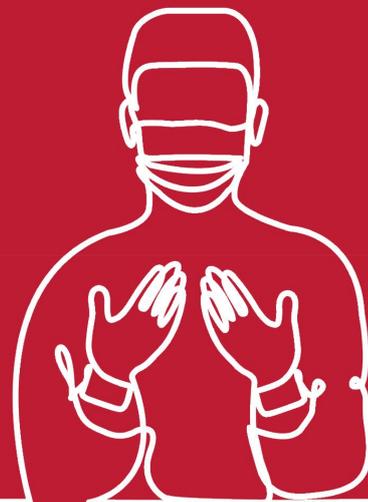


# Faculty of Podiatric Surgery Governance Overview



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# Podiatric Surgery

Podiatric surgery is a specialism of podiatry dedicated to the assessment, diagnosis and surgical management of the foot, ankle and its associated structures. Podiatrists who have undertaken extensive postgraduate training in foot surgery remain registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) but in addition, are annotated as podiatrists practicing podiatric surgery.<sup>1</sup>

## **Podiatric Surgical training routes**

It should be noted that the foundation stones for surgical training are laid during undergraduate podiatry training at one of fourteen universities in the UK. The current BSc (Hons) programmes teach trainee podiatrists the fundamentals of anatomy, physiology, medicine, pathology, injury and rehabilitation, pharmacology, regional anaesthesia, minor surgical techniques and research.

Postgraduate training begins with an MSc in the Theory of Podiatric Surgery which is delivered on a full or part-time basis. Successful candidates can then apply for a podiatric surgical training post in the NHS and at the same time will enrol on a 3-year Master of Podiatric Surgery (MOPS) programme during which time training will be delivered both in long-term clinical placement and in the classroom. On completion of the MOPS programme, the successful candidate will gain annotation with the HCPC and will also be awarded a Fellowship of the Royal College of Podiatry (RCPod) Faculty of Podiatric Surgery (FRCPodS). At this stage, candidates can apply for a post as a Specialty Registrar in Podiatric Surgery. These posts are typically three years in duration and allow for a period of advanced training under the guidance and supervision of a Consultant Podiatric Surgeon. During this period the candidate will work towards a Certificate of Completion of Podiatric Surgical

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<sup>1</sup> The HCPC maintains an online register of podiatrists and those individuals with additional annotation in the practice of podiatric surgery. That information can be readily searched for at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register/>



Training (CCPST), a process which is governed by the RCPod and overseen by the Academic and Clinical Governance Committee.

The CCPST marks the end point of formal podiatric surgery training, and the qualified podiatric surgeon can now apply for consultant-grade posts within the NHS.

Podiatric surgical training is provided jointly by Health Education England (HEE), Higher Education Institutions and the RCPod. Please see pathway detailed in Figure 1.

