

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



Registered Charity No 1119599

Academic Dean  
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May 2021

## Academic Dean's Report 2020 – 2021

### Introduction

This is my second report as Academic Dean, (AD), having taken over from my predecessor in 2019. "May you live in interesting times". An English expression claimed to be a translation of a Chinese curse. These have been interesting times and for a lot of people they have been horrible. At the Faculty, we have had to adapt both our running of the Faculty and especially the examinations.

However, every cloud has a silver lining, and some of the changes we have made will continue as an improved service to our members. The facility to run our examinations online had been considered but now we have put those plans into action and they work! The DLM exam in 2020 was held completely online. Whether this helped to swell the candidate numbers, or whether it was spreading the details to various organisations, I'm not sure but we had a record entry. For candidates it means no travelling or hotel costs and it is much less stressful for them. We also have no travelling costs for our team of examiners and staff and no room hire costs. The company carrying out the exam for us invigilate it. The computer links are two way. One candidate reported that he bent down to plug in his computer and a voice barked out "What are you doing?"

In March we held OSCEs and OSPEs online. This involved the team, and especially Jay Costa, in much technical work setting up separate rooms for each candidate and each examiner and much training in online procedures (especially for some of our examiners).

Co-ordinating candidates, examiners and actors worked extremely well. All the station questions were practised in advance and altered for online use. There were some stations that require a face to face setting and (Boris permitting) will be held in June. This means that I cannot give you the results at present but it looks good. I think we will continue with a mix of online and face to face examinations.

My predecessor did not tell me the full extent of a Dean's duty. I spent some considerable time in 2020 (between lockdowns) selling furniture from our old office, out of the storage facility. I thank Charlene for organising the buyers. All the items were eventually sold.

Last year, I asked if anyone could contribute to the Faculty with help with the educational documents. Members should have seen in the Bulletin, mention of the opportunity to observe meetings. With Caroline Jones I placed a request for any member to write in with ideas for examination questions. I hope that more members will involve themselves with the Faculty. Indeed, some members might like to consider becoming part of our team of examiners. Please contact us and you will find it very rewarding.

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I thank all our current volunteers for their enthusiasm. I also thank our Assistant Academic Dean (AAD) Marie-Elle Vooijs whose knowledge of the Forensic side assists me especially with the educational documents, recommendations, guidelines, etc. that are continuously being updated.

## For the AGM's approval

I have proposed to the Academic Committee, and then to the Board who have approved a new postnominal of AFFLM (DLM). This would be for those who pass the DLM exam and pass with distinction and then apply for Affiliate membership and are accepted. The postnominal could then be used whilst they remain in membership.

There are categories of people taking the exam who are not eligible for full membership of the Faculty. For instance, experts who are not Forensic Practitioners, Coroners, MLAs or DLAs. At present they can of course use DLM if they pass the exam and we do encourage them to apply to be Affiliates/Associates. The new postnominal giving a clearer indication of their relationship to the Faculty and the Royal College may encourage more members.

## 1. The Academic Committee (AC)

1.1 The AC has met three times in the last year. All three of the meetings had long agendas. The meetings included reports and discussions on the subcommittees that report to AC:

- The Chief Examiner's Committee (CEC)
- The Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSCC)
- The Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC)
- The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)
- The Research Subcommittee (just reformed)

1.2 The committee also receives reports from representatives of the FFLM on other outside committees. I thank all those involved for attending, and reporting to us relevant information. These include:

- BMA Forensic and Secure Environments Committee
- RCGP Secure Environments Group
- NPCC Working Group on Rape & Adult Sexual Offences
- National SARC Advisory Board
- FSR Medical Forensics Specialist Group
- Contamination Elimination Database Project (SARCs)
- NHSE SARC Strategic Clinical Forum
- Inter-Collegiate and Agency Domestic Violence Abuse
- NPCC Healthcare Advisory Group (Custody)

