



Dermatopathology Sub-Committee (SC) Meeting

A meeting of the Dermatopathology Sub-committee was held on Tuesday 25 November 2025
at 14:00pm – 16:00pm via MS Teams

Professor Sarah Coupland
Registrar

Minutes

Present:	Dr Mathew Bipin	Chair
	Dr Arti Bakshi	NSDEQA lead
	Dr Lynne Jamieson	Chair, Panel of Examiners
	Dr Anoud Zidan	BAD representative
	Dr Catherine Stefanato	President, British Society of Dermatology
	Dr Aliaksandra Lapukhova	RCPATH Trainees' Advisory Committee representative
In attendance:	Miss Shelaine Kissoon	Governance and Committee Services Officer (minutes)
Apologies:	Prof Adrian Bateman	Chair, Cellular Pathology SAC
Absent:	Dr Sara Edward	Co-opted (E-learning)
	Prof Sarah Coupland	RCPATH, Registrar
	Dr Paul Craig	Immediate Past Chair

- Derm.23/25 1. Welcome, declarations of conflict of interests and apologies for absence**
- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting and introductions were made.
 - 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and noted above.
 - 1.3 There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

- Derm.24/25 2. Review and approve the minutes of the previous meeting**
- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2025 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.
 - 2.2 There were no matters arising not already covered on the agenda.
 - 2.3 The action log was reviewed, and the following updates were noted:

Derm.2/25:

- a) *Diploma Examination Part 2 Completions (Based on data from the past three years' College Bulletins)*

The SC received and noted the list of individuals who have completed the Diploma in Dermatopathology, based on data from the past three years' College Bulletins. Dr Jamieson agreed to cross-reference the list with current panel members, update the spreadsheet, and provide it to the Chief Examiner. It was agreed that maintaining this list should become a standing agenda item, with names extracted from each exam bulletin every six months, ensuring eligible candidates are tracked and invited to join the panel at the appropriate time.

Action ongoing: Shelaine Kissoon



b) Circulate the updated list of Diploma holders via EQA communications

It was agreed that an email would be circulated to all EQA contacts requesting that anyone who has completed the Diploma should contact the Chair directly. This approach will ensure all Diploma holders are identified and added to the official list, while avoiding the circulation of personal information.

Action: Dr Bakshi

c) RCPATH Trainee representative

Dr Aliaksandra Lapukhova was noted as the new RCPATH trainee representative. She outlined her plans to promote pathology among trainees, raise awareness of what pathologists do, and engage with patient groups, with a particular interest in Melanoma patients in Aberdeen. The Chair highlighted the importance of patient engagement and offered to connect Dr Lapukhova with Melanoma Focus, which she welcomed. Dr Bakshi suggested encouraging trainees to explore dermatopathology and noted the benefits of involvement in EQA educational activities. Dr Lapukhova also proposed interviewing recent exam passers to provide guidance and support exam preparation, potentially publishing these insights in the College Bulletin.

Actions:

- **Chair to connect Dr Aliaksandra Lapukhova with Melanoma Focus (completed)**
- **Dr Lapukhova to interview recent dermatopathology exam passers to provide guidance for trainees, with a view to publish the insights in the College Bulletin.**
- **Shelaine Kissoon to connect Dr Lapukhova with the College Communications Team to support dissemination of the interviews and related materials. (completed)**

Derm.3/25:

a) Pathology Portal Lead

The committee discussed the future of the pathology portal following the resignation of the previous lead. It was noted that the existing team, led by Luke, is highly capable and responsive, and that an intermediary lead may no longer be necessary. The role was originally established during the initial rollout of the portal to coordinate contributions from subspecialties, but it was acknowledged that the portal has evolved significantly since then. Concerns were raised about the current level of engagement, particularly for trainee contributions, and the challenge of inspiring participation without overburdening clinicians. Suggestions were made to explore strategies for increasing engagement, such as aligning portal cases with textbook chapters or incorporating past exam cases, while ensuring appropriate governance and examiner consent. It was agreed that no new pathology portal lead would be appointed at this stage.

