

## Joint Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy for Intercollegiate Surgical Examinations and Training

### Purpose of this Policy

This policy outlines our commitment to fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across all aspects of surgical examinations and training. Our goal is to create an environment that is fair, inclusive, and reflective of the diverse backgrounds of those we serve. We strive to eliminate discrimination and promote fairness in line with the statutory requirements of the General Medical Council (GMC) and the principles of equality embedded in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

The Intercollegiate Committee for Basic Surgical Examinations (ICBSE), the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE) and the Joint Committee on Surgical Training (JCST) work within the oversight of the four surgical Royal Colleges of the UK and Ireland. They are responsible for the supervision, standards, policies, regulations, and professional conduct related to surgical examinations and training.

### Our Commitments

Across all our functions, we ensure fairness underpins every aspect of our work. This includes:

1. **Equity:** Promoting fairness and eliminating discrimination, harassment, and bias in all interactions with candidates, trainees, examiners, and stakeholders.
2. **Diversity:** Embracing and welcoming the diversity of individuals by creating an environment that reflects a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives.
3. **Inclusion:** Fostering a culture where everyone feels respected, valued, and supported in their engagement with examinations and training processes.

### Key Principles

- **Respect:** We treat all individuals with dignity, appreciating the unique contributions each brings to our activities.
- **Open Dialogue:** We encourage honest communication to promote understanding, collaboration, and respect for diversity.
- **Accessibility:** We are committed to providing accessible examination and training environments, ensuring all individuals can engage fully with our services.

### How We Meet Our Commitments

The surgical colleges value integrity, excellence, collaboration, transparency, and fairness. All our stakeholders, including staff, examiners, Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) chairs and all committee members, play an essential role in upholding these values. We are committed to:

1. **Actively Considering Equalities and Challenging Bias:**
  - Designing services, policies, and processes to be free from bias and discrimination.
  - Ensuring all policies undergo equality impact assessments to promote fairness.
  - Providing regular training for staff and stakeholders on EDI to ensure all decisions are made impartially.

## 2. Respecting People and Treating Them Fairly:

- Considering the health, wellbeing, and individual needs of trainees, candidates, examiners and staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are made where necessary.
- Tailoring our services to meet the needs of vulnerable medical professionals and providing appropriate safeguarding support.
- Optimising our communications to be clear, empathetic and accessible.

## 3. Being Open and Accountable for Our Actions:

- Publishing transparent policies and decision-making criteria to ensure our processes are clear and applied consistently.
- Monitoring diversity within our examination and training systems and assessing the impact of our practices on different groups.
- Making improvements based on feedback, appeals, and complaints, following ISO 10002:2018 guidelines for quality management.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Our governance is overseen by the Presidents of the four Surgical Royal Colleges, while the ICBSE, JCIE, and JCST are responsible for their operations. Key roles include:

- **The Overseeing Committee:** Responsible for defining and driving progress on EDI. They ensure the organisation meets legal and best practice standards and fosters a culture of fairness and inclusion.
- **All Surgeons, Examiners, SAC Chairs and all Committee Members:** Responsible for adhering to this policy and demonstrating fairness and inclusivity in their interactions.
- **All Staff:** Expected to comply with this policy and actively contribute to creating an inclusive and equitable working and learning environment.

### Review and Improvement

We recognise that EDI is an evolving area. Therefore, we commit to reviewing and improving our practices regularly, ensuring they align with the latest developments and meet the needs of those we serve.

### Commitment to Excellence

In line with the mission of each activity, we strive to ensure that surgical training and examinations are equitable and inclusive. This includes:

- Encouraging diverse individuals to apply for committee membership.
- Providing EDI training to committee members.
- Conducting curriculum consultations to ensure inclusivity.
- Developing Quality Indicators (QIs) to define excellence in training posts and running surveys to measure their achievement.
- Developing an understanding of, and addressing, differential attainment to ensure no individual is disadvantaged.

### Considering Concerns of Discrimination or Unfairness

We take complaints and appeals seriously, with due regard to fairness and bias. All individuals have the opportunity to present their case, and we will act on any learnings to improve our guidance, processes, and training.

This policy reflects our shared commitment to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in surgical examinations and training, ensuring that everyone we engage with is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.