

# **Faculty of Dental Surgery**

## **Royal College of Surgeons of England**

### **Fellowship by Assessment**

### **Regulations & Guidelines**

#### **Introduction**

1. Fellowship is the pinnacle of membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery (FDS) of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCS Eng). There are a number of routes to Fellowship, the newest of which is Fellowship by Assessment. A Dental Surgeon is eligible to apply for this award if he/she has more than ten years in continuous good standing\*, holds a Membership diploma recognised by the Faculty of Dental Surgery, and has a

demonstrated commitment to upholding the highest clinical standards and excellence in all aspects of his/her work.

The award of Fellowship by Assessment is an honour merited by the breadth and depth of achievement in dental surgery and denotes the esteem in which a recipient is held by his or her peers; it is ultimately in the gift of the Board of (FDS RCSEng) on the recommendation of the FDS Fellowship and Awards Committee.

2. A Dental Surgeon who holds any of the general or specialty fellowships, memberships or diplomas awarded by the RCS Eng or sister Royal Colleges in the UK may be considered.
3. A Dental Surgeon may, on no more than three occasions, apply for Fellowship by Assessment based on a portfolio of evidence in the achievement categories set out in 6, below.
4. This document outlines the general principles underlying the Fellowship by Assessment procedures, including:
  - the application process, achievement
  - criteria, and assessment process.
  -A statement describing the nature of Fellowship is also attached.

## **Summary of the Process**

5. A candidate for Fellowship by Assessment will normally initiate an application, although he or she may receive support from local colleagues to apply.
6. A candidate submits a portfolio of evidence in all four 'achievement categories', reflecting the range of their past and current roles and activities, together with a detailed personal statement of their past and current roles and activities. The achievement categories are:
  - i. Clinical practice
  - ii. Teaching & education
  - iii. Academic & research
  - iv. Management and leadership <sup>1</sup>

7. Whilst a candidate must complete all four achievement categories they will be required to achieve the required standard in at least two to be eligible for the award.
8. A candidate must supply the names and contact details of two referees able to attest to the validity of the evidence in all of four achievement categories. At least one of these should be a Fellow in good standing\* of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. A further referee will be appointed by the Royal College of Surgeons of England.
9. The portfolio of evidence will be assessed in the first instance by an Assessment Panel comprising three senior Fellows of the Faculty and evaluated against published criteria. The Assessment Panel may either approve the application or refer it to the Faculty Fellowship Committee for a final decision.
10. A candidate who successfully passes the assessment of the portfolio of evidence will be recommended to the Board of Faculty of the Faculty of Dental Surgery for ratification and then on to the Royal College Council for formal approval. This process may take some months, but when final approval has been granted, the Dean of the Faculty will write to

<sup>1</sup> \* *To be considered in good standing, a member will need to have continuously paid his/her membership subscriptions throughout the period (no less than ten years).*

successful candidates advising them of the outcome and arrangements for the conferral of the Fellowship.

## **The Application Process**

11. Details about the achievement criteria can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this document. Application and referee forms are available on request from the Faculty Office. [Appendix 3](#) illustrates the process from point of application through to Fellowship award.
12. A candidate who wishes to be considered for the inaugural Fellowship by Assessment must:
  - I. **Register their interest** by emailing the Faculty and attaching their CV. Individuals who appear to be eligible to apply will then be sent a full application form and instructions regarding submitting their portfolio of evidence.

II. The following must be submitted to the Faculty Office in order for applications to be considered:

- Application form, completed in full.
- Two signed referee forms validating the information provided in the achievement categories (*refer to point 16*).
- The application fee of £1,250\*\* (by cheque/postal order) payable to The Royal College of Surgeons of England.
- Portfolio of evidence for each of the achievement categories.

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13. The Assessment Panel will check the application against the eligibility criteria, including whether the candidate has been in good standing\* in dental surgery for at least ten

<sup>1</sup> \* *To be considered in good standing, a member will need to have continuously paid his/her membership subscriptions throughout the period (no less than ten years).*

\*\* *The application fee of £1,250 applies to each and every submission, to cover the cost of administration and the assessment process. Full payment must be received in order for your application to be considered.*

consecutive years prior to registering and holds relevant qualifications set forth in 2, above. A candidate is also asked at this stage to declare whether they have any upheld or outstanding professional conduct or disciplinary issues that have been made against them by regulatory or civil authorities. Such complaints are not necessarily a bar to Fellowship, and can be discussed informally and in confidence with a member of the assessment panel in advance of an application being made.

14. A candidate may seek advice about their suitability or make general requests for information about their application from the Faculty Office by emailing [fdsbyassessment@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:fdsbyassessment@rcseng.ac.uk).