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- Scottish Health in Custody Network
- RCPATH Medical Examiner Committee
- NHS E&I SARC Medicines Management Task and Finish Group
- NHSE Health and Justice CRG
- GMC Intercollegiate Ethics Forum
- RCPCH Standing Committee on Child Protection
- RCP's Student and Foundation Doctor Network
- NPCC Clinical Governance Panel
- NSPCC Healthcare Liaison Committee
- Drink and Drug Driving (D3) Practitioners Group update (Department for Transport)
- Medical Education and Training Forum
- Review committee for National Guidance on the Retention, Storage and Destruction of Materials and Records relating to Forensic Examinations
- Forensic Examiner Capabilities Framework - Steering Group

1.3 I would also like to thank those representatives of other bodies who attend the AC and add much to our deliberations. They are representing the following organisations:

- College of Paramedics
- Royal College of Nursing
- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
- UK Association of Forensic Nurses & Paramedics

## 2. The Chief Examiner's Committee (CEC) and FFLM examinations

2.1 The CEC has met several times both as a full committee and various groups of examiners. A great deal of work goes on behind the scenes to make the examinations work. In advance the exams are planned carefully with each question or station considered on not only its last use in the exam but also as to whether its relevance has changed. Where multiple types of registrants will be taking the exam, this is also considered carefully. I have already mentioned the changes to online exams.

2.2 I must especially thank Caroline Jones, our Chief Examiner, for all her hard work. She is active in planning and running the exams but also on making sure that our examiners are fully trained and instructed for each exam. She has a band of helpers including the examiners who give many hours to the Faculty. Caroline demits today but I hope we can still call on her expertise. She has been giving much of her wisdom to George Wright our new Chief Examiner. Thank you Caroline and Good Luck George.

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- 2.3 There is a small group of DLA examiners preparing for 2022 when the Dentolegal exams will commence. We have now prepared the syllabus and are going on to the exam itself. We have considered a paper based exam or an online OSPEs and SAQ examination. It is not proposed at present to change the MLA Part 2 exam.
- 2.4 Last year the Board gave permission for DLM to be taken at centres abroad. With online DLM, candidates can take it anywhere in the world. Although candidates will pay some additional fee, they will not have the expense of coming to the UK.
- 2.5 In July 2020, the FFLM Board approved a route to the LFFLM (SOM) [c] for paediatricians experienced in conducting forensic child sexual abuse (CSA) examinations via prescribed/equivalent experience. Since then, the FFLM Board has updated the requirement to hold the MRCPCH/FRCPCH to allow applicants to hold membership/fellowship of an appropriate Royal College or Faculty.
- 2.6 I also want to especially thank Angela Hall who organises the OSCEs. Her expertise in running the OSCEs and picking and training the actors is vital.
- 2.7 Dr Johnathan Round was appointed as the Faculty's External Examiner in November 2020 and we thank him for his input.
- 2.8 Work has been continuing on updating the syllabi and the regulations. Some regulations were out of date and also there were unnecessary variations between different exams.
- 2.9 A thank you to anyone involved but not mentioned.
- 2.10 Exam Results:

## October 2020

Exam	Overall No. of Passes	Overall No. of Fails	Overall No. of Candidates
DLM	54*	13	67
LFFLM (GFM)	17	1	18
LFFLM (SOM)	6	0	6
MFFLM Part 1	13	0	13

\* Out of whom 39 achieved Distinction (reached the MFFLM pass mark)

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## March 2021

### MFFLM (MLM) - Final

Overall No. of SAQ Passes	Overall No. of SAQ Fails	Overall No. of Candidates
0	1	1

### MFFLM (GFM) – Partial (OSCE results to be published in July 2021)

Overall No. of SAQ Passes	Overall No. of SAQ Fails	Overall No. of Candidates
0	2*	3

*\*Third candidate passed SAQ in a previous examination diet*

### MFFLM (SOM) – Partial (OSCE results to be published in July 2021)

Overall No. of SAQ Passes	Overall No. of SAQ Fails	Overall No. of Candidates
6	2	8

### LFFLM (GFM) – 9 candidates - results to be published in July 2021

### LFFLM (SOM) – 6 candidates - results to be published in July 2021

## 3. Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC)

Prof Margaret Stark, our outgoing President, chairs this committee with two meetings annually in June and November. The committee has many external members as well as Faculty members and deals with many queries and ongoing discussions about various topics. Much of the work goes on behind the scenes and a large amount of this is dealt with swiftly and efficiently by the President.