# Career Pathway for Podiatric Surgery

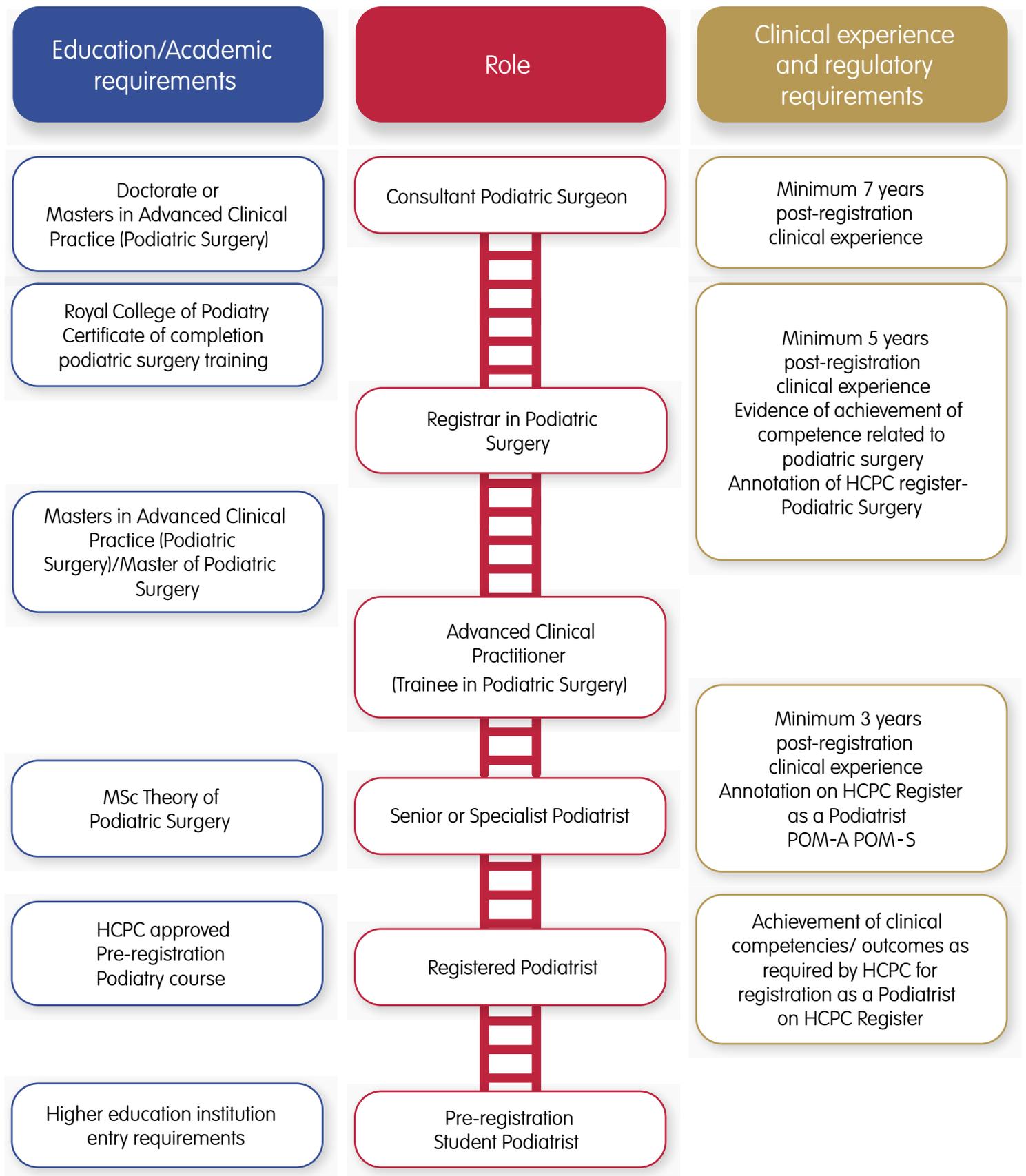


Figure 1: Career pathway for podiatric surgery

## Governance

Podiatric surgeons are first and foremost podiatrists, registered with and regulated by the HCPC, and as such work to the appropriate standards of proficiency for podiatrists<sup>2</sup>. In addition, those podiatrists practising podiatric surgery are annotated by the HCPC and must meet an additional 19 standards of practice<sup>3</sup>. Many podiatric surgeons are also non-medical prescribers and adhere to an additional set of prescribing standards<sup>4</sup>. Registration is renewed every two years by the regulator with a randomised auditing process in place during the renewal cycle. During this audit, registrants are required to provide evidence of continuing professional development (CPD) and their continued compliance not only to the standards of proficiency but also to the **19 standards of practice for podiatric surgeons and the standards for prescribing**.

Podiatric surgeons providing NHS services are required to undergo an annual appraisal. In that appraisal, their standards of practice, continuing professional development and future practice aims and objectives are reviewed. In line with other regulated professions, unsatisfactory practice, negligence or poor behaviour can be reported to the regulator by any healthcare professional or member of the public to ensure wider public protection.

The annual appraisal and mandatory training requirement of NHS Trusts/Health Boards and independent hospitals ensure that practice is appropriately governed. In addition, podiatric surgeons hold regular regional meetings to review clinical cases, share best practice and present their clinical outcomes.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-proficiency/chiroprpodists-podiatrists/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-relevant-to-education-and-training/standards-for-podiatric-surgery/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-relevant-to-education-and-training/standards-for-prescribing/>



## Outcome Reporting

Annotated podiatric surgeons utilise the Royal College of Podiatry's clinical audit tool, PASCOM-10 to prospectively audit and evaluate clinical outcomes including complication rates, patient satisfaction and health-related quality of life. PASCOM-10 collates outcome data nationally with work ongoing in the RCPod to create a public-facing registry. At a local level, podiatric surgery teams monitor their outcomes and use that data to inform procedure choice and patient information leaflets (PILS). PASCOM-10 data has been published in many peer-reviewed journals. However, many reports and datasets are already freely available via PASCOM-10 information pages.<sup>5</sup>

PASCOM-10 incorporates the Manchester Oxford Foot/Ankle Questionnaire (MOXFQ) which is a well-respected, validated patient-reported outcome measure. A further bespoke patient satisfaction questionnaire tested over more than 20 years analyses patients' satisfaction with their surgical treatment and the care provided to them. These measures and outcomes are available in the form of reports to individual podiatric surgeons, departments or indeed the entire profession which provides a benchmark against which individuals and departments can be measured.

## About the Royal College of Podiatry

The RCPod was incorporated as a learned society in 1945, and also serves as an independent trade union. It provides a wide variety of membership services to podiatrists throughout the United Kingdom and overseas, including amongst others education, professional practice guidance, employment support, regular journal publications and annual scientific conferences. It has numerous branches where podiatrists can meet and promotes continuing professional development for members – as well as expert advice to other healthcare bodies and the public. All the College's members in podiatric practice are currently statutorily registered with the HCPC. The organisation was granted royal status by Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth II in 2021.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.pascom-10.com/information-resources>



The mission of the College is to promote guidelines and standards of practice that are evidence-based and ensure the safety of patients and clinical effectiveness, with a focus on clinical and public health outcomes. It campaigns to raise awareness among the general public and at government level that good lower-limb health is essential to mobility and that podiatry is a key element of preventative medicine. As such, the College endeavours to influence the governments of the four countries making up the United Kingdom, ensuring that they understand that podiatry encompasses specialist care, surgery, limb salvage, general practice and public health, and makes a key contribution to population health. Linked to this, it campaigns to ensure podiatry services across all sectors are supported by government policies which includes enabling a healthy supply of podiatrists into the workforce and sustaining well-funded and supported podiatry and podiatric surgery services.

