

Association of Gastro-intestinal Physiologists



AGIP

Members Handbook

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1 Constitution

The Association of Gastro-intestinal Physiologists (AGIP) is an Associate group within the British Society of Gastroenterology, inaugurated in 1991.

'Associate Membership of the BSG is intended for those who have a long-term commitment to some aspect of gastrointestinal practice or research, but who are ineligible for other forms of membership. It is accordingly appropriate for gastrointestinal nurses, dieticians, clinical GI physiologists, nurse consultants and other non-medically qualified individuals. Intending Associate Members should have been in a relevant post for at least one year, and their commitment should be demonstrated by regular sessional contributions to gastrointestinal practice or research amounting to at least two-and-a-half days per week.'

[BSG Website]

The constitution of the Association of G. I. Physiologists is governed by BSG guidelines, and states that a council be formed from members of the association to work together to enhance the role and standing of their association within the medical field.

1.1 Council Structure

The Council should comprise a maximum of twelve members. Ten elected by the membership and two medically qualified members nominated by the council: these must be ordinary members of the BSG. and, preferably, one surgical and one medical. Trainee members of AGIP will not be eligible to stand for nomination or vote for Council.

The council will have officers with specific roles and terms of office:-

Chairperson	Three Years
Honorary Secretary	Three Years
Honorary Treasurer	Two Years
Membership Secretary	Two Years
Education Secretary	Two Years
Symposium Secretary	Two Years
Publication Secretary	Two Years
Ordinary Members	Two years

In addition, ordinary members will also be responsible for taking the minutes of the meetings and ensuring distribution of the minutes to all council members. In the absence of the Chairman the council meeting may be convened by the Honorary Secretary or appropriate designate. A quorum of five council members must be present for a meeting to be convened.

Officers and ordinary members of the Council, if re-elected, may serve no more than two consecutive terms in office but may stand for re-election after an absence of one year. In exceptional circumstances or where failure to fill all the vacancies has occurred, the council members may vote to co-opt an appropriate member of the association to serve on the council or to extend the term of office of an elected member for periods of 12 months. Information on Council Members and Accreditation and Education committee members published on the web page and reports of activities published in NEW WAVE.

1.2 Council Meetings

The Council is to meet a minimum of four times per year plus the AGM. Elected council members must attend a minimum of two of the four meetings each year to retain their seat. In the event of non-attendance the member may submit an explanatory letter requesting the council to consider retention of their seat. In addition, an individual member may be asked to leave the Council if a simple majority of the other members support a vote of no confidence in the individual's commitment to the aims of the association.

1.3 Annual General Meeting Quorum

An annual general meeting will take place if at least nine AGIP members plus a quorum of the council are present.

1.4 Accreditation and Education Committee.

This is a standing committee to implement Accreditation and Education policies. A chairperson will be appointed by the main council and membership should consist of the Chair, (normally the voting Education Officer on AGIP Committee), the Accreditation Registrar, Module Leader(s) for BSc.(Hons.) and Clinical Physiology (G.I.). The Council Chairperson will be an ex-officio member of the Accreditation and Education committee. A minimum of one written report from the A & E committee must be presented to the full council annually.

1.5 Sub-committees

Sub-committees or working parties will be formed to discuss and resolve specific issues relating to the Association. Once resolution of the issue has been reached the sub-committee may be dissolved. Any appropriate member of the Association may be requested to serve on a sub-committee. There will be no time restriction applied to serving on a sub-committee but both the Council and the other members of the sub-committee will scrutinise an individual's role on the sub-committee for continuing suitability. At least one member of each sub-committee must also be a member of Council. The Council Chairperson will be an ex-officio member of each sub-committee.

1.6 Bursaries

AGIP members will be eligible to apply for bursaries from the Council to fund expenses related to attendance at relevant scientific meetings or training courses. In addition the 'Margaret Marples Award' is awarded annually to the student who is considered by the Accreditation and Education Committee to have made the best progress either academically or in high level of competency achieved.

1.7 Honorary President

The position is held by an international expert in the field at the invitation of the AGIP council. The post has no fixed term. The role of the Honorary President is to promote the Association within Gastroenterology in the United Kingdom and further afield.

1.8 Membership Criteria

Application for Membership is through the BSG and is open to Healthcare Professionals who undertake diagnostic investigations and therapeutic interventions on patients. It is also open to those who have a continuing commitment to research and development of clinical measurements within Gastroenterology.