15. All applications must be completed and emailed electronically. The Faculty can only receive emails up to 10MB so larger files must be WinZipped or uploaded to a personal Dropbox account and filename shared.

16. Supporting evidence for each achievement category should be reviewed and validated by two referees prior to submission to the Faculty. The two original signed referee forms must be posted to the Faculty. **Electronic signatures on referee forms will not be accepted.**

17. A candidate will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their application by the Faculty Office, who will act as the main point of contact for enquiries relating to the application.

## The Assessment Process

18. The candidate's statements and portfolio of supporting evidence will be sent to all members of the appropriate Assessment Panel for preliminary evaluation. The Assessment Panel will normally consist of a Chair drawn for the Fellowship and Awards Committee as well as one member from the specialty of the applicant (where appropriate) and one from outside the specialty. Each member of the panel will individually make a two-stage evaluation:

**Stage 1:** A full assessment of each category of a candidate's evidence against the achievement categories (see [Appendix 1](#)), including an assessment of the scale, scope and accumulated weight of a candidate's achievement in the category.

**Stage 2:** An overall evaluation of the cumulative weight of a candidate's presented attainments against the word picture of a Fellow of the Faculty (see [Appendix 2](#)).

For both stages each assessor will make a decision of:

- i. 'meets the required standard for Fellowship',
- ii. 'indeterminate', or
- iii. 'does not meet the required standard for Fellowship'.

19. The evaluations of individual Assessment Panel members are collated and any differences of opinion will be discussed amongst the Panel.
20. Applications that '**meet the required standard for Fellowship**' will be forwarded to the Fellowship and Awards Committee and then ratified by the Faculty Board at the next available opportunity. Upon ratification it will be passed to the Royal College for formal approval and then the Dean of the Faculty will write to the candidate confirming the application has been successful and inviting them to attend the Faculty Diplomates' Day for the conferral of the Fellowship.

Applications considered '**indeterminate**' by the Assessments Panel will be forwarded to the Fellowship and Awards Committee. The Committee may approve or reject the

application, or may recommend a modified re-submission or further information/evidence to support the application.

It is important to note that applicants are not expected to wait until they receive feedback before submitting all relevant information. Rather, applicants are expected to make sound judgement in the first instance as to what they need to submit. The panel may reach the decision *Indeterminate* if something is unclear to them, and they need more information to clarify. But a simple case of failure to provide sufficient evidence is more likely to result in the outcome of *Unsuccessful* than *Indeterminate*. Feedback provided after an assessment is something that is intended to help any applicants or candidates develop going forwards, and **not** to coach them for a second attempt under appeal. That would be misuse of the appeal rule.

Applications that '**do not meet the required standard for Fellowship**' will be forwarded to the Fellowship and Awards Committee who will then pass them to the Faculty Registrar. Candidates will be informed by letter that their application has been unsuccessful.

Unsuccessful candidates may obtain feedback, however any such requests must be made within 30 days of the issuing decision letter.

21. A candidate has recourse to an appeals procedure, determined by a Tribunal. An appeal will comprise of the Dean of the Faculty as Chair, one other elected member of the Board of Faculty who was not involved in the original assessment process and the Registrar of the Faculty as Secretary. Any candidate wishing to make an appeal about the conduct of his or her assessment must address it to the Dean of the Faculty within 30 days of notification of the result of the assessment.
22. Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of alleged procedural error. Appeals disputing the academic / clinical judgment of the Assessment Panel or Fellowship and Awards Committee will not be considered. Details of the Royal College of Surgeons' appeals process can be found on the [Faculty website](#).

## **Criteria, standards and evidence**

23. The decision, as to whether or not a colleague is worthy of Fellowship is, in the final analysis, a matter of judgment and not of measurement. Fellowship is recognition by one's peers that one's contribution to dental surgery and patient care has gone significantly beyond what might reasonably be expected of a Member of the Faculty and College. The

assessment process has as its focus this description. Fellowship assessors, acting on behalf of the community of dental surgery, can be trusted to recognise such 'added value' without relying on overly detailed or specific criteria.

