

AGIP Alternate Route to Independent Practitioner Status

Information for Prospective Applicants

The Association of GI Physiology (AGIP) recognises that some practitioners have developed extensive clinical experience in GI Physiology without completing one of the formally approved AGIP training pathways.

This document outlines an alternative pathway to achieve AGIP Independent Practitioner Status for experienced practitioners who can demonstrate competence equivalent to that expected from standard training routes.

This pathway provides a structured and rigorous assessment process to ensure applicants meet the professional standards required for independent practice in GI Physiology.

It is important to note that this pathway does not replace AGIP-approved training routes such as the Scientist Training Programme (STP) or Advanced Specialist Practitioner (ASP) pathway. Instead, it provides a defensible mechanism to recognise equivalence based on demonstrable competence, objective assessment, and alignment with recognised professional standards.

Applications must be submitted electronically to either the AGIP Education Secretary or Accreditation Officer.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the following eligibility criteria in their application.

Justification for Non-Participation in Standard Training Pathways

Applicants must provide a written explanation outlining:

- Why they have not undertaken an AGIP-approved training pathway.
- Why they do not intend to pursue one of these routes.

Applications will not proceed if a satisfactory explanation is not provided.

Academic and Professional Baseline

Applicants must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Registration or professional standing as a Clinical Scientist (or equivalent) in another relevant healthcare science discipline.

or

- A Master's degree (MSc) or higher in a relevant or appropriately transferable subject.

The assessor panel will determine whether the applicant's academic background provides an appropriate scientific and clinical foundation for GI Physiology practice.

Clinical Experience Requirements

Applicants must demonstrate:

- A minimum of 18 months clinical experience per specialty applied for (e.g. Upper GI and/or Lower GI) in a diagnostic GI Physiology setting.
- Evidence that the experience has been regular, sustained, and clinically meaningful, rather than occasional or ad hoc.
- Evidence of sufficient training provided by an individual suitably qualified to practice in GI Physiology independently

During this period, at least 20% of a full-time equivalent (1.0 WTE) role per specialty must have been dedicated to clinically relevant work in that specialty.

This experience must reflect ongoing clinical involvement sufficient to support independent practice.

Supervisor Endorsement

Applicants must provide a formal letter of endorsement from an appropriate clinical supervisor or senior practitioner. The individual providing the endorsement should be suitably placed within the clinical service and possess sufficient expertise and understanding of GI Physiology investigations to appropriately assess the applicant's competence.

The letter must confirm that the applicant's competence has been supervised and assessed within the clinical environment, and that they meet the standards expected for independent practice across the full scope of GI Physiology.

The endorsement must confirm competence in the following areas:

- Clinical history taking and patient assessment
- Communication with patients
- Safe clinical practice
- Technical competence in performing investigations
- Analysis and interpretation of studies
- Recognition of artefacts
- Understanding of scientific and physiological principles underpinning GI physiology investigations
- Appropriate clinical decision-making and escalation within scope of practice

The supervisor must also provide evidence of their own suitability to assess competence which may include:

- Relevant qualifications
- Accreditation or recognised equivalence
- Demonstrable expertise in the specialty area

If the supervisor cannot demonstrate appropriate credentials to assess competence, the application will not proceed.

Portfolio Submission

Applicants must submit a structured portfolio demonstrating competence across the relevant domains of practice.

The portfolio must be mapped to the appropriate components of the STP Curriculum Library for the specialty applied for.

Applicants can find the relevant curriculum components in the STP Curriculum Library below.

STP Curriculum Library: <https://curriculumlibrary.nshcs.org.uk/stp/specialty/SPS3-1-26/>

End Point Assessment (EPA)

Applicants must successfully complete an ASP-style End Point Assessment (EPA).

The EPA must be passed on the first attempt and will assess the full scope of independent practice.

Assessment may include evaluation of:

- Clinical history taking
- Patient communication
- Study interpretation
- Recognition of artefacts
- Clinical reasoning
- Safe decision-making in clinical practice

Where appropriate, applicants may also be required to undertake a practical peer assessment to confirm that investigations are performed to the expected professional standard.

Failure to pass the EPA will result in an unsuccessful application.

Unsuccessful Applications

If an applicant is unable to provide sufficient evidence of competence to satisfy the assessor panel, the application will be deemed unsuccessful.

If the applicant intends to continue practising independently within a GI Physiology role, they will be required to undertake one of the AGIP-approved training pathways to obtain Independent Practitioner Status.

Failure to comply with this requirement may result in action from the professional body, which may include (but is not limited to) communication with:

- The organisation's Lead Healthcare Scientist
- The organisation's Chief Medical Officer
- The applicant's body of professional registration

This communication may address concerns regarding practice outside recognised professional standards.

Appeals Process

Assessment outcomes are considered final. However, appeals may be considered in cases of:

- Demonstrable procedural irregularity
- Evidence of bias
- Administrative error

Appeals will **not** be accepted based on disagreement with the assessors' professional or clinical judgement.

All appeals will be reviewed by the full AGIP committee to ensure a fair and balanced decision.

Contact Information

For further information about the AGIP Alternate Route to Independent Practitioner Status, prospective applicants may contact:

AGIP Education Secretary

John Gallagher

john.galagher6@nhs.net

AGIP Accreditation Officer

Tanya Miller

Tanya.Miller@ouh.nhs.uk

General Queries

agip@bsg.org.uk