In order to qualify for membership of AGIP, the following criteria should be fulfilled:-

1. Applicants must be healthcare professionals with physiological, nursing, technical or scientific backgrounds.

2. Currently employed by an institution responsible for healthcare or for the delivery of education or engaged in research and development.
3. A minimum of one year's experience in G.I. Investigations.
4. A continuing commitment to the investigation and measurement of G.I. function.
5. Be actively involved in G.I. Physiology for a minimum of two and a half days per week.
6. Must be proposed by an ordinary member of the B.S.G.
7. Must be proposed by an Accredited Independent G. I. Physiologist or a Consultant Specialist

1.9 Retired members

Associate members of the BSG will not be eligible for continued membership after the age of 65 or earlier retirement. (See limitations in Rule13 of 2007 B.S.G. handbook)

2 Statement on the role of an Accredited Independent Practitioner in GI Physiology.

Gastro-intestinal Physiologists provide a physiological assessment service in Gastroenterology. Investigative techniques of an invasive nature are used to investigate possible abnormalities or disease processes throughout the GI Tract. The role of the GI Physiologist is to be responsible for performing all aspects of the required procedures and contributing to the overall clinical management of the patients. The majority of the investigations involve invasive techniques that are classed as minor surgical procedures. An Accredited Independent Practitioner in GI Physiology will provide expert advice on selection and reporting of the investigation for optimum diagnostic outcome.

The investigations are undertaken for the diagnosis of myopathic, neuropathic or functional disorders of the GI tract. This encompasses the following:-

- Motor dysfunction of the GI Tract.
- Sensory dysfunction of the GI Tract.
- Duodeno-gastro oesophageal reflux disease.
- Detection of microbial disorders.
- Pelvic floor dysfunction.

Therapeutic techniques are undertaken in pelvic floor disorders.

The accredited practitioner will provide a range of services, which will include:-

- The planning and performance of a wide range of investigations for the diagnosis and assessment of GI disease.
- Analysis and technical reporting of the data measurements from the diagnostic or therapeutic procedures undertaken.
- The provision of a safe working/clinical environment.
- Maintenance of records for all procedures for audit purposes.

More experienced accredited practitioners would, in addition, be expected to demonstrate a higher level of responsibility:-

- Direct management of implanted devices.
- Evaluation, procurement, calibration and quality control procedures for all equipment used within the GI physiological environment.
- Specialist education of other health care professionals.
- Involvement in research and development in the field of gastroenterology.
- Involvement in education, training and provision of continuing professional development of GI Physiologists.
- Advice and professional opinion on the appropriateness of investigations.
- Contribute to the overall clinical management of the patient.

3 AGIP Code of Professional Conduct.

3.1 Introduction.

The purpose of this code of practice is to provide guidance for the expected standard of professional conduct for practitioners in gastro-intestinal physiology. All practitioners must have regard to the physical and psychological needs of patients and their carers and have regard to all adults with mental incapacity and to children. This code is designed to provide advice to practitioners and is for guidance only and should not be seen as a definitive statement.

3.2 Objective

To provide workable guidelines for the practitioner and so enable good working practice with respect to:-

- Relationships and responsibilities to patients.
- Professional integrity.
- Professional relationships and responsibilities.
- Maintenance of professional standards.

3.3 Statement of standard to be achieved

3.3.1 Relationships and responsibilities to patients.

- Confidentiality of patient information must be maintained. In exceptional circumstance, where divulgence of information is required, the consent of the patient must be obtained where possible.
- The safety, privacy, autonomy and dignity of the patient must be respected at all times and informed and written consent must be obtained prior to any procedure undertaken. The practitioners must accept that the patient may withdraw their consent for the procedure at any time.

3.3.2 Professional integrity.

- The privileged relationship between the practitioner and the patient and carers must not be abused.

- The practitioner must work to the highest standard of integrity and must adhere to national guidelines for equal opportunities.
- The practitioner must not work when under the influence of any substances that may influence their performance.
- The practitioner must not accept gifts or favours that may be offered in exchange for preferential management.

3.3.3 Professional relationships and responsibilities.

- Both public and patient interest must be served, ensuring that the good standard and reputation of the profession is upheld
- Loyalty to colleagues must not override the practitioner's responsibility to report any conduct not conducive with correct practice, to their line manager.

3.3.4 Maintenance of professional standards.

- Procedures should only be undertaken on patients according to established criteria.
- Practitioners must ensure safe standard of practice at all times.
- Where the GI Physiologist is involved in research it is their responsibility to ensure that the project has been approved by the appropriate body and/or ethics committee and that the work is undertaken in a manner which will not jeopardise the subject's welfare. All results must be presented without prejudice.
- Professional development must be maintained throughout the working career and where appropriate the Accredited Practitioner should be actively involved in the development of students and other health care professionals.
- The Employing Authority should facilitate Professional development.
- Professional development records should be maintained in a portfolio available for inspection.
- Practitioners in GI Physiology are legally accountable for any action undertaken as part of their professional duties.
- Practitioners in GI Physiology must not allow themselves to be misrepresented as other qualified practitioners.