24. Assessors, working with descriptors matching the type and level of achievement expected of a Fellow of the Faculty, will abstract from the detail of a candidate's information an impression which they can match against 'word pictures' created for each achievement category ([Appendix 1](#)).
25. There will at times be overlap between achievement categories, and some uncertainty as to where a particular achievement should be placed. It is obviously the case that much clinical practice is clearly clinical teaching and the distinction between clinical research and practice is at times a fine one to make. A candidate should not be disadvantaged by such arbitrary categorisations. By moving away from a checklist approach in favour of global judgements, assessors can make the necessary considerations when coming to an overall view.
26. Quality control and consistency monitoring are a central part of the evaluation process. This is accomplished in several ways:
  - i. Regular opportunities for two-way feedback between Assessment Panel members and the Fellowship and Awards Committee on the outcome of applications.
  - ii. Training events for Assessment Panel members, convened by a member of the Fellowship and Awards Committee with designated responsibility in this area.
  - iii. Review by a subgroup of the Fellowship and Awards Committee of a sample (at least 10%) of all applications.

## **Guidance for Overseas Candidates**

27. The Faculty is keen that the assessment process should not disadvantage any eligible individuals, including those living or practising overseas.
28. In the various achievement categories for the Fellowship by Assessment process, there will be a significant number of criteria that relate to international activity. It will therefore be possible for candidates who are living and working in the United Kingdom, or overseas, to include activity undertaken in the international field in their submission for Fellowship.

## Enrolment Fees

29. The Fellowship by Assessment fee, as stated in 12, above, is £1,250 for each and every submission (*maximum 3 submissions allowed*) and is subject to the same annual review by the Faculty of all of its fees.

## Exemptions

30. There are no exemptions from any part of the assessment process.

## Diploma Certificate for Fellowship by Assessment

31. Having been successful in the assessment process and recommended to and approved by the Board of Faculty, a candidate will be required to make a Fellowship declaration and sign the register of the Faculty:

*'I solemnly and sincerely declare that, while a Fellow in Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, I will observe the Ordinances thereof, and will obey every lawful Summons issued by Order of the Board of Faculty of Dental Surgery and Council of the said College, having no reasonable excuse to the contrary, and will to the utmost of my power maintain the dignity and welfare of the Faculty and College.'*

32. A candidate who is awarded the Fellowship by Assessment is entitled to the designation of 'Fellow in Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England (FDS RCSEng) and receives a diploma bearing the seal of the College signed by the President, the Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery, Chair of the Assessment Panel of the Faculty and the Faculty Registrar. The wording of the diploma reads as follows:

'Know all by these present that We  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England do  
hereby admit  
[recipient's name in full]  
to the Fellowship in Dental Surgery *by assessment*  
of the Royal College of Surgeons of England as  
witness our common seal

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

President  
Dean of the Faculty of Dental Surgery  
Chair of the Assessment Panel

Enrolled by \_\_\_\_\_ Registrar

Signature of Fellow in Dental Surgery \_\_\_\_\_,

33. A candidate who has been awarded the Fellowship in Dental Surgery *by assessment* will be required to pay an annual subscription as determined by the Council of the College.

### **Diplomate's Day Ceremony**

34. Newly awarded Fellowships will ordinarily take up their Fellowship in the Royal College at one of the Diplomates' Day Ceremonies run by the Faculty. Any Fellow unable to attend a Diplomates' Ceremony will be awarded the diploma *in absentia*.

## **APPENDIX 1 – ACHIEVEMENT CATEGORY CRITERIA**

### **I. CLINICAL PRACTICE**

1. It is the intention of the Faculty that patients of a dental surgeon who is a Fellow in Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England should be confident that he or she, regardless of any other accomplishments, practises to a clinical standard with which the Faculty and College are satisfied, delivering safe personal dental surgical care to the highest standard.

2. The nature of a candidate's clinical responsibilities should be clear from the submitted personal statement.
3. Candidates should submit documentary evidence of three consecutive satisfactory appraisals and ongoing personal development planning. Alternative documentation may be submitted by candidates who work in an environment where currently appraisal is not carried out.
4. All candidates must submit evidenced and verifiable statements from clinical colleagues who are Members or Fellows of this Faculty of Dental Surgery or our sister Faculties that the candidate's clinical performance represents safe personal dental surgical care of the highest standard.
5. All candidates must submit documentary evidence of involvement in clinical audit.

## II. TEACHING AND EDUCATION

1. The following are examples of roles and activities a potential Fellow might have undertaken if submitting in this category.

- i) At least three years as an educational supervisor / SpR/StR trainer.
- ii) Appointment as a tutor or course organiser or equivalent.
- iii) A national assessment role, either within or outside the Faculty.
- iv) Acting as an appraiser after appropriate training.
- v) Appointment as an undergraduate or Foundation Programme Director or equivalent.
- vi) An appropriate postgraduate qualification in teaching or education, such as Diploma in Medical or Dental Education / Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.
- vii) Award of an FDS Tutorship.
- viii) Appointment as a Faculty / College Examiner and performance in at least three examination diets.
- ix) Publication on educational topics in peer-reviewed journals.
- x) A substantial contribution to the development or delivery of undergraduate or postgraduate courses.
- xi) Work of national significance in undergraduate or postgraduate dental, medical or other health care education.
- xii) Evidence of innovation in delivery of teaching and education particularly e-learning and distance learning.
- xiii) Substantial involvement in education and development of Dental Care Professionals.

