



Registered Charity No 1119599

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May 2026

Academic Dean's Report 2025 – 2026**Introduction**

When I started this role, in May 2023, a three-year term of office seemed a long time. It is hard to believe how quickly those three years have passed. I look back and realise how much I have learnt, how well supported I have been and how the FFLM has grown, continuing to raise standards and care for the most vulnerable in society. Something we should all be proud of and continue to champion.

Our small charity now has a CEO and a strong office team, without whom we would be lost. I have had the fortune to work with two amazing Presidents and alongside some impressive Senior Officers and I am grateful for the opportunities and relationships this post has offered.

I am incredibly lucky to work with a dedicated Chief Examiner, Dr Sandy Fielding, who works tirelessly to ensure the exams are ready and fit for purpose. I am not sure when she switches off, as I frequently get messages about her latest ideas! The expanding team of examiners are committed and hardworking, and without whom our exams would not be possible.

The DLM and Part 1 MFFLM and LFFLM examinations were held on-line in October 2025. In April 2026, following valuable feedback from our candidates, we moved back to pre-covid times and hosted the LFFLM and MFFLM SAQ and OSCE examinations in person in London. This year we have also commissioned a review of our examinations and have been working closely with the company to identify areas for improvement to improve the examinations process for our candidates. Many thanks to Kim Feltham and Shelby Farenden for all their work in ensuring the examinations run smoothly.

We look forward to adding the Secure and Detained settings (SDS) examination this October. Many thanks to all those in SDS who have worked hard to produce an examination.

Sadly, there has been little progress on the proposed dento-legal exams and the reinstatement of the medio-legal exams. We have decreasing numbers of MLAs and DLAs within the FFLM, which results in very few members with the requisite experience and expertise to write and host the exams. We are trying to increase our educational content relevant to MLAs and DLAs to boost membership and have been liaising with the MDO leads to consider a portfolio Part 2 examination.

Last year we appointed Dr Elisabeth Alton as Safeguarding Lead. Dr Alton brings immense knowledge of adult safeguarding and champions equality in safeguarding.



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Supporting Dr Alton, as Deputy Safeguarding Lead, is Zoe Lane, who has an impressive CV and experience in child safeguarding.

Dr Helen Mills has worked hard as Sexual Offence Lead, representing the FFLM at critical meetings. Dr Jo Gifford is an asset as our RCPCH link and Prof John Gall continues to engage with key stakeholders in his role as Expert Witness Lead.

Dr Libby Sevink has worked tirelessly in her role as Vice President, Forensic Medicine, and we are appreciative of her continued passion and enthusiasm, especially in her role as chair of the Training and Education (TED) subcommittee.

I am grateful for all the work of all the volunteers who give their time generously and with purpose, ably supported by our fantastic office team.

1. The Academic Committee (AC)

1.1 The AC met virtually four times in the last year. The meetings have long agendas, hence the move back to quarterly meetings. The meetings included reports and discussions on the subcommittees that report to the AC:

- The Chief Examiner's Committee (CEC)
- The Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSCC)
- The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)
- Institute for Addressing Strangulation (IFAS)

Updates are also invited from Dr Helen Mills, Sexual Offence Medicine Lead, Dr Jo Gifford, RCPCH representative, Prof John Gall, Expert Witness Lead, and Dr Elisabeth Alton, Safeguarding Lead.

The Research Subcommittee has been disbanded due to a lack of formal reporting and oversight. The SAC (Specialist Advisory Committee) has been disbanded, and Prof Carol Seymour has been appointed as Portfolio Pathways lead.

1.2 The committee also receives reports from representatives of the FFLM sitting on external 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 National Rape Working Group
- National SARC Advisory Board
- Forensic Science Regulator's Medical Forensics Specialist Group



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- NHSE SARC Strategic Clinical Forum
- Inter-Collegiate and Agency Domestic Violence Abuse
- NHSE Health and Justice CRG
- GMC Intercollegiate Ethics Forum
- RCPCH Standing Committee on Child Protection
- RCP's Student and Foundation Doctor Network
- NSPCC Healthcare Liaison Committee
- Drink and Drug Driving (D3) Practitioners Group update (Department for Transport)
- Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (Wales)
- NPCC First Aid National Clinical Government Committee
- NPCC Less Lethal Weapons Working Group

1.3 I would 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

1.4 Many thanks to Tessa Lewis for her organisation and efficiency, which is vital to the running of the AC.

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. Every new question is 'Angoffed' and many hours are spent reviewing questions and examination weightings.

2.2 We are grateful for everything Angela Hall has contributed, including the coordination of the excellent actors. Her expertise in running the OSCEs and picking and training the actors is vital. We appreciate all Kajal, and her team do in ensuring the OSCEs run smoothly.

2.3 Dr Jonathan Round was appointed as the FFLM's External Examiner in November 2020, and we thank him for his continuing input. His insights are invaluable, and he teaches us so much.

