

9 November 2021 (GMT)

International Committee

A meeting of the International Committee was held on Monday, 8th November 2021 at 10:30am (GMT) via Zoom.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Maadh Aldouri, Clinical Director of International Activities.

Unconfirmed Minutes

Present: Professor Ismail Matalka Clinical Director of International Activities

Professor Lai-Meng Looi International Regional Advisor for the Western Pacific

Region

Dr Maysa Al-Hussaini International Regional Advisor for MENA Professor Angharad Davies Vice President for Communications

Dr. Mashal Al-Nawab

Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member

Dr. Kedar Deodar International Regional Advisor for South East Asia

Dr Sanjiv Manek Clinical Director of Examinations

Dr Monica Terlizzo International Regional Advisor for Europe
Dr Naresh Kikkeri International Regional Advisor for Americas
Dr Omar Qassid Associate Regional Advisor for MENA

Dr Wale Atoyebi ARISE lead

Dr Hebah Ali International Education Lead – ITSS & Sponsorship

Dr Anan Ghazy International Education Lead – ITSS & MTI

Professor John Obwanfa International Regional Advisor for Sub-Saharan Africa

In attendance: Miss Joanne Brinklow Director of Learning

Miss Kelley Price International Projects Officer
Miss Tanna Hawkins International Education Officer

IC Apologies: Dr Nicki Cohen Clinical Director of Training and Assessment

ITEM NO. 1 - WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were duly noted.

ITEM NO. 2 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

ITEM NO. 3 – MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 2021

The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.



ITEM NO. 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Committee reviewed the 'Actions and Decisions' table arising from the last meeting.

	Action	Assigned to
1)	Reopen MTI and Sponsorship Schemes	Miss Tanna Hawkins
		COMPLETED
2)	Send and request feedback regarding the Terms of Reference to all committee members.	Miss Kelley Price
		COMPLETED
3)	The IC and Diaspora group will meet on the same day (either the Monday or the Tuesday for the next meeting).	Miss Tanna Hawkins
		COMPLETED

ITEM NO. 5 - DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Past six months continued to focus on participating in COVID-19 related activities as well as preparing for return of usual activities and recovery post COVID-19 delays. This is summary of main activities:

- 1. Preparation for International Pathology Day on 11th November: INFECTION THROUGH THE LENS OF COVID-19 WITH AN INTERNATIONAL VIEWPOINT, in collaboration with Pathologist magazine and Sonic Healthcare UK.
- 2. 2. Organising two webinars with Turkmenistan Health authorities in collaboration with British Embassy in Ashgabat on 7.2.2020 and 23.9.2020, hosted by RCPath.
- 3. Collaboration with Anbar Medical College, Iraq, to take part in International Conference on COVID-19 pandemic, 28th and 29th November 2020.
- 4. Establishing Molecular Biology training for clinicians and scientists in Nigeria, collaboration with Professor John Obafunwa as part of NPMCN MoU: Kelley Price.
- 5. Restating MTI and ITSS schemes: Tanna Hawkins.
- 6. Continuing work on sickle cell projects and establishing E-learning platform: Wale Atoyebi and Kelley Price.
- 7. Participating in WASPaLM Education Committee and Board of Directors, suggestion to hold 32nd World Congress 2023 in the UK.
- 8. Completing review of MoUs and finalising MoU with Mohammed Bin Rashid University, Dubai.
- 9. Updating International Committee Terms of Reference, appointing International Committee members and Regional Advisors for MENA and America Regions.
- 10. Starting discussion with Mr William Dean, Chair of RCOphth International Committee on possible collaboration between the two committees, and discussion of Global Health Forum of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

Finally, Dr Maadh Aldouri thanked the committee for all their work and dedication over his role of Director of International Activities and, acknowledged the fantastic group of Fellows and colleagues in the UK and abroad, and the International team at the RCPath. Dr Aldouri wished the new Director and International Committee members, as well as the International RCPath team all success in their future work and projects.