The College promotes the highest professional values, practices and standards, as well as enhanced public awareness of good lower-limb and foot health. It provides members with guidelines and standards relating to patient care which must be adhered to comply with membership requirements and good governance. Its policies are informed by the United Kingdom's most prominent podiatrists, scientists, and researchers, as well as product suppliers and the College's wide caseload of users.<sup>6</sup>

### **Faculty of Podiatric Surgery**

The Faculty of Podiatric Surgery is led by an elected board of representatives taken from its membership. Representatives from the various podiatric surgery training grades are included on the board. Elections to the board are held annually and once elected, members can hold their seat for a period of three years before standing down for at least a year. The board is chaired by a Dean of the Faculty.

The committee meets three times per year and is fully supported by the secretariat of the RCPod

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<sup>6</sup> The Saks report. <https://rcpod.org.uk/saksreport>



including the Clinical Director and the Postgraduate Education Officer. The Faculty of Podiatric Surgery is the advisory body for the practice of podiatric surgery and podiatric surgery training.

### **Academic and Clinical Governance**

The RCPod's committee of Academic and Clinical Governance is responsible for maintaining the College's quality assurance system and accreditation of pre-registration courses leading to degrees in podiatry, and the academic component of training for post-registration courses including podiatric surgery and CPD.

The committee is the advisory body for the underpinning knowledge component that is delivered through the education sector and relates to post-registration training; where all courses leading to eligibility for membership are considered and decisions on the recommendation of accreditation are made. It provides advice to the Clinical Senate on the suitability of an educational institution to offer courses in podiatry and the academic component of postgraduate podiatric surgery training. It ensures the comparability of standards in pre-registration podiatry across the UK.

### **Clinical Senate**

The primary focus of the Clinical Senate is to develop a clinically relevant, sustainable, educated workforce across the range of the foot-health economy from the support workforce through to consultant level in both podiatric medicine and podiatric surgery. The Clinical Senate directs the educational role of the College and the development and formulation of appropriate clinical and professional guidelines. Clinical Senate facilitates College policies on clinical effectiveness, health and safety, expert witness requirements and health informatics.

### **Deanery Structure**

Podiatric surgeons and their teams are supported by the deanery system led by regional chairs. Each deanery supports trainees, the appraisal for registrars, and offers peer support and education for consultants.



There are 3 deaneries;

- 1) Northern Deanery including Scotland and Northern Ireland
- 2) Midlands and International Deanery
- 3) Southern Deanery.

MSc students on the Theory of Podiatric Surgery course are supported into the deaneries via the RCPod's onboarding process to optimise early links between academia and clinical practice.

The deanery structure is overseen by the Faculty of Podiatric Surgery.

### **Registrar Network**

The registrar network is comprised of post-fellowship individuals who are working towards their Completion Certificate of Podiatric Surgical Training (CCPST) and those who are aspiring to consultant grade in the NHS. Peer support and development are made available via a virtual platform to discuss complex cases, journal articles, surgical techniques and career development.

### **Annual Scientific Conferencing and CPD**

The Faculty of Podiatric Surgery is proud to host an annual scientific conference, open to all grades within podiatric surgery, podiatry at large and other professions.

Every year there are cadaveric training courses supported or promoted by both the College and industry.

Podiatric Surgeons are required to fulfil their HCPC-mandated and employer CPD requirements. Clinical supervision, peer support and deanery meetings, training, journal, and educational engagement/provision are some suggested areas to consider.



## **Affiliations**

The RCPod and the Faculty of Podiatric Surgery have numerous formal and informal affiliations. Below is an example;

### **Australian College of Podiatric Surgeons (ACPS)**

Founded in 1978, the Australian College of Podiatric Surgeons is a professional organisation for podiatric surgeons in Australia; it is the leading advocate for podiatric surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia.

### **The Vascular Society of Great Britain and Ireland**

The two organisations have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and have agreed to work together to ensure the best clinical treatment and the delivery of excellent services for people with lower-limb peripheral arterial disease (PAD). Our joint intent is to support the delivery of care of the highest quality to all people with PAD and to work together to support this aim. Furthermore, we work together to identify and focus on those areas of clinical practice and research that will generate the most clinical and cost-effective service delivery models and therapies for the future.

### **Allied Health Professions Federation**

The Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF) comprises twelve professional bodies representing Allied Health Professionals (AHPs). The AHPF provides collective leadership and representation on common issues that impact its members' professions.