Derm.4/25:

a) Guidelines

The Chair provided an update on the status of the datasets, and the following was noted:

- Melanoma dataset - Author: Dr W. Merchant, resident doctor Emily Clark will act as training representative and collaborate on a chapter
- SCC/BCC dataset - Authors: Dr Richard Carr & Dr Paul Craig
- Skin and adnexal tumor dataset - Author: Dr Nick Tiffin

- Merkel Cell Carcinoma dataset - No lead is currently assigned; Dr Jamieson suggested Dr Patrick Shenjere be contacted due to his experience with rare cases. (Dr Patrick Shenjere has now agreed)

Derm.7/25:

- a) *Identify who conducts the BMS Skin Diploma reporting exams and who the examiners are.*

The SC noted a lack of transparency regarding the BMS Skin Diploma exam, including the identities of those conducting it, the examiners, and the criteria for candidates and examiners. The Chair reported that he was yet to receive responses from key contacts (Professor Bateman, Professor Coupland) to his email, and although Dr Tamara Griffiths provided some information, the overall exam structure remained unclear. Unlike other diplomas, SC members are not involved, and information on graduates and their current roles is not publicly available. BSD provided input on potential departmental impacts, and BAD was identified as an important clinical stakeholder to ensure dermatologists understand the limits of BMS reporting. The SC agreed that clarifying these details is essential for governance, accountability, and patient safety. The Chair stated he would engage with Professor Bateman and RCPATH regarding the matter.

- b) *Consider arranging a meeting with IBMS and relevant RCPATH committees to clarify roles, responsibilities, and oversight*

The SC discussed the need to clarify roles, responsibilities, and oversight of the BMS Skin Diploma with relevant bodies. Engagement with both IBMS and RCPATH committees was considered important to understand how the exam is administered, the involvement of committee members, and the governance structures in place. The SC also highlighted the importance of including clinical stakeholders, such as BAD, to ensure dermatologists are aware of the scope and limitations of BMS reporting. The Chair and members agreed that arranging a meeting with IBMS and RCPATH committees would help gather the necessary information and foster collaboration.

Derm.8/25:

- a) *Explore ways to simplify administrative and visa processes for international Fellows*

The SC discussed the challenges of recruiting international dermatopathology fellows. The main barrier identified was UK Home Office rules, particularly for any paid or stipend-based posts, which limit HR flexibility. Only certain NHS Trusts are licensed to sponsor work visas, while others are unable to do so. It was acknowledged that securing funding for independent candidates remains very difficult. Dr Stefanato and Dr Bakshi highlighted the potential to pilot fellowships at visa authorised hospitals and explore funding arrangements to facilitate international participation, though the SC recognised that these issues are largely beyond its direct control.

- b) *Develop an outline proposal for a standardised dermatopathology Fellowship curriculum*

The committee noted that the British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) had previously considered a standardised dermatopathology fellowship curriculum, intended to align with dermatologists' training and provide a framework for hospitals to advertise fellowships. It was emphasised that fellowships are intensive and the experience gained varies depending on the fellow's prior

training. There has been no recent progress on developing the curriculum, and there are currently no plans to actively pursue it.

Derm.25/25 3. Academic Activities

3.1 Diploma Examinations

Dr Jamieson provided a report on the examinations. She noted her plans to step down from her role as examiner in January 2026 and confirmed that there had been interest from potential successors, although they had not yet examined themselves. She offered to provide transitional support to the incoming examiner to ensure a smooth handover.

During her tenure, she had expanded the Examiners Panel from around six to fourteen members, improved the onboarding and observation process, and reorganised exam logistics while maintaining the content and format. She also highlighted the potential for the FRCPATH exam to move to digital delivery in the future, which could be explored by the next examiner.