The FSSC continually updates and looks at documents and a list of those produced or revised is below.

January 2021	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects
January 2021	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
January 2021	SARC Storage of Forensic Samples & the Human Tissue Act: Frequently Asked Questions

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January 2021 February 2021	FSSC newsletter – This document was further revised in February 2021 to cover the labelling of the vials in the older RTA kits that are still being used in some constabularies.
January 2021 February 2021	Recommendations for the examination of female suspects of sexual assault. This document was further revised in February 2021 to cover the exceptional circumstances where self-swabbing may be done.
July 2020	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects
July 2020	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
July 2020	FSSC newsletter
July 2020	Blood Samples in Hospital for Unconscious/Incapacitated Patients
July 2020	Recommended Equipment for Obtaining Forensic Samples from Complainants and Suspects
July 2020	Recommendations for Collecting Hair Samples for Toxicology
July 2020	Recommendations for Collecting Nail Clippings for Toxicology

## 4. The Specialty Advisory Committee

This is chaired by Prof Carol Seymour and meets as and when necessary. The process is a slow one but we do continue to make that progress. Carol is now a member of the Academic Committee.

## 5. The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)

- 5.1 The subcommittee has a full complement of members currently under the chairmanship of Professor Margaret Stark.
- 5.2 The current COVID situation has of course affected the courses for this year and there have been no face to face courses. The Part 2 exam revision days were held virtually in December 2020 and January 2021. I would like to thank the facilitators for running the revision days and adapting them to work online.
- 5.3 Thirty-seven webinars have been held over the period June 2020 – April 2021 see Appendix A. Overall the feedback on the webinars has been positive.
- 5.4 The existing webinars are being reviewed and will either be revised or replaced where necessary.
- 5.5 I would like to thank Margaret for chairing this committee. Dr Shiraz Qamaruddin will be taking over chairmanship of this committee from May 2021.

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## 6. Research Subcommittee

The Research Subcommittee has met once for an initial meeting under the chairmanship of Dr Michael Freeman. It will meet again in May 2021.

## 7. FFLM documents

- 7.1 The task of reviewing and renewing our large resource of documents is an ongoing project. Marie-Elle helps extensively in this area. The target of all being reviewed on a three year cycle has been maintained and will continue to be curated by the AAD.
- 7.2 My thanks again to all of those who assist with this complicated task. Our staff have been excellent in support - Tessa, Charlene, and Jay.
- 7.3 List of revised / reviewed publications since May 2020 (not mentioned elsewhere):

May 2020	Recommendations – Child Safeguarding: Information Sharing Guidance for Healthcare Professionals working in Police Custody
May 2020	Taking Blood Specimens from Incapacitated Drivers
May 2020	Child Safeguarding Summary Referral pro forma
May 2020	Role of the Forensic Pathologist
May 2020	Obtaining the MFFLM (General Forensic Medicine)
May 2020	The Role of the Educational Supervisor
May 2020	The Role of the Clinical Validator
May 2020	Resources for those involved in FFLM examinations
June 2020	Pro forma – Mental Health Act Assessment
June 2020	Pro forma – Fitness for detention and interview
June 2020	Guidance for best practice for the management of intimate images which may become evidence in court
June 2020	Pro forma – Paediatric Forensic Medical Examination
June 2020	Safe and Secure Handling and Supply of Medicines in Sexual Assault Services for Adults and Children
July 2020	Frequently Asked Questions for 2020-21 examinations
July 2020	Mark sheet and assessment marking criteria for LFFLM portfolio
October 2020	Recommendations – Forensic clinicians as witnesses in criminal proceedings
October 2020	Pro forma – Assessments (alcohol and drugs) under the RTA
November 2020	The Role of the Clinical Director in the Sexual Assault Referral Centre

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January 2021	Consent form for photographs – pro forma
January 2021	Advice on obtaining qualifications in clinical forensic medicine
January 2021	Recommendations – Introductory Training Courses in General Forensic Medicine
February 2021	Recommendations – Irritant Sprays: Clinical Effects and Management
February 2021	Adult forensic sexual assault examination - pro forma
February 2021	The Role of the Healthcare Professional
February 2021	Quality Standards for Nurses and Paramedics – General Forensic Medicine
February 2021	Position Statement on video recording assessments in custody
March 2021	Intimate searches in police custody flow chart
March 2021	Recommendations – Healthcare Professionals asked to perform intimate body searches
March 2021	Recommendations – Assessment of people with learning difficulties and disabilities in police custody
March 2021	Quality Standards for Clinicians undertaking Paediatric Sexual Offence Medicine

