



Forensic Science Regulator

Terms of Reference

Forensic Pathology Specialist Group

FSR-T-C03

Issue 4

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This document sets out the terms of reference for the Forensic Pathology Specialist Group.

2. Implementation

2.1.1 This issue of the terms of reference became effective on 22 September 2020.

3. Modification

3.1.1 This is issue 4 of the terms of reference. Changes from previous versions are not identified.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1 Status

4.1.1 The Forensic Pathology Specialist Group (hereafter referred to as the “Specialist Group”) is a standing specialist group established to advise the Forensic Science Regulator (“the Regulator”) and the Forensic Science Advisory Council (“the Council”) on matters within its remit.

4.2 Remit

4.2.1 The Specialist Group will support the Regulator and the Council by providing advice on all matters related to the preparation, implementation and monitoring of forensic pathology quality standards and related issues within the remit of the Regulator. The Specialist Group will:

- a. Review the standards in place (and the factors influencing those standards) as they apply to forensic pathology. The review will consider, but not be limited to, the following.
 - i. Legal provisions (including common law, statute and subsidiary legislation) in as much as they impact on the requisite quality standards;

4.3 Composition

4.3.1 The Specialist Group will be chaired by an individual appointed by the Regulator.

4.3.2 Membership of the Specialist Group will comprise persons in each of the following categories. Where stated, the relevant organisation will normally be invited to nominate a suitable person to the post.

a. Forensic Pathology.

- i. Two Home Office registered forensic pathologists with significant experience of working within the CJS. Nominating body is the British Association in Forensic Medicine.
- ii. The President of the British Association in Forensic Medicine (ex-officio).
- iii. A forensic pathologist with significant experience of investigating suspicious or violent deaths. Nominating body is the Royal College of Pathologists.
- iv. A forensic pathologist with significant experience of investigating suspicious or violent deaths in Scotland. Nominating body is the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.
- v. A forensic pathologist with significant experience of investigating suspicious or violent deaths in Northern Ireland. Nominating body is the Northern Ireland Executive.

b. Police

- i. Up to two senior police officers with experience in the application of forensic pathology to the investigation of crime. Nominating body is the National Police Chiefs' Council.

c. Coroners

- i. A coroner with experience in the application of forensic pathology within the coronial justice system. Nominating body is the Coroners' Society of England Wales and Northern Ireland.

d. Human Tissue

- i. An official with knowledge of the Human Tissue Act and the operation of the Human Tissue Authority. Nominating body is the Human Tissue Authority.
- e. Criminal Justice System
 - i. A lawyer with experience of prosecuting, or managing the prosecution of, cases in which forensic science has been at issue. Nominating body is the Crown Prosecution Service.
- f. Pathology Delivery Board
 - i. An official with responsibility for, or working with, the PDB. Nominating body is the Home Office Forensic Pathology Unit.

4.3.3 If not a member of the Specialist Group as a result of a nomination described above the following shall also be a member for so long as they hold the relevant position.

- a. The Lead of the Specialist Group’s Audit Group (ex-officio).
- b. The Responsible Officer appointed by the Pathology Delivery Board (ex-officio).

4.3.4 The organisations invited to nominate representatives to the Specialist Group may, from time to time, be amended by the Regulator following consultation with the Specialist Group.

4.3.5 Each organisation shall submit its proposed nomination for approval by the Regulator before appointment is confirmed.

4.3.6 If a member regularly fails to attend Specialist Group meetings, the Regulator may terminate his/her appointment and request a new appointee from the nominating body.

4.3.7 The Regulator may, following consultation with the Specialist Group, add to the membership of the Specialist Group or invite other individuals to serve on the Specialist Group for limited periods of time where additional skills, knowledge or experience are required.

Specialist Group business by any members who are unable to obtain reimbursement from their employers. Repayment will only be made where the Regulator has agreed, to entertain claims from a named individual under this provision.

6.1.6 Where the business of the Specialist Group gives rise to the need for expenditure from the Regulator’s budget, the Regulator’s written approval must be obtained in advance of any commitment to the expenditure.

6.1.7 The Chair of the Specialist Group may establish such other procedures as s/he considers appropriate for the operation of the Specialist Group, providing that these are not inconsistent with the above.

6.2 Working Groups

6.2.1 The Specialist Group may, with the approval of the Regulator, establish such working groups as it considers necessary for the efficient and effective conduct of its business. Such working groups will be constituted with clear written terms of reference and will report to the Specialist Group.

7. Conduct

7.1.1 Members of the Specialist Group are required to observe the Seven Principles of Public Life endorsed by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life. Each member must at all times act in good faith and observe the highest standards of impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the conduct of the Specialist Group’s business.

7.1.2 Any Specialist Group member has the right to bring to the attention of the Regulator any matter, which he or she believes raises important issues relating to his or her duties as a member. In such cases the member should, before approaching the Regulator, raise their concerns with the Specialist Group Chair to establish whether they might be resolved within the Specialist Group.

8. Data Protection

8.1.1 The contact details that members provide will be used by the Regulator, or the Regulator’s representatives, and shared amongst the membership of the

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Colmore Row

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