ITEM NO. 6 – INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT REPORT



Dr Maadh Aldouri and Miss Joanne Brinklow provided a summary and review of department's work and achievements for the period May 2020 – November 2020:

	International Department Report
N. OILL	
New Clinical Director of International Activities	 Director of International Activities The role for the new Clinical Director of International Activities will be advertised and recruited for in the coming months.
International Committee Membership Jo Brinklow, Director of Learning and International Manager Curriculum and Examination Update	 International Committee recruitment and incoming appointments International Regional Advisor Middle East and North Africa (MENA) The decision was made to appoint Professor Maysa Al-Hussaini, based in Jordan, as the International Regional Advisor for the MENA region and to appoint Dr Omar Qassid as the Associate Regional International Advisor. International Regional Advisor for the Americas Professor Naresh Kikkeri, based in Washington DC, has accepted our offer to be appointed International Regional Advisor for the Americas. International Regional Advisor for South East Asia The College is currently recruiting for this position and hope to appoint a new International Regional Advisor in the coming months. Leads for the MTI and Sponsorship Schemes combined with Leads for ITSS histopathology and medical microbiology Dr Hebah Ali has been appointed as the International Education Lead for ITSS Histopathology and Sponsorship. Dr Anan Ghazy has been appointed as the International Education Lead for ITSS Medical Microbiology and the MTI scheme. Clinical Lead for ARISE and DELTAS Dr Wale Atoyebi has been invited to join the committee as the clinical lead for the on-going ARISE project and DELTAS. Miss Joanne Brinklow updated the International Committee and Diaspora group with the following:
Miss Joanne Brinklow	group with the following.
Director of Learning	 Curriculum updates: Pathology Undergraduate Curriculum The Pathology Undergraduate Curriculum was developed by Undergraduate and Foundation Pathology Education Group and published in September 2019 Supported by:



International Department Report

- 2021. There will also be minor changes to the FRCPath examination including removal of written option (project)
- Cellular Pathology curricula has been submitted to the GMC for approval and will be implemented from August 2021. The training will be a 2.5 year Integrated Cellular Pathology Training (ICPT) programme followed by specialty training. Stage A examinations will also be removed.
- Haematology curriculum submitted by the JRCTPB has been approved subject to actions. There are no plans to change the examination yet, and this curriculum will also be implemented from August 2021.
- Immunology curriculum was submitted to the GMC and will be implemented from August 2021.
 - Clinical pathway: Allergy and Clinical Immunology (4 years)
 - Combined pathway: Clinical and Laboratory Immunology and Allergy (5 years)
 - Combined FRCPath Part 1/Certificate exam and FRCPath Part 2 for combined pathway only.
- Infection curricula has been submitted to the GMC (awaiting approval) and is very similar to the existing curricula. There are also some changes to Medical Microbiology and Medical Virology FRCPath Part 2. It is also set to be implemented from August 2021.

Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR)

- New specialty specific guidance to be published in line with new curricula
- The College's LEPT system is also now available to doctors putting together a CESR application to allow them to collect and present evidence

Changes and updates as a result of Covid-19

- May: ARCP derogation guidance has been approved and published by the College
- Updates on Covid 19: Information for Trainees page:
- Following the Covid-19 lockdown announcement on the 13th March: the College made the difficult decision to cancel of some overseas centre examinations and the entire Spring examination session was deferred
- In May 2020 a candidate survey was sent out, and we received 1265 responses
- Applications for the Autumn session opened between 15 May 3 July 2020, and the withdrawal deadline was extended to 27 July 2020.
- 30 July: Attempt derogation confirmed for candidates
- The Examinations team hosted a Q&A webinar (available on the College website) on the 7 August, and on the 13th August: Changes to exams were approved by GMC.