4 AGIP Disciplinary Procedures

A complaint or notification of misconduct arising from certain judicial proceedings or from contravention of the Professional Code of Conduct received by the Council will be considered and may be referred on to the appropriate body. This may be the Employing Authority, the BSG Council or the relevant Regulatory/Registration body. A substantiated complaint may result in suspension or termination of AGIP membership.

Judicial proceedings include: -

- Proven fraud or dishonesty
- Conviction for any other criminal offence
- Proven professional negligence.

Non Judicial proceedings include: -

- Expelled from membership of a professional or registration body on grounds of misconduct
- Contravention of the Professional Code of Conduct.

5 Criteria for entry to the Accreditation Register

5.1 Trainee membership

Trainee membership will be given to those practitioners who should

1. have been employed in GI Physiology for 1 year.
2. be Members of AGIP (BSG)
3. be undertaking training in GI Physiology.
4. must be working in a unit headed by an Accredited Independent Practitioner in Gastroenterology or working directly for a Consultant Specialist with relevant expertise.

Application for entry to the Accreditation Register should be made using Form 2

5.2 Affiliated membership

Affiliated membership will be given to those practitioners who should

1. be Members of AGIP (BSG)
2. currently undertake GI Physiological procedures
3. have been employed in GI Physiology for a minimum of 2 years but who are not eligible to apply for membership as an Accredited Independent Practitioner.

And

4. must be working in a unit headed by an Accredited Independent Practitioner in Gastroenterology or working directly for a Consultant Specialist with relevant expertise.

Or

5. Currently engaged in GI Physiology in a non-clinical role.
6. must be sponsored by a Consultant Specialist with relevant expertise.

In addition

7. Affiliated membership will be given to those clinicians who are actively involved in physiological measurements.

Application for Affiliated membership should be made using Form 3

5.3 Accredited Independent membership

Accredited Independent membership will be given to those practitioners who should

8. be Members of AGIP (BSG)
9. be Registered where appropriate.
10. have obtained appropriate academic qualifications and professional competencies

or

11. have a minimum of 6 years experience with a portfolio of appropriate professional experience

To retain registration as accredited independent practitioners members must:-

1. Demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development.
2. This must be evidenced by attendance at appropriate continuing professional education. It is recommended that this should be a minimum of 10 hours per annum of which 5 hours may be obtained from mandatory in-house courses and local seminars and 5 hours should be obtained from attendance at external meetings or training.
3. Maintain a portfolio of Continuing Professional development which should be available for scrutiny.
4. Comply with codes of professional conduct.
5. Maintain Registration status where appropriate.
6. Independent Practitioners who develop and expand into new modalities, as part of a personal development programme, must obtain appropriate training.
7. Submit appropriate CPD every other year before end of April.
8. Independent practitioners whose role now includes a high percentage of management, specialism or teaching must ensure that competencies in direct patient testing are retained at a level that ensures compliance with safety and diagnostic testing criteria.

Application for Accredited independent membership should be made using Form 4

5.4 Fellowship status

Fellowship status will be available to Accredited Independent Practitioners who

1. have a minimum of 10 years experience in GI Physiology and
2. have taken an active role in the Association and

3. are considered, by the Council, to have made an outstanding contribution to GI Physiology.

Fellowship status will also be available to those Affiliated Members with no clinical experience who have been employed in academic research or development or teaching and who fulfill the criteria for fellowship. Those practitioners who have attained the status of Fellows would be recognised as having the appropriate experience to give expert advice in their field of practice.

Such individuals must be proposed by two Fellows of AGIP, scrutinised by the Accreditation Committee and ratified by the full Council. Fellows may use the designatory letters FAGIP.

