

Policy Guidance for the use of External (Lay and Clinical) Advisors

Wessex Deanery

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Policy

According to its governance arrangements, the Department of Health and the General Medical Council (GMC), the Deanery must involve external advisers in a number of its panels and committees.

This policy guidance links in with the following GMC Standards for Deaneries:

- **Standard 3.10** – The monitoring of programmes and posts by the Deanery must routinely involve external advisers
- **Standard 4** – The Postgraduate Deanery must have a system for the use of external advisers

This document also takes into account the Joint AoMRC and COPMED/COGPED Training Advisory Group guidance issued in March 2010 ([Link to document web link](#)).

Purpose

This policy sets out the expectations the Deanery has of its external advisers and the basis on which they are appointed.

Scope

External advisers are appointed to the Deanery to provide the public or professional scrutiny of clinical education. They are drawn from a wide range of experience and backgrounds in business and public life or specialised clinical expertise. They are:-

- expected to be independent and impartial
- clinical or lay depending on the area in which they are required to provide advice or scrutiny

They will be involved in events covering all training grades from Foundation, Core, General Practice and Specialty and Senior Deanery appointments.

Responsibilities and duties

External Lay Advisers

External lay advisers appointed by Wessex Deanery will:

- represent the public interest and safeguard patient safety

- assist the Deanery to maintain the quality of its education and training
- verify that trainees are attaining and maintaining certain standards
- scrutinise appointment and assessment processes to confirm that they are sound and fairly operated
- identify and record notable and best practice so that it can be used to promote comparable standards of trainee experience in the same specialty, across deaneries
- enhance the accountability of doctors by questioning the assumptions a predominantly professional body might otherwise make
- write and submit reports/evaluations following visits/panels
- consider processes in detail if required
- attend lay member training and development events
- perform their duties in a way that supports and promotes Wessex Deanery's commitment to equality and diversity
- maintain confidentiality and discretion about matters of which they will acquire knowledge in the course of their duties
- be appointed via a competitive process
- declare any conflict of interest prior to the involvement in any event

Range of duties

Lay advisors will be allocated to specific events which will include one or more of the following:

- Hospital monitoring visits – the inclusion of lay members here will serve as a reminder that the overriding purpose is to safeguard patient safety and promote high quality training
- ARCP/RITA panels
- Recruitment activity
- Specialty school activities
- Working groups on particular issues
- Appeals, complaints and investigation panels
- Senior Deanery appointments

Allocation to events will be for a fixed time period of 12 months.

Lay advisors are required to complete a feedback report following all events and return this to the Deanery. These reports will help in the development and improvement of Deanery processes and the quality of training. Necessary expenses will be paid following receipt of this report in accordance with the Deanery policy on lay expenses.

Lay advisors have a responsibility to highlight any significant concerns promptly to the Postgraduate Dean outside the above reporting mechanisms.

External clinical advisers

Clinical advisers will have expertise appropriate for the programme, course or School being considered. They will normally be drawn from the Royal Colleges, Faculties or specialty associations.

Clinical advisers will not normally be Heads of School from the home Deanery unless they have a dual role within a Royal College or Faculty

Range of duties

These may include:

- ARCP/RITA panels
- Senior Deanery appointments
- Visits to Trusts
- Appeals, complaints and investigation panels
- Specialty School activities

External clinical advisers are required to provide a report to the Postgraduate Dean following certain events. This report should also be shared with the relevant Royal College or Faculty. Necessary expenses will be paid on receipt of this report.

Wessex Deanery

Wessex Deanery will:

- clearly identify the roles, powers and responsibilities of the external advisers it appoints and uses
- provide a clear induction programme for newly appointed external lay advisers with appropriate updates when required
- provide appropriate background information to all external advisers prior to any event
- take careful note of all comments, considerations and feedback from external advisers and incorporate the Deanery's response to these in its annual report to the GMC
- appoint external lay advisers for a period of three years, after which time they may reapply
- remunerate external lay advisers and reimburse their travel expenses as appropriate