It was noted that the recruitment process for a new examiner would be managed by the RCPATH Examinations Team, with Dr Jamieson and the Chair involved in reviewing applications and supporting the appointment process. She emphasised her ongoing commitment to supporting the new examiner through the transition.

Derm.26/25 4. Guidelines

4.1 Covered under Derm.24/25 above.

Derm.27/25 5. Training

5.1 Covered under Derm.24/25 above.

Derm.28/25 6. National Specialist Dermatopathology EQA (NSDEQA)

6.1 Dr Bakshi provided the following report on the EQA scheme:

- Membership had grown to 499, including more overseas members and trainees, with scope for further trainee involvement.
- The EQA Steering Committee had been restructured into an Advisory Panel for experienced members and a core working group for newer members with 3–6-year terms.
- Dr Bakshi and a few other members are due to step down next year; new posts will be advertised in due course.
- The next review meeting is on 12th December; 93% of submissions have been received and data is being collated.
- RCPATH support via NQAPP may be paused from January 2026, causing concern; DermPath continues its SOP while clarification is awaited.

Dr Lapukhova asked whether there was any seniority threshold for trainees wishing to participate. Dr Bakshi confirmed there are no restriction and trainees can join as limited members, receiving personalised scores and educational feedback without performance monitoring, and membership is free. Dr Lapukhova expressed enthusiasm and said she would share the opportunity with colleagues. Both Dr Bakshi and the Chair emphasised the educational value of the EQA and encouraged greater trainee participation.

Derm.29/25 7. Society Updates

7.1 British Association of Dermatologist (BAD)

Dr Zidan reported that she had no specific updates.

7.2 British Society for Dermatopathology (BSD)

Dr Stefanato provided an update on the BSD, noting that the society had secured £5,000 from the BAD Special Interest Fund to support the upcoming ISDP meeting. She highlighted that the meeting is still in its early stages, with securing a venue, arranging sponsorship, and promoting the event as the main priorities. The website and invitations are scheduled to go live at the end of November to generate wider engagement.

Regarding the request to contribute an 800-word letter for the BAD newsletter, Dr Stefanato noted that the situation is delicate and that it would be inappropriate to publish anything until there is greater clarity. She emphasised the goal of raising awareness among clinicians receiving biopsies but stressed the importance of timing. The Chair supported a cautious “baby steps” approach to gradually influence the exam process. The group discussed involving the new examiners in SC, potentially by co-opting them temporarily rather than granting full membership.

Action: Shelaine Kissoon to invite the new examiner, once appointed, to future SC meetings and co-opt them to the subcommittee.

Derm.30/25 8. Standing items

8.1 Formation of specialist networks for Dermatopathology reporting following the French CARADERM model

Discussion postponed to the next meeting.

8.2 Fellowships in Dermatopathology

Discussion covered under Derm.24/25 above.

8.3 Digital Pathology & Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Chair highlighted the increasing role of AI in pathology and the need for careful evaluation, noting that LLMs can provide inaccurate answers and that productivity gains in other industries have been limited. AI applications in dermatopathology, including margin measurement and pattern recognition, were discussed as supportive tools, with supervision by pathologists emphasised to avoid deskilling. The SC agreed to establish a BSD/BAD AI task force to define clinical requirements, curate a validated case repository, and guide AI development. Dr Zidan agreed to liaise with the BAD regarding representation, and the task force’s mission will be documented on the BSD website. A follow-up meeting is proposed for April 2026.

Derm.31/25 9. RCPATH and BAD joint statement on AI in dermatopathology

9.1 The SC received and noted the RCPATH and BAD joint statement on AI in dermatopathology. Members discussed relevant references, including the recent *Nature Communications* paper on HistGPT, and acknowledged the BAD representatives involved in the statement. The Chair requested that SC members review the statement and provide feedback directly to him. Following the receipt of feedback, the statement will be formally approved.

Derm.32/25 10. Any other business

None.

Derm.33/24 11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 30 April 2026 at 2pm for a duration of 2 hours.