2. Particularly strong candidates in this category might have achieved one or more of the following:

- i) At least one year as a training programme director or equivalent, or as a Deputy or Associate Postgraduate Dental Dean.
- ii) Appointment as a Professor or Reader (in an educational capacity).
- iii) Attainment of an appropriate, education related, postgraduate qualification at Masters level or above (MSc, MPhil, MD, PhD, DSc, etc.)
- iv) Management or leadership role in a national assessment process.
- v) Personal award of a National Training Fellowship.
- vi) Authorship of books on dental or health care education.
- vii) Evidence of work of international significance in undergraduate or postgraduate dental or health care education.

### III. ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH

1.

The following are examples of achievements a potential Fellow might demonstrate if submitting in this category:

- i) A postgraduate degree in research with significant research component DDS, MD, MDRes, or PhD.
- ii) Publications in peer-reviewed journals.
- iii) Membership of a research management or funding body (e.g., NHS R&D committee, MRC, Wellcome Trust, etc).
- iv) Recipient of a national research award or personal research development award (e.g., Research Council or NHS Training Fellowship).
- v) Invitations to present research work at national or international meetings.
- vi) Evidence of obtaining substantial project grants or attracting research funding to undertake work in a speciality.
- vii) Contribution to research capacity development, e.g., by supervising research students.

2.

Particularly strong candidates in this category might have achieved one or more of the following:

- i) A significant body of publications in leading peer-reviewed journals.
- ii) A senior position in a university department (Reader or Professor).
- iii) Award of Fellowship of the Academy of Medical Sciences or of other Royal Colleges as a result of contributions to research.
- iv) Evidence that his or her own research has had an impact on national policy or practice.
- v) Invitations to deliver eponymous lectures.
- vi) Editorships of research journals.
- vii) Award of prizes reflecting teaching or research accomplishment (e.g. honorary degrees, medals).

## IV. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

In this category assessors will take into account the nature, scope, scale and length of the candidate's leadership role, the impact and outcomes of the achievement, and any degree of self-sacrifice to serve needy communities or patients. Important management and leadership qualities also include the empowerment of others, and demonstration of quality and of support. Assessors will consider what has changed for the better as a result of the candidate's management and leadership. It must also be remembered that strong leaders may show personal integrity and courage in *stopping* things happening – and so the outcome may be invisible.

The degree of achievement in this category will be titrated against the scale of the challenge – in other words, achieving a great deal in a relatively minor role may be seen as the equivalent of lesser success at a more major and challenging role, or vice-versa.

1. The following are examples of achievements a potential Fellow might demonstrate if submitting in this category:
  - i) Involvement in Royal College of Surgeons work at Faculty, national or international level.
  - ii) Work with primary or secondary care organisations or other healthcare bodies. iii) Work with government promoting the quality and reputation of dental surgery.
  - iv) Involvement in the strategic development of the health service and particularly the provision of dental surgery.
  - v) Holding senior office in national or international specialist or professional bodies.
  - vi) Serving as editor of a peer reviewed journal or textbook. vii) Authoring publications of importance to dental surgery.
  - viii) Chairing a substantial committee.
  - ix) Serving as Clinical Director, Head of Department, Chief Executive Officer.

## APPENDIX 2. 'A Fellow in Dental Surgery'

1. This 'word picture' of a Fellow in Dental Surgery is offered as a profile against which to evaluate the global impression formed of a candidate after assessing his or her application and portfolio of submitted evidence.

2. Fellowship is an honour, denoting the esteem in which a Member of the Faculty is held by his or her peers.
3. It is a mark of achievement to which every Member should aspire and from which no Member should be debarred solely by circumstance.
4. A Fellow is someone who has made a contribution to patient care, to the Faculty or to their speciality significantly over and above what might reasonably be expected of any Member of the Faculty. In this sense, Fellowship signifies that the Fellow has brought 'added value' to his or her career and to the specialty/profession as a whole.
5. Fellowship can be merited both by the breadth and the depth of achievement. Some Fellows earn recognition for contributions made in a number of areas and over extended periods of time. For others, Fellowship is an accolade marking outstanding and farreaching achievement in a relatively narrow field.
6. A Fellow in Dental Surgery is an ambassador for the Faculty's standards and values in whom the Faculty is happy to signal its pride.

### **APPENDIX 3. FDS by Assessment Process**