2.4 Sandy Fielding and Kim Feltham have put in a considerable amount of work in the preparation of and running the exams. They have coped admirably with the change in format, going back to face-to-face Part 2 examinations. Many thanks to you both.



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2.5 We were fortunate to appoint Karen Lobb-Rossini as Educational Advisor this year. Despite only working with us for a short time, her impact has been measurable. We thank her for her efforts and are delighted to welcome Dr Hannah Dunne and Dr Ling Wong as Educational Advisors. We look forward to working closely with them.

2.6 Many thanks to everyone involved in the running of the exams, especially our examiners, Educational Advisors, and actors.

2.7 Exam Results:

October 2025

Exam	Passes	Fails	Total Candidates	Pass Rate
DLM	32*	10	42	76.2%
LFFLM (GFM)	13	0	13	100.0%
LFFLM (SOM)	5	1	6	83.3%
MFFLM Part 1	8	5**	13	61.5%

**Includes 19 Distinctions (MFFLM Part 1 pass mark attained).*

***Includes 3 candidates who achieved the DLM.*

***Out of whom three achieved the DLM.*

March 2026

In March we had:

2 MFFLM SAQ GFM applicants
 7 MFFLM SAQ SOM applicants
 7 LFFLM SAQ GFM applicants
 4 LFFLM SAQ SOM applicants

2 MFFLM OSCE GFM applicants
 8 MFFLM OSCE SOM applicants
 10 LFFLM OSCE GFM applicants
 5 LFFLM OSCE SOM applicants

We will release the results in due course.



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3. Forensic Science Subcommittee (FSSC)

After years of inspirational leadership, Prof Margaret Stark resigned as chair of this committee, which meets twice a year, in June and November. We were delighted to appoint co-chairs, Dr Laura Dean and Dr Amy Hamm. The committee has many external members as well as FFLM members and deals with many queries and ongoing discussions about various topics.

Dr Dean has been working hard on Early Evidence Kits (EEKs) and is in the process of producing videos which will be hosted on the FFLM website and accessed through a QR code on the EEK modules. These short videos will demonstrate how to collect evidence.

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

July 2025	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects
July 2025	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
July 2025	Recommendations for the examination of adult female suspects of sexual assault
July 2025	Pro forma: Forensic Medical Examination: Complainant
July 2025	FSSC Newsletter
July 2025	Information for complainants undergoing a forensic medical examination
January 2026	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects - the evidence
January 2026	Operational procedures and equipment for clinical and forensic examination rooms in police stations
January 2026	FSSC Newsletter
February 2026	Recommendations for the Forensic Collection of Specimens from Complainants and Suspects

4. The Training and Education Subcommittee (TED)

The subcommittee is currently under the expert leadership of Dr Libby Sevink. Libby has embraced her role as Vice-President for Forensic Medicine, and we are grateful for her contributions and enthusiasm as well as her efforts to increase webinar attendance and think of interesting relevant content for all educational activity.



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Development Training Courses (DTCs)

4.1 The following DTCs have taken place since the last AGM:

Virtual SARC Best Practice Day	10 September 2025
Forensic Aspects of Adult Safeguarding	04 & 25 November 2025
Virtual Child Safeguarding Day	22 November 2025
MFFLM and LFFLM Part 2 Revision Day	28 February 2026
Virtual Adult Safeguarding Day*	21 April 2026

**Free for FFLM Members and those working in the NHS to attend*

I would like to express my thanks to the course organisers for facilitating these - I appreciate a lot of time and effort goes into planning and running these events and we are grateful for their continued support.

Webinars

4.2 10 webinars have been held over the period May 2025 – April 2026 (see Appendix A). These were all free for FFLM members to attend. Many thanks to our speakers for presenting such a range of interesting topics.

4.3 Overall, the feedback on webinars continues to be positive and we welcome any suggestions for future topics and speakers.

Adult Safeguarding

4.4 The Forensic Aspect of Adult Safeguarding Forum, chaired by Dr Elisabeth Alton and Prof Margaret Stark, continues to meet quarterly.

4.5 The Virtual Adult Safeguarding Day in April 2026 was very well attended with over 80 participants.

Introductory Course in General Forensic Medicine

4.6 In November 2025, Prof Sarah Hull and Prof Rudo Masanzu hosted a hybrid course in Belfast. There were 8 attendees and we are grateful for all their work in running the course.

5. Institute for Addressing Strangulation (IFAS)

The Academic Committee receives regular updates from IFAS. IFAS continue to work hard in educating professionals about the risks of non-fatal strangulation and

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provide support and advice for victims. Thanks to Bernie Ryan, Prof Cath White and the team for their commitment and work in this field.