The approved changes to the examinations:

- Online proctoring for FRCPath Part 1 and some FRCPath Part 2 examinations
 - A full tender process was followed and TestReach was chosen and purchased
 - Exams will be taken in candidates' own homes or place of work with live proctor as invigilator
 - Working and sharing ideas with other Colleges making similar changes



	International Department Report	
	 Virtual vivas via Microsoft Teams of Zoom will be used and face to face examinations where necessary. The Histopathology and Haematology FRCPath Part 2 slide-based exams are set to run as normal with social distancing and an additional session to accommodate high candidate numbers Further guidance to outline what will be required instead will be issued by the College. There have been some issues with delivery of online examinations: Late withdrawal of drawing tool Mistakes in some Part 1 papers Some isolated connectivity issues (resolved by TestReach in real time for candidates) Connectivity issue for a small number of candidates sitting Histopathology Part 1. The College re-sit was on Thursday 22 October 	
International Projects Kelley Price	Miss Kelley Price updated the International Committee and Diaspora group with the following:	
International Projects Officer	 The second of our secondees has made a safe return home after flights resumed to and from Nigeria in mid-September In October, we were involved in designing and supporting the facilitation of an event entitled 'Case Studies: Hemoglobinopathies Including Newborn Screening – The Challenges and Discrepancies'. This is part of the ARISE virtual teaching programme, established in March, as a platform to continue providing ongoing professional development to laboratories participating in the project. Laboratories were invited to develop a single case study that set out a challenging patient case resolved or was still ongoing that might have implications for clinical care. The scenarios were jointly discussed to reach a correct diagnosis 	
	 The virtual event takes place on the 11th of November themed on Infection, which will explore Infection through the lens of COVID with an international viewpoint Unlike in previous years when The Pathologist magazine has provided the online platform for the roundtable, this year the College will be hosting the entire IPD event virtually The role of the Pathologist magazine this year will be to promote the event before the day, provide post-event editorial, and provide all reporting information based on all digital marketing efforts Sonic Healthcare UK is the event sponsor and will be sponsoring the poster competition for the second year The British Society of Haematology (BSH) are also joining as sponsors and will be providing a participant for the round table in the afternoon 	

The international team is piloting the recognition framework with Landspitali University Hospital Pathology Department, Iceland; they have completed all

Recognition Framework:



International Department Report

three initial questionnaires. A teleconference with representatives there took place at the start of the year.

• Both parties continue to wait for a suitable time when it will be appropriate to resume planning for a scoping visit.

International MoUs:

- The signing an MoU between the College and Mohammed Bin Rashid University of Medicine and Health Sciences (MBRU) is in progress. A meeting is planned late November when RCPath's President-elect and MBRU's Dean will meet virtually to mark the start of our future collaborations.
- Following the review and audit of achievements across all five-existing international MoUs that took place in February, correspondence highlighting the accomplishments with a request for a report on the progress of the activities' schedule has been sent to all institutions.
- The Sudanese UK Pathologists Diaspora Group was the first to respond with their report.
- They were followed by The Supreme Council of Universities of Egypt and The Egyptian Committee for Pathology Training. In further communications, we continue to arrange meetings to discuss possibilities for further and future collaboration. Other institutions have indicated that they will submit their reports soon.

Train the trainer event National Post Medical Graduate College of Nigeria (NPMCN)

- The College hold an MoU with NPMCN, in which we agreed to support a train-the-trainer event. It has been decided that event will be held virtually and will focus on molecular pathology because it cuts across all specialties.
- This is offered to 117 examiners and trainee examiners.
- Colleagues at Kings College Hospital and St. Georges University Hospital, London have agreed to facilitate and support aspects of the training

Other requests and work within the international Team:

- Grant Opportunity for a Moldova Project:
 - We have been approached to explore the interest in RCPath to leverage its extensive network in the UK to help form a global health research group that could apply for National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) grant of up to three million pounds for a project of between three to four years, which would cover some of the following objectives: address locally-identified challenges in LMICs through reasonable research partnerships between researchers and institutions in the UK and ODA-eligible countries (which includes Moldova) and to generate the scientific evidence that can improve health outcomes for people in low resource setting through improving practice and informing policy.
- The College of Medicine University of Anbar in Iraq
 - Will hold the Anbar International Medical Conference (AIMCO-2020) which is entitled; COVID-19 Updates on Management and Outcome.
 The International Team have helped to secure three speakers for the event, taking place over the weekend of 28th 29th November.