7.4 A number of documents have been produced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- COVID-19 Pandemic & SARCS: A guide for the Police
- Template for Step by Step Guidance for Face to Face FMEs of SARC clients during COVID-19 pandemic
- Template for Step by Step Guidance for SARC FMEs conducted entirely remotely via telephone or videoconferencing during COVID-19 pandemic
- SARC Requests for Forensic Medical Examination during COVID-19 Pandemic
- Position Statement on the Management of suspected COVID-19 cases in police custody
- SARC COVID-19 Screening and Triage Tool
- COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on FME Case Management covering letter
- Patient leaflet – collection of a self-taken anal swab
- Patient leaflet – collection of a self-taken vaginal swab
- Patient leaflet – collection of a self-taken penile swab
- Key principles for intimate clinical assessments undertaken remotely in response to COVID-19

These are regularly reviewed and updated by Dr Alex Gorton and Dr Cath White. Many thanks to them for leading on these.



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## 8. Other Work

There have been several other areas of activity including the following:

- Restarting work on expanding Ulster E-learning to include General Forensic Medicine and reviewing the existing modules;
- Working with UKAFN, the College of Paramedics, the Royal College of Emergency Medicine and the Royal College of Nursing to produce guidance on the management of detainees post CED discharge;
- Developing Quality Standards on Mental Healthcare in Sexual Offence Medicine for adults and children with representation from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, UKAFN and the Royal College of Psychiatrists;
- Responding to the following consultations:
  - Forensic Science Regulator's anti-contamination guidance;
  - TACT Custodial Healthcare Service Specification;
  - RCP submission to the PSA review into responses to the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - Call for evidence for violence against women and girls strategy;
  - Royal College of Nursing draft guidance for healthcare staff caring for people in prison with dementia;
  - Road Traffic Reports;
  - College of Policing;
  - Call for evidence for Women's Health Strategy;
  - Mental Health Act 1983.

## 9. Conclusion

I have already mentioned the staff but I also appreciate all the help and support from all of the Senior Officers. I look forward to my third year. I thank Tessa especially for her help with this report and all the other work she has carried out faultlessly during the year

Finally, it has been a pleasure working with Margaret. Her successor has a fine example to follow. Her steady stream of emails during the last two years have been just what were needed. I know how strongly she feels about the Faculty and I'm pretty sure that she will still be just as active as Past President.

Margaret, thank you and I look forward to dancing with you at next year's AGM.

I am happy to receive questions or comments not only on this report but throughout the year [academicdean@fflm.ac.uk](mailto:academicdean@fflm.ac.uk).

