

Arrangements for the Introduction of Vascular Surgery and the new General Surgery Curriculum

Vascular Surgery is now a new surgical specialty with the same standing as others such as General Surgery. The first trainees to be selected into Vascular Surgery training will start their programmes in August / October 2013 and will follow the new Vascular Surgery curriculum, which has been approved by the GMC. The Vascular Surgery SAC, under the Chairmanship of Professor Cliff Shearman, is helping to co-ordinate arrangements for the start of these programmes.

Trainees will be able to apply to Vascular Surgery through national selection which, for this first year, will run in parallel to the General Surgery national selection process along the same lines as in 2011 and 2012. Application in open competition will be the only method of entry into Vascular Surgery and no transfers from General Surgery into Vascular Surgery will be permitted. Posts will be available at ST3 level only.

Once appointed, Vascular Surgery trainees will need to gain some experience in General Surgery in addition to their vascular training, as required by the curriculum and as built in to their programmes.

These trainees will gain their CCTs in 2019 at the earliest, and so no consultant vascular surgeons who have been trained in this new system will take up post until that date. Up until then, all vascular surgeons will continue to be trained through General Surgery programmes as has been the case up to now.

A new General Surgery curriculum has been approved by the GMC and will come into effect in August 2013. All current trainees will need to transfer to the new curriculum, with the exception of those within 18 months of their expected CCT date. This curriculum contains some vascular surgery, in particular the assessment and initial management of acute vascular conditions, but not the full range of skills required by a vascular specialist.

General Surgery trainees who are appointed in the 2013 selection process will not be able to develop a special interest in Vascular Surgery.

Current General Surgery trainees (appointed to an NTN before 1 January 2013) will be able to continue full training in Vascular Surgery alongside their General Surgery if they choose Vascular Surgery as their special interest. In order to accommodate this, the complete vascular section of the 2010 curriculum will be appended to the new 2013 General Surgery curriculum. This section of the curriculum will be available to existing trainees but not to new trainees appointed in 2013.

Arrangements will be made at Deanery and SAC levels to ensure that existing General Surgery trainees developing a vascular interest will receive the vascular training required to be competitive as vascular specialists.

The General Surgery FRCS exam will continue to include a vascular special interest section until the final trainees in this system reach the end of their training.

Summary Points

- **The only route into the new Vascular Surgery training programmes will be through competitive national selection at ST3 level only**
- **Transfers from General Surgery to Vascular Surgery will not be possible.**
- **There is a new General Surgery curriculum, which will come into effect in August 2013. All current trainees will need to transfer to the new curriculum, with the exception of those within 18 months of their expected CCT date.**
- **The vascular section of the 2010 curriculum will be appended to the new General Surgery curriculum for existing General Surgery trainees only who want to develop a vascular interest. This option will not be available for new trainees.**
- **The General surgery FRCS exam will continue to have a vascular special interest section for as long as necessary.**