International Medical Graduates

Tanna Hawkins, International Education Officer

International Department Report

Miss Tanna Hawkins updated the International Committee and Diaspora group with the following:

The recruitment of two International Education Leads to support International Medical Graduates (IMGs):

- Initially, there were intended to be three separate roles; one for sponsorship and MTI and then two separate roles to support the International Trainee Support Scheme (ITSS) in histopathology and medical microbiology. However, to optimise the two applicants' experience and expertise, it was decided to merge the Sponsorship and ITSS histopathology educational lead roles and the MTI and ITSS medical microbiology lead role, thereby eliminating the need for a third person to be appointed
- Dr Hebah Ali has been appointed Educational Lead for the Sponsorship scheme and ITSS histopathology. Dr Anan Ghazy will take up the educational lead's role for the MTI Scheme and ITSS medical microbiology

Update on GMC sponsorship, Medical Training Initiative and International Trainee Support Scheme

- The College MTI and Sponsorship schemes have successfully re-opened, and we have slowly started seeing an increase in the applications as international borders start to re-open. We have received a total of 8 Sponsorship applications and 5 MTI applications since relaunching the scheme in the summer. Reflecting on last year's applications, there is a slight decrease in the number of the applications, however we are hopeful that this number will slowly increase again as testing centres (OET/IELTS) re-open and obtaining documentation (e.g.: Certificates of Good Standing) become easier to access.
- The GMC have resumed face to face ID checks again as these were suspended at the start of the pandemic in the UK, however given the latest guidelines we have not received confirmation as to whether these will be suspended again.
- The Home Office (UKVI) has also changed the system for extensions on the Tier 5 GAU visa, applicants will no longer apply through the AoMRC or the College.
- UKVI have also recently launched a 'Tier 2 Health and Care Visa', and international medical graduates (IMG's) are requesting to be put on this visa as they do not need to pay the NHS surcharge. This issue is shared across all Royal Medical Colleges and it is believed to be a contributing factor to decreased MTI applications. The AoMRC are aware of the issue and have reported this to UKVI. Currently, MTI applicants need to pay the NHS fee before their visa applications, their fee is then refunded to them at a later stage, but they have to apply for this refund.
- The International Education Officer together with the new Leads, the International team hope to develop the the ITSS schemes for both Part 1 and 2.

International Pathology School (IPS)

 A toolkit has been developed for International Pathology School. In previous years, the International Team have travelled overseas to international institutions to host the event and this has been very successful



International Department Report

- This toolkit has been designed to distribute to international institutions so that they can host their own live events under the guidance and supervision of the College
- The College will be piloting IPS as a webinar due to the on-going Covid-19 restrictions. This will take place in Jordan in January 2021. IPS will be a webinar for medical students in the MENA region and cover a range of topics, including subspecialty presentations, research in pathology, artificial intelligence and digital pathology and we have included a quiz to keep the webinar interactive
- Delegates will also be notified later in the year, and encouraging them to purchases tickets for International Pathology Day

International Response to COVID-19

- In summer, the British Embassy in Turkmenistan contacted the College and requested support by contributing to a webinar for the International Scientific-Educational Centre of the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan. The Turkmen government had approached the embassy for help, particularly in jointly organising an online lecture/webinar/e-workshop between British leading virology and microbiology research centres/institutes and representatives of the Turkmen national healthcare system. As part of the UK Government's broader COVID-19 global response to help developing countries respond effectively to the impact of the pandemic, the embassy was keen on supporting the Turkmenistan's government efforts to prevent and respond to the spread of COVID-19, as well as mitigate potential health risks
- The first webinar proved both educational and beneficial to the Turkmen Ministry of Health, the British Embassy contacted the College again to facilitate and host a second webinar for the Ministry of Health in Turkmenistan. Both included a group of senior scientists and professors from internationally renowned UK universities, institutes and government agencies. Their continuous efforts in the area of COVID-19 prevention and scientific research were discussed with the Turkmen medical workers, healthcare specialists and representatives of the Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry
- The presentations highlighted a variety of challenges and concerns around the Covid-19 crisis. Speakers discussed the importance of the basics of the coronaviruses, their genetic history and explored the mutation of the virus as well as tracing the sources of infection. The talks also included the methods and techniques for protecting medical workers in the UK and the immune response to the virus

ITEM NO. 7 - INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL ADVISOR REPORTS

(a) Americas

Dr Don Onwose, International Regional Advisor for Sub-Saharan Africa sent apologies for this meeting.

