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RCSEd Resources for SAS LED
Surgeons and Dentists
Career Development

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The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) offers a portfolio of professional educational resources for Specialists, Associate Specialists and Specialty Doctors (SAS), and Locally Employed Doctors (LED). This guidance document highlights the key resources available to SAS LED surgeons and dentists for career development and advancement.

Introduction

The SAS LED workforce currently makes up 30% of all licensed doctors, and by 2030 the General Medical Council (GMC) predicts that SAS doctors will become the largest group on the medical register [1]. SAS dentists make up 20% and in fact in the Oral Surgery sub-speciality, they make up almost 45% of the workforce [2]. Given the vital role SAS LED workforce plays in the NHS, strengthening the SAS workforce is more pertinent than ever before.

SAS LED doctors form the backbone of NHS services leading to effective patient care. Most are engaged in medical education, training, and mentoring the next generation of surgeons, in addition to ever-growing clinical demands. Some have gone into senior administrative positions and championed autonomous practice. Many senior SAS doctors have already completed a structured training programme overseas and bring a wealth of experience to the various settings in which they work.

RCSEd recognises the valuable contribution SAS LED doctors make to the NHS and as such has a dedicated SAS LED committee (SASLC) and a SAS LED representative sitting on each of the RCSEd Surgical Specialty Boards. RCSEd encourages all SAS Members and Fellows to take up roles in various committees and faculties to enhance their own professional development and contribute to the vision of RCSEd to enhance patient care.

Key RCSEd resources for SAS LED surgeons and dentists are:

1. RCSEd Mentor Development Programme
2. RCSEd Future Leaders Programme for Surgeons
3. RCSEd Portfolio pathway support
4. Intercollegiate Surgical Education Committee for SAS, LED, and Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (ISECSN)
5. Annual RCSEd SAS LED Surgeons conference
6. Webinars and other resources available via the RCSEd app and website

1. RCSEd Mentor Development Programme.

A practical three-day programme focusing on developing mentoring skills suitable for use in a range of leadership and clinical situations amongst senior surgeons and Fellows of RCSEd was launched in 2024 [3].

SAS and LED surgeons can enroll in the RCSEd Mentor Development Programme with the aim of developing mentoring skills, exploring ethical issues, as well as learning of practical applications of mentoring at work. This three-day course, with the first and final days delivered face-to-face, and the second day delivered online, includes taught sessions based on Egan's mentoring model.

It supports Domain 1 of the updated GMC Good Medical Practice guidelines [4], and advice regarding further possible qualifications, accreditation or membership of the European Mentoring & Coaching Council (EMCC). It provides an essential step to enrich Mentorship and Coaching skills for SAS and LED Surgeons. Individuals who sign up and complete this course must commit to being a College mentor through this scheme for future mentees.

2. RCSEd Future Leaders Programmes.

The innovative Future Leaders Programme (FLP) is open to all surgeons. The 12-month blended learning programme supports surgeons (ST8, SAS or in the first years of consultant practice) and dentists on the specialist list or working as an SAS grade, with the passion to be future leaders within their specialty and equip them with the advanced leadership skills needed to excel. [5]

The programme is accredited by RCSEd, and the College has helped with the administration of the programme since 2021. Funding is available from various surgical and sub-speciality organisations such as ASiT ASGBI, BAOMS, ENT UK, SBNS and the Vascular Society, as well as from the MDDUS and RCSEd.

FLP provides the necessary platform and skills for SAS LED surgeons to develop and enhance their leadership potential within their scope of practice in NHS Trusts / Health Boards, surgical organisations and the wider healthcare system.

3. RCSEd Portfolio pathway support for Specialist Accreditation.

RCSEd provides support to SAS LED doctors who wish to enter the Specialist Register through the GMC's portfolio pathway. Resources, including workshops and webinars, are offered along with signposting to key information on JCIE examinations and how to access ISCP. Follow the link to find out more: www.rcsed.ac.uk/SAS-CPD

4. Intercollegiate Surgical Education Committee for SAS, LED, and Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (ISECSN).

The Intercollegiate Surgical Education Committee for SAS, LED, and Non-Consultant Hospital Doctors (ISECSN) website was launched in 2023 to provide key information, resources, and access to support the development of educational provision specifically required for SAS and LED doctors.

The comprehensive site provides information on:

- Career advice and support
- Webinars and courses to include generic and specialist topics
- Mentor training
- Skills development
- Learning tools
- Portfolio Pathway (CESR) application advice
- Assessment support
- Credentialing

With recent changes in the evidence required for the CESR / Portfolio process, the new FRCS examination eligibility criteria, and details regarding the introduction of a new Senior SAS role (Specialist Grade), the ISECSN committee aims to address areas for development relevant to SAS, LED, and Non-Consultant surgeons.[6].



5. Annual SAS/LED Surgeons and Dentists Conference.

The annual RCSEd SAS LED Conference is held each autumn and is exclusively for SAS LED surgical and dental colleagues. The conferences offer an opportunity for academic and professional development. [7]

Through didactic lectures and popular interactive workshops, the conferences cover wide ranging important topics and themes such as:

- Changes to the Portfolio Pathway and how to collect and collate evidence for a successful application
- SAS / LED contracts and the evolving role of this important part of the workforce in the NHS
- Support available to dentists from the RCSEd Dental Faculty
- Template for success – experience of accomplished SAS LED surgeons in setting up a new service for patient care e.g. endoscopy, neurosurgery, satellite clinics etc
- Learn the importance of Quality Improvement Projects in the NHS, including how to use common QIP tools necessary to complete a project successfully
- Ways to navigate a fulfilling and satisfying career as a SAS surgeon



6. Webinars and other resources available via RCSEd app and website.

RCSEd offers a wealth of information in the form of webinars of both a technical and non-technical nature. The ongoing programme of webinars is an important resource for those looking to consolidate their knowledge and understanding or keep up with the latest developments in their chosen field. Webinars cover a wide range of specialties and disciplines while offering a convenient remote learning opportunity.

Archived webinars are available only to Fellows, Members and Affiliates of RCSEd, through the website and on the RCSEd App. Most live webinars are archived and available to view on demand by the membership. [8]

Search the RCSEd website [9] for educational courses suitable for SAS LED surgeons or dentists, including the following:

- Future Surgeons: Key Skills Course
- Addressing Conflict in Surgical Teams (ACT)
- Non-Technical Skills for surgeons [NOTSS]
- Clinical Research Methodology in Nutshell
- Foundation in Dental/Surgical Leadership
- RCSEd Mentor Development Programme
- Training the Trainers- Trainer development course
- Team Based Quality Review (TBQR)
- MRCS Examination Preparation Courses

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Our Mission

To be a strong voice for our family of members, developing their careers, upholding standards, and ensuring patient safety across the world.

Our Vision

To be the most welcoming, inclusive and innovative royal medical college in the world.

Our Values

Inclusivity. Integrity. Innovation.
Respect. Professionalism.

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