee (SEAC) will support Heads of Schools and TPDs to develop flexible and achievable implementation and transition plans tailored as necessary for each region.



Resources and guidance in a number of formats, will be developed and shared over the coming months to help trainers and trainees with the proposals laid out in the advanced training review. This will include:

- Each SITM and 2023 subspecialty curricula will have an individual curriculum guide. The guides will include what the SITM / SST is about, its aim, how it is designed and assessed. The Guide will be embedded in the ePortfolio for ease of access.
- Career guidance giving examples of SITM combinations that would prepare a trainee for a consultant post that matched their aspirations and abilities.
- Detailed plans for transition will be produced for each stage of training and including trainees that are out of programme, LTFT or undertaking academic training.
- The Curriculum 2019 online resource on RCOG Learning was produced for the roll-out of the 2019 curriculum. It describes and illustrates the overarching principles of making professional global judgements regarding the progress of a trainee, how the assessment process works and also gives guidance for learning and evidencing the non-clinical capabilities in practice. This advice is still applies. The resources relating to the 2023 advanced curriculum will be updated
- Case studies and best practice examples to support rotation planning for the move to ST5 SITM entry
- Videos and guidance will help trainees and trainers navigate the updates and changes to the Training ePortfolio
- FAQs have been developed to understand how the changes will impact you and your colleagues. We understand that there will be many more questions in the months to come and we will continue to update these as we move through the approvals and implementation process. Please contact us via curriculum@rcog.org.uk

6. Next steps

The College would like to hear from as many people as possible as part of the consultation process for the advanced training review. This stage of the development process is critical and we will use the feedback to shape the final plans and submission to the GMC later this year.



We encourage you all to share your views and feedback on what works well in the ATR changes and what could be improved further. The success of the 2023 curriculum will be dependent on us addressing the anxieties and challenges raised by these changes as well as the engagement and involvement of all those involved in the delivery of education and training to ensure a high quality implementation.

The consultation feedback survey can be found [here](#) and more detail on the process is available on our [website](#).



Appendix 1: List of current ATSMs, ASM, APM and Subspecialty curricula

Gynaecology Advanced Training Skills Modules

- Acute Gynaecology and Early Pregnancy
- Advanced Laparoscopic Surgery
- Benign Abdominal Surgery: Open and Laparoscopic
- Benign Abdominal Surgery: Hysteroscopy
- Colposcopy
- Menopause
- Oncology
- Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology
- Sexual Health
- Subfertility and Reproductive Health
- Urogynaecology and Vaginal Surgery
- Vulval Disease

Obstetric Advanced Training Skills Modules

- Advanced Labour Ward Practice
- Fetal Medicine
- High Risk Pregnancy
- Labour Ward Lead
- Obstetric Medicine

Other Advanced Training Skills Module

- Medical Education

Advanced Skills Module

- Safe Practice in Abortion Care

Advanced Professional Module

- Clinical Research

Subspecialty Curricula

- Gynaecological Oncology
- Maternal and Fetal Medicine
- Reproductive Medicine
- Urogynaecology



Appendix 2: List of proposed SITMs/SIPMs and subspecialty curricula

Gynaecology Special Interest Training Modules

- **Gynaecological Surgical Care** (includes skills and knowledge common to many areas of gynaecological practice, reflects the need for pre-operative planning consent, management of post-operative complications, includes Human Factors and the management of the theatre team, OSATS for both open and laparoscopic surgery; no major surgery as those aspiring to become gynaecological surgeons undertake either the Oncology Care, Endometriosis Care or Management of Subfertility SITM in addition to the Gynaecological Surgical Care SITM)
- **Endometriosis Care** (known as Advanced Laparoscopic Surgery)
- **Oncology Care**
- **Management of Subfertility**
- **Urogynaecology and Vaginal Surgery**
- **Management of the Endometrium** (known as Benign Abdominal Surgery: Hysteroscopy)
- **Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology**
- **Vulval Disease**
- **Colposcopy**
- **Menopause**
- **Safe Practice in Abortion Care** (already approved by the GMC and no changes made)
- New: **Complex Early Pregnancy and Emergency Gynaecology**
- New: **Chronic Pelvic Pain**
- New: **Robotic Surgery**

Obstetric Special Interest Training Modules

- **Fetal Care**
- **Pregnancy Care** (skills and knowledge to manage the commonest medical issues encountered in obstetric care)
- **Maternal Medicine** (must be undertaken in conjunction with the Pregnancy Care SITM)
- **Care for Prematurity**
- **Perinatal Mental Health**
- **Prenatal Diagnosis** (must be undertaken in conjunction with the Fetal Care SITM)
- **Supportive Obstetrics** (looking after the pregnancies of those with additional needs and vulnerabilities)



Special Interest Professional Modules

- **Clinical Research** (already approved by the GMC and no changes made)
- **Medical Education** (content revised/updated and rebadged as a special interest professional module)
- NEW: **Leadership and Management**

Disbanded ATSMs

- **Advanced Labour Ward Practice:** capabilities are covered in core and descriptors in relevant core key skills have been strengthened as every CCT holder needs to achieve these
- **Acute Gynaecology and Early Pregnancy:** many of the emergency capabilities from this ATSM are covered in core and descriptors in relevant core key skills have been strengthened as every CCT holder needs to achieve these. The SITM in Complex Early Pregnancy and Emergency Gynaecology has been developed to cover the non-core capabilities from the ATSM.
- **Labour Ward Lead:** the revision of the obstetric ATSMs into SITMs resulted in the skills from the Labour Ward Lead ATSM being covered across the obstetric SITMs and core. Any doctor hoping to develop a leadership role in any area of O&G could consider undertaking the Leadership and Management SIPM.
- **Sexual Health:** content is suitably covered in core.

Subspecialty Curricula

- **Gynaecological Oncology:** consists of SITM in Oncology Care CiPs 1-3, SST GO CiPs 1-4 and the subspecialty specific research CiP
- **Maternal and Fetal Medicine:** consists of SITMs in Pregnancy Care CiPs 1-2, Maternal Medicine CiPs 1-2, Prenatal Diagnosis CiPs 1-3, Fetal Care CiPs 1-3, SST MFM CiPs 1-3 and the subspecialty specific research CiP
- **Reproductive Medicine:** consists of SITM in Management of Subfertility CiPs 1-4, SST RM CiPs 1-5 and the subspecialty specific research CiP
- **Urogynaecology:** consists of SITM in Urogynaecology and Vaginal Surgery CiPs 1-4, SST UG CiPs 1-4 and the subspecialty specific research CiP

Core Curriculum

- **Summary of changes to 2019 core curriculum**
- **Full 2019 core curriculum with changes**

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