(b) The Middle East & North Africa (MENA)



Summary of activities undertaken taken during this period

- Attending the International Committee meeting (20 May 2020).
- Participation in preparation for the International Pathology Day (11 November 2020) by nomination a speaker from the MENA region (Professor Ali Hajeer, Laboratory Director, King Abdulaziz Medical City) who will be talking about: Antibody Testing for MERS and COVID-19.
- Preparation for the "International Pathology Taster Webinar" to be held in collaboration between the College and Jordan University of Science and Technology on 29-30 January 2021.
- Review of the following RCPath MoUs :
 - MoU with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan and Pakistan Association of Pathologists.
 - MoU with the Khartoum State Ministry of Health and Soba University Hospital.
 - MoU with The Supreme Council of Universities of Egypt and The Egyptian Committee for Pathology Training.
- Part 1 FRCPath Autumn Exam at Irbid Center, Jordan was cancelled due to COVID 19 Pandemic
- Part 2 FRCPath Autumn Exam at Cairo, Egypt was cancelled due to COVID 19 Pandemic

Future Scheduled meetings and activities

• International Pathology Taster Webinar, 29-30 January 2021.

In the era of COVID 19 Pandemic

- Changes of patterns of activities and meetings
- Webinars, E-education & training, Virtual Pathology
- The Annual Congress of Arab Division of IAP Canceled
- The ESP/IAP Congress in Glasgow has been postponed to 5-9 December 2020

(a) South-East Asia (SEA)

COVID 19 continued to hamper international travel. In most countries, basic medical services have resumed normal, but there are still virtually no international travels. In some countries, the incidence remained high.

Indonesian initiative: Educational activities have been greatly diminished, and several national wide meetings have either been scaled down or postponed. Very few if any outsides speakers were involved. Efforts for locating FRCPath have also stopped as it is unlikely that a physical rotation / attachment will take place soon.

Myanmar teaching program: the communication was inactive since last report.

Perhaps we can rethink the strategy? Education part can be virtual

- Bigger pool of FRCPath as educators
- Overall lower budget
- Easier enrolment as there is no need to travel within the country

Emerging issues, opportunities and trends

Continuation of the higher training program. One issue is difficult in identifying fellows in the region
who are interested to take up mentorship position. Dr Tse has reached out for volunteers but did
not get any response



- Re-establishment of Myanmar teaching. Issues will be mostly on timely communication. Faculty
 can be drawn from experts (and RCPath fellows) in the region, and do not foreseen major
 difficulties
- Establishing a communication link with India country advisors have been attempted and it was suggested that the new International Regional Advisor should pursue at least regular telemeetings among the South East Asian country advisors
- Strengthening tie with China, and whether this is still a priority was also discussed

Activities

- Myanmar teaching conjoint efforts with Prof LM Looi
- Continuation of higher training for junior faculty from Indonesia

(b) Sub Saharan Africa (SSA)

Professor Adekunle Adesina, International Regional Advisor for Sub-Saharan Africa sent apologies for this meeting.