**Brian Westbury**  
**FFFLM, LLM, BA, BDS, LDSRCS, MGDSRCS, MCGDent.**  
**May 2021**

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## Appendix A

### FFLM Webinars – June 2020 to April 2021

Webinar Date	Webinar	Presenter/s	Chair
Mon 11 June 2020	Stay Alert – Pass Exam	Dr Caroline Jones	Prof Margaret Stark
Mon 06 July 2020	The Role of the Medical Examiner	Prof Jason Payne-James	Prof Ian Wall
Thurs 16 July 2020	A Conversation on Recently Updated FFLM Documents	Prof Margaret Stark and colleagues	Prof Margaret Stark
Tues 21 July 2020	Completing a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death	Prof Jason Payne-James	Dr Alex Gorton
Wed 29 July 2020	Effective handover from the 'detained' to 'secure' estate – how can we close the gap to improve patient care	Dr Jake Hard	Prof Margaret Stark
Tue 04 August 2020	Scene Examination	Prof Richard Shepherd	Prof Margaret Stark
Thurs 13 August 2020	Recognition and Photography of Human Bite Marks	Dr Douglas Sheasby	Mr Brian Westbury
Tues 18 August 2020	Clinical Leadership	Dr Caroline Osborne-White	Dr Michael Devlin
Tues 25 August 2020	The Role of the Forensic Nurse	Jennie Smith	Prof Ian Wall
Thurs 27 August 2020	How Are Clinical Forensic Medical Services Provided Outside Of England And Wales?	Dr David Carson, Dr Vincent Davidson and Dr Deryn Evans	Prof Margaret Stark
Thurs 03 September 2020	Everything you always wanted to know about dentolegal but didn't like to ask	Mr Brian Westbury	Dr Michael Devlin
Wed 09 September 2020	Novel psychoactive substances	Mr Hassan Kurimbokus	Prof Margaret Stark
Thurs 10 September 2020	Hints and Tips For The October 2020 Examinations	Prof Sarah Hull	Dr Caroline Jones
Thurs 17 September 2020	Highlights from the Blue Guidelines – using illustrative cases	Prof Margaret Stark	Dr Alex Gorton
Thurs 24 September 2020	COVID-19 and Custody	Dr Alex Gorton	Prof Ian Wall
Tues 29 September 2020	COVID-19 and SARCs	Dr Cath White	Dr Helena Thornton
Mon 05 October 2020	View from the 'Beak' – the role of Magistrates	Dr Bernadette Butler	Prof Margaret Stark
Wed 07 October 2020	Route to LFFLM (SOM)c for Paediatricians experienced in CSA Examinations	Dr Caroline Jones	Prof Margaret Stark
Wed 14 October 2020	Practical Ethics	Dr Michael Devlin	Prof Margaret Stark
Mon 26 October 2020	Complaint handling / Engagement with the IOPC	DCI Syed Hussain	Dr Alex Gorton

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Wed 28 October 2020	How to Pass the Part 2 of the MFFLM or LFFLM	Dr Sally Pickard, Stacey Shelley and Dr Philip Zack	Prof Margaret Stark
Mon 02 November 2020	Assessment for autism and ASD in custody	Prof Rajan Nathan	Prof Margaret Stark
Tues 24 November 2020	Sexually Transmitted Infections after sexual assault	Dr Michelle Carroll	Dr Helena Thornton
Mon 30 November 2020	The Role of the Appropriate Adult	Chris Bath and Grev Wallington	Prof Margaret Stark
Thurs 03 December 2020	Wellness and Wellbeing	Dr Emma Vaux	Prof Margaret Stark
Mon 11 January 2021	Causation problems in medical negligence	Dr Michael J Powers QC	Dr Michael Devlin
Wed 20 January 2021	Child Safeguarding	Dr Peter Green and Dr Sheila Paul	Dr Linda Teebay
Thurs 28 January 2021	Management of photo documentation of intimate images	Dr Bernadette Butler and Dr Caroline Jones	Dr Helena Thornton
Thurs 11 February 2021	The FFLM Licentiate examination: the role of the Educational Supervisor and how to produce a 'Gold Standard' Portfolio	Dr Christine Greenshaw and Prof Margaret Stark	Dr Caroline Jones
Wed 17 February 2021	Forensic Sampling for HCPs working in General Forensic Medicine	Dr Bernadette Butler, Dr Sandy Fielding and Dr Alex Gorton	Dr Helena Thornton
Mon 22 February 2021	How are Clinical Forensic Medical Services Provided Outside of England and Wales Part 2?	Prof Denis Cusack and Dr Maric Thorpe	Prof Margaret Stark
Thurs 25 February 2021	Leadership in a Pandemic	Prof Jason Leitch	Mr Brian Westbury
Thurs 04 March 2021	Photo-Documentation of Injuries	Dr Will Anderson	Dr Alex Gorton
Thurs 18 March 2021	Mental Health Legislation	Dr Gabrielle Pendlebury	Prof Margaret Stark
Wed 31 March 2021	Provision of Forensic Services over Australasia	Dr Angela Williams	Prof Margaret Stark
Tue 13 April 2021	COVID-19 in Custody and SARCs: Update	Dr Alex Gorton and Dr Cath White	Prof Ian Wall
Wed 28 April 2021	An introduction to the Forensic Capability Network – opportunities for research, ideas and current challenges	Carolyn Lovell	Prof Margaret Stark