



Registered Charity No 1119599

Registrar's Report for the AGM, May 2025

It has been another phenomenally busy year for the Faculty. The Faculty decided that the time had come to appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to provide continuity as Senior Officers rotate, which led to the appointment of Halita Obineche in April 2025. We warmly welcome Halita now she has joined the Faculty on 06 May. I would like to acknowledge the enormous amount of support provided to the Faculty by Bernie Ryan, CEO of IFAS in preparing for and appointing our CEO.

Central to Halita's role will be supporting the Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) and developing the Faculty's ongoing campaign to have Forensic Medicine recognised as a specialty. Our members continue to place this at the top of their feedback in terms of what the Faculty can do for them. We continue to be very grateful for all the work done on this agenda by Prof Carol Seymour and all who sit on the SAC.

The Office team has seen many changes in the past year with Tessa's maternity leave partially backfilled by Charlotte Kirkland until January 2025. We are very grateful to her. At the same time, Charlene stepped up to the role of Interim Office Manager to provide Officer team leadership pending the CEO appointment and she is taking on more of the Accountancy roles previously held by Professional Services Ltd. Jordan Bailey continues to develop her expertise, supporting Charlene in managing the Faculty's finances and membership. Jordan has worked very hard to challenge existing processes and develop more efficient ways of working with Charlene's support.

We were delighted to welcome Tessa back to the team in December and she has picked up her role as Learning and Development Manager, leading on the Annual Conference, Educational events and numerous committees. Along with Charlene and Senior Officers, Tessa holds a great deal of organisational memory and her expertise and experience was missed in the second half of 2024. This shows the importance of manuals and the series of how-to guides, which we have in development.

Kim Feltham has now managed a full cycle of examinations and continues to develop robust processes to ensure that this core Faculty business is delivered effectively. Her teamwork and close working relationship with the Chief Examiner are particularly noteworthy. Work continues apace and the Faculty continues to develop the examinations diet, including the first round of examinations for Secure and Detained settings.

The whole team has completed a 'time and motion' study and we have held an initial workshop to ensure that each role is balanced between challenge, workload and personal development. The teamwork, mutual support and readiness to ensure that critical functions are set out in 'How to' guides helps to avoid single points of failure, ensuring that we have business continuity plans in case of unforeseen absences.

Now that Halita is in post, we plan an Office Team and Senior Officer team-building away-day to make sure that we take all the benefits of our diversity including our various personality types. This will help to enhance the already considerable team spirit and



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ensure that we are proactive in valuing diversity and maximising opportunities for all team members' to input their thoughts and ideas. Only by maximising our staff potential will we be able to take the Faculty forward with the energy and effort our members deserve.

All Office Team members are encouraged to identify relevant training they would like to undertake for their personal development. This is particularly relevant as the Faculty seeks to bring more functions in-house (including marking examinations, automating receipts and certificates). Of particular note is the ongoing work to integrate the functions of Salesforce and Testreach, making use of automation where possible so the human effort can be directed to where interpersonal contact is most beneficial.

We were very sad to receive notice from our longstanding Accountancy provider, Professional Consultancy Services Ltd. Ross and Josie have provided huge support to the Faculty, and Charlene in particular, over many years. We are grateful to Ross and Josie for agreeing to stay on until October 2025 to ensure a safe handover. However, this provides an opportunity to bring some more of the Faculty's accounting processes and payroll in-house, while we go to tender for a new provider. This tendering process will answer another External Audit recommendation by improving governance on purchase controls.

Last year's External Audit by MHA exposed some areas of concern, including the lack of a risk register. The Faculty has now created a risk register, which is under regular review by the Senior Officers and Office Team. Although the Information Commissioner's Office advised it was not compulsory, in order to model best practice, we have appointed an external Data Protection Officer and there is a significant project underway to assess our data retention practice. Inevitably, and in common with many organisations, this will create a large volume of work as we reduce the volume of out-of-date data we hold. We look forward to the finalised external audit of 2024 and the learning and organisational development we will take from any recommendations from the Auditors.

It is rare to have to advise members on their behaviour, but we have had an instance of a member sharing log-in credentials and allowing non-members access to membership areas of the website. In another incident, a member's use of the Faculty logo, might have been interpreted as Faculty endorsement of a member's clinic. Whilst it is gratifying to see that members value the kudos of Faculty membership, this was not appropriate, and I hope that those concerned will feel that these were dealt with firmly but compassionately.

Finally, we celebrate the continued growth in membership with Membership and Fellowship committee being a busy meeting every other month. The membership report (included in the Board meeting bundle) provides considerable reassurance that the Faculty is relevant to numerous groups within the forensic and legal umbrella of medical practice.

Iain Brew
Registrar