(c) Western Pacific (Inc. Australasia)

Covid-19 Pandemic continues to overshadow pathology educational and professional activities and plans Many countries still at various stages of lockdown at different times. Medical conferences have been cancelled or postponed. Pathology laboratories continue to be heavily engaged in COVID-19 testing. There has been an upsurge in the following areas:

- Virtual and/or hybrid meetings
- Webinars, online teaching and teleconferencing

Covid-19 impact on pathology training and practice in Malaysia

- Master of Pathology (University-based) is the main pathology training programme
- Practical training has continued through hospital-based practice with new SOPs for safety
- Classes/seminars/multidisciplinary team meetings reinstated using teleconferencing
- New normal rapidly developing in adaptation to Covid-19.
- MPath Examinations were held in October-November 2020 under lockdown conditions

Bhagwan Singh Fellowship (Malaysia) is now used mainly to fund a UK pathologist, to be a guest speaker or resource at a Malaysian Scientific Conference or Workshop annually. Professor Jo Martin was to be the Bhagwan Singh Fellow and Guest at the International Congress of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine (ICPaLM) in Kuala Lumpur in June 2020. This has now been postponed to March 2021.

The capacity-building in Myanmar continues:

- Workshops in Yangon 2015 2019
- Trainers from Singapore, Malaysia and surrounding regions

Current status (2020)

- New initiative conducting fortnightly online lectures and slide seminars using digital pathology
- Focused on Bone Marrow pathology
- Led by Professor Soo Yong Tan, with contributions from Fellows in Singapore
- 7 Myanmar candidates have passed the FRCPath part 1 exam (Anat Path)



Emerging issues, opportunities and trends

- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a new normal has settled in
- Online and hybrid meetings have removed the distance of UK from the Western Pacific.
- As easy to participate as National meetings (baring time difference)
- Less cost, time and travel constraints
- There has been more participation in educational events and webinars
- National medical specialist training and curriculum undergoing radical changes and review which have been driven by Specialty Conjoint Boards and Malaysian Medical Council
- Opportunity for input from RCPath and strengthening parallel programmes

Recommendations and Priorities for RCPath in the Western Pacific

- Sustain and Strengthen Capacity-Building in Myanmar
 - Involve more RCPath contributors/trainers from outside of WP
 - Placements for candidates who passed FRCPath Part 1
- Strengthen parallel training in Malaysia towards FRCPath
 - The National Pathology Curriculum and National Specialist standards are currently being reviewed
 - Incorporating mutual development and recognition of pathology training and assessment
 - Establish FRCPath exam centre
- More involvement of International Members in RCPath initiatives
- Consideration of time zone differences

(d) Europe

The International Regional Advisor Europe and the College's continued to collaborate with Ukrainian colleagues at Shupyk National Medical Academy, there are plans for online roundtable discussions on COVID 19 related topics in Pathology.

Emerging issues, opportunities & trends

- Digital Pathology and remote reporting have been used widely following the beginning of COVID pandemic and strict lockdown in March 2020.
- Meetings have moved to remote connection and educational meeting have taken the shape of webinars

Priorities for the next period and upcoming activities

Continuing interaction and collaboration with Ukraine

ITEM NO. 8 - Any Other Business

No points were raised, and the committee moved onto the 2021 meetings

ITEM NO. 9 – 2021 MEETINGS/ EVENTS SCHEDULE

The Committee noted the following schedule of meetings for 2020:

Date	Activity
Wednesday 29 th May 2021	International Committee Meeting
Monday 8 th November 2021	Diaspora Meeting & Full International Committee



Date	Activity
Wednesday 10 th November 2021	International Pathology Day

MEETING CLOSE



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS & DECISIONS

(Please refer to specific minute items for detailed information on each action)

	Action	Assigned to
1)	Invite members to the International Pathology School pilot in January 2021.	Miss Tanna Hawkins
		COMPLETED
2)	Establish new point of contact for Pakistan (Tariq Shafi replacement) for Diaspora group.	Miss Tanna Hawkins, Dr Maadh Aldouri ON GOING
3)	Advertise for the role of Clinical Director of International Activities	Miss Joanne Brinklow COMPLETED
4)	Share the International Regional Advisor Europe (Dr Monica Terlizzo's) details with Dr Wale Atoyebi	Miss Kelley Price COMPLETED
5)	Share Training the Trainer details and Future Learn link to International Committee and Diaspora Group	Kelley Price/Tahir Pillay
		COMPLETED