Application for Fellowship should be made using Form 5

6 Training Pathways

6.1 Overview of training option

Associate Practitioner	A level entry	*Graduate entry (inappropriate degree)	*Graduate entry (appropriate degree and provided training starts before 2005)	GI Practitioner with >6 years experience	State Registered Health Care Practitioner e.g. Nurse, Clinical Scientist
<p>Achievement of any pre-requisite qualification to enter foundation BSc in Clinical Physiology e.g. NVQ level 3</p> <p>Specialist modules as required by scope of practice</p> <p>Log book of achieved competencies</p> <p>External assessments</p>	<p>4 year BSc Clinical Physiology which includes</p> <p>Parts 1 & 2 professional examinations</p> <p>Log book of achieved competencies</p> <p>External assessments</p>	<p>4 year BSc Clinical Physiology which includes;</p> <p>APL of any modules from first degree as appropriate</p> <p>Parts 1 & 2 professional examinations</p> <p>Log book of achieved competencies</p> <p>External assessments</p>	<p>Appropriate degree but not currently practicing/registered</p> <p>Degree to be 'APL' in to Clinical Physiology degree (complete missing modules if necessary)</p> <p>Parts 1 & 2 professional examinations</p> <p>Log book of achieved competencies</p> <p>External assessments</p>	<p>This pathway will cease after being subsumed into HPC (date to be announced)</p> <p>"Grandparenting" of experience</p> <p>Evidence of CPD</p> <p>External assessments</p>	<p>Parts 1 & 2 professional examinations</p> <p>Log book of achieved competencies</p> <p>Portfolio of CPD</p> <p>External assessments</p>
<p>Eligible for proposed professional registration as GASTRO-INTESTINAL CLINICAL PHYSIOLOGIST **</p>					<p>Extended Scope of Practice Practitioner will not be able to use Clinical Physiologist as title - if this becomes the "Protected Title" but could use:-</p> <p>Clinical Nurse Specialist GI Physiology</p> <p>Clinical Scientist in GI Physiology as appropriate</p>

6.2 Example of “A level”

Example of “A level” entry on a Vocational BSc (Hons) Clinical Physiology Degree (GI Physiology)

(This pathway will be recognised for Professional Registration as a Clinical Physiologist)

Year	Practical Competencies	Specialist Academic Component	B.Sc (Hons) Core Modules
1	Clinical Practise. Individual Record of Clinical Performance	Specialist G.I. module 1 (with Assignment and examination).	Level 1
2	Clinical Practise Individual Record of Clinical Performance Assessment of G.I. physiology competencies	Specialist G.I. module 2 (with Assignment and Part 1 Prof Body examination)	Level 2 [Possible exit point with Dip.HE award if G.I. physiology competency and Part 1 PB exam successfully achieved]
3	Clinical Practise Individual Record of Clinical Performance	Specialist G.I. module 3 (with Assignment and examination)	Level 3 Project + 30credit core module
4	Clinical Practise Individual Record of Clinical Performance Assessment of G.I. physiology competencies	Specialist G.I. module 4 (with Assignment and Part 2 Prof Body examination)	Level 3 cont Project continued and additional 30 credit core module [Exit with BSc (Hons) if all components completed.] All criteria fulfilled for proposed RCCP Professional Registration application.

7 Criteria for accreditation as a Service Unit

Accredited Service Units must

Provide a safe environment for patients and staff

Comply with AGIP and BSG procedure protocols and and minimum activity.

Be headed by an Accredited Independent Practitioner in Gastrointestinal Physiology or by a Consultant Specialist with relevant expertise.

Maintain appropriate records in accordance with local and statutory requirements

Be open to inspection by the Council.

Application for Service Unit Accreditation should be made using Form 6

8 Criteria for accreditation as a Training Unit

Accredited Training Units must:

Provide a safe environment for patients and staff

Comply with AGIP and BSG procedure protocols and minimum activity.

Be headed by an Accredited Independent Practitioner in Gastroenterology. (GI Physiologist)

Maintain appropriate records in accordance with local and statutory requirements

Be open to inspection by the Council

Provide a broad range of Investigations

or

Cover one area of investigation in depth

Provide training, when required, as part of the practical component of the AGIP courses in GI Physiology.

Accredited Training Units will usually be involved in R&D in Gastroenterology

Only units that are headed by an Accredited Independent Practitioner in Gastroenterology (GI Physiologist) will be given Training Status.

Application for Training Unit Accreditation should be made using Form 7

9 Application Forms

Please note that these application forms must be filled in to initiate the process of scrutiny. Additional detailed information may then be requested from the applicant.

Form 1 Associate membership of the British Society of Gastroenterology see below

The appropriate form can be obtained from either

**BSG Secretariat
3 St. Andrews Place
Regent's Park
London
NW1 4LB**

Or alternatively the **AGIP Membership Secretary** see www.giphsiology.org

The following application forms can only be accessed through the AGIP Membership Secretary or downloaded from the Associations web page at www.giphsiology.org

Form 2 - AGIP registration as a trainee Accredited Independent Practitioner

Form 3 - AGIP registration as an Accredited Independent Practitioner

Form 4 - Affiliated Membership of AGIP

Form 5 - Fellowship

Form 6 - Accredited Service Unit

Form 7 - Accredited Training Unit

Form 8 - Continuing Professional Development