6. Strategy to support applications for specialist status

Attempts to achieve specialty status have been hampered for many years. Sadly, feedback and responses have been heavily redacted, so we are unclear what the barriers are. After the dissolution of the Specialist Advisory Committee, Prof Carol Seymour has been appointed as Portfolio Pathways Lead. We are hopeful that the development of a more structured pathway for individuals to apply for specialist registration with the GMC will increase numbers of individuals being recognised for their work in the field of forensic and legal medicine, evidencing the need for formal recognition of the speciality.

7. Expert Witness work

Prof John Gall has been meeting with other expert witness leads and representatives from the Expert Witness Institute (EWI). He has worked hard to develop proposals for the FFLM to consider, including closer working with the EWI. We thank Prof Gall for his efforts in this field.

8. FFLM documents

- 8.1 The task of reviewing and renewing our large resource of documents is an ongoing project. We are grateful for all the efforts by Dr Remy Bahl, in his role as Assistant Academic Dean in keeping the documents up to date.
- 8.2 Many thanks to the Senior Officers, Members and subject matter experts who review and update our documents.
- 8.3 List of new / reviewed publications since May 2025 (not mentioned elsewhere):

May 2025	Pro forma: Forensic Examination - Adult Victim of Suspected Assault/Non-Accidental Injury (NAI)
August 2025	Quality Standards in Forensic Medicine
September 2025	Blood Samples in Hospital for Unconscious/Incapacitated Patients
October 2025	Recommendations for intimate sampling in pregnancy
October 2025	Recommendations on the order of ano-genital sampling when obtaining forensic specimens from complainants and suspects of sexual offences
December 2025	Recommendations on the management of detainees or prisoners who are prescribed Cannabis-based Products for Medicinal Use (CBPMs)



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January 2026	What Happens Now?
March 2026	Recommendations – Irritant Sprays: Clinical Effects and Management

- 8.4 A working group has been established to review *Detainees with Substance Use Disorders in Police Custody: Guidelines for Clinical Management* (the 'Blue Guidelines'). Prof Margaret Stark chairs the group, and several meetings have already been held to review and revise the content.
- 8.5 We have also contributed to the development of joint guidance with the Royal College of Emergency Medicine. This includes new guidance on *Dog Bites Reporting* and on *Body-Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) worn by police accompanying patients in the Emergency Department*.

9. Less Lethal Weapons Update

- 9.1 We continue to deliver our Clinician Assessment Training Course nationally. Since the last AGM, 8 courses have been delivered. Over a thousand clinicians have now attended this course, and feedback continues to be positive.

10. Consultations

- 10.1 The FFLM has responded to the following consultations since May 2025:

- Establishing the Child Protection Authority in England
- Proposed Changes to Penalties for Motoring Offences

- 10.2 The FFLM has also published responses to the following policy and review processes:

- Leng Review
- Home Office Adults at Risk in Immigration Detention policy, Rules 34 and 35

11. Other Work

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

- The Appraiser Forum continues to meet twice a year to support appraisers who often work outside of organisations with clinical governance processes.
- Established links with Wessex Appraisal Service who are kindly preparing some material for us to support both appraisers and appraisees.



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12. Conclusion

In summary, it's been another busy, fulfilling year, and I am incredibly grateful for the support and expertise of those I work alongside. A special mention to the Senior Officers for their support and commitment and to the Office staff who really are the glue who hold the FFLM together. We are incredibly lucky to have such a hard-working efficient Office team. Charlene, Tessa, Kim, Jordan, Ellie and Shelby - thank you, we'd be lost without you! Many thanks to the steady, supportive leadership of our President and the tenacity and organisation of our CEO. Finally, to anyone considering getting involved, I cannot recommend it enough!

Deryn Evans**FFFLM MRCGP DFFP DRCOG RCPATH(ME) BSc(hons)****May 2026**



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Appendix A

FFLM Webinars – April 2024 to May 2025

Webinar Date	Webinar	Presenter/s	Chair
21 May 2025	Child Safeguarding 101	Dr Jo Gifford	Dr Iain Brew
01 June 2025	Meet the President and CEO	Dr Alex Gorton and Halita Obineche	Dr Bernadette Butler
23 July 2025	Caldicott Principles and the challenges of information sharing in the criminal justice system	Dr George Fernie	Dr Alex Gorton
19 August 2025	Heart-stopping cases of Deep Vein Thrombosis. How can we safely apply NICE guidance in the Secure Estate?	Dr Alex Bunn	Dr Iain Brew
03 September 2025	Pain Management in Prison	Mr Paul New	Dr Alex Gorton
05 November 2025	The Role of the Forensic Nurse	Stacey Shelley	Emma Murphy
26 November 2025	Examination in Pregnancy	Dr Amy Hamm	Samantha Fenoulhet
28 January 2026	HCPs and the Appropriate Adult in Custody	Chris Bath	Dr Alex Gorton
23 February 2026	AI in Healthcare	Dr Roger McMillan	Dr Pallavi Bradshaw
18 March 2026	Capacity Assessments	Dr Elisabeth Alton	Prof Margaret Stark