

Association of Gastrointestinal Physiologists [AGIP]



Members Handbook

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1 Constitution

The Association of Gastrointestinal Physiologists (AGIP) is an Associate group within the British Society of Gastroenterology, inaugurated in 1991.

The constitution of AGIP is governed by BSG guidelines, and states that a council be formed from members of the association to work together to enhance the role and standing of their association within the medical field.

1.1 Council Structure

The Council should ideally comprise a maximum of twelve members. Ten elected by the membership and two medically qualified members nominated by the council: these must be full members of the BSG and, preferably, one surgical and one medical.

The council will have officers with specific roles and terms of office (which may be extended with the full agreement of the AGIP council):-

Chairperson	Three Years
Research Secretary	Three Years
Honorary Treasurer	Three Years
Membership Secretary	Three Years
Education Secretary	Three Years
Accreditation Officer	Three Years
Symposium Secretary	Three Years
Publication (Inc. NewWave) Secretary	Three Years
Minute Secretary	Three Years
IQIPS Officer	Three Years

In the absence of the Chairman the council meeting may be convened by an appropriate designate. A quorum of five council members must be present for a meeting to be convened.

Information on AGIP Council Members is published on the AGIP web page of the BSG.

1.2 Council Meetings

The Council is to meet a minimum of three times per year plus the AGM. Elected council members must attend a minimum of two of the four meetings each year to retain their seat. In the event of non-attendance the member may submit an explanatory letter requesting the council to consider retention of their seat. In addition, an individual member may be asked to leave the Council if a simple majority of the other members support a vote of no confidence in the individual's commitment to the aims of the Association.

1.3 Annual General Meeting Quorum

An annual general meeting will take place if at least nine AGIP members plus 5 Council members or their appointee are present.

1.4 Sub-Committees

Sub-committees or working parties will be formed to discuss and resolve specific issues relating to the Association. Once resolution of the issue has been reached the sub-committee may be dissolved. Any appropriate member of the Association may be requested to serve on a sub-committee. There will be no time restriction applied to serving on a sub-committee but both the Council and the other members of the sub-committee will scrutinise an individual's role on the sub-committee for continuing suitability. At least one member of each sub-committee must also be a member of the AGIP Council. The Council Chairperson will be an ex-officio member of each sub-committee and a full written report must be provided to the AGIP council.

1.5 Bursaries

AGIP members will be eligible to apply for bursaries from the Council to fund expenses related to attendance at relevant scientific meetings or training courses. Bursaries will be dependent on funds being available and will be conferred by approval of the AGIP Council. Currently the bursaries available are:

'Margaret Marples Bursary' (max of £300) to attend the BSG annual meeting

'European Bursary' (max of £750) to attend the UEG meeting

'Graeme Duthie International Award' (max of £1500) to attend the DDW meeting

Preference would be given to those AGIP members who have an abstract accepted to the above mentioned meetings and conditional on submitting a scientific report to the 'Publication (Inc. NewWave) Secretary' of AGIP.

1.6 Honorary President

The position is held by an international expert in the field at the invitation of the AGIP council. The post has no fixed term. The role of the Honorary President is to promote the Association within Gastroenterology in the United Kingdom and further afield.

1.7 Membership Criteria

Application for Membership is through the BSG, as such membership of the BSG is a pre-requirement of AGIP. For Allied Health Professionals, Clinical GI Physiologists, clinical and non-Clinical Scientists and GI Physiology students enrolled on an appropriate training programme (STP/ASSP) the most appropriate route to AGIP membership is via the BSG's **AHP & Scientist Members** (Associate Membership) of the BSG which states that:

Membership is intended for those who have a long-term commitment to some aspect of gastrointestinal practice or research, but who are ineligible for other forms of membership. It is accordingly appropriate for a range of Allied Health Professionals and clinical and non-clinical scientists (dietitians, physiology technicians, radiographers and other non-medically qualified individuals). Intending associate members should have been in a relevant post for at least one year and/or be enrolled on an appropriate training programme *, and their commitment should be demonstrated by regular sessional contributions to gastrointestinal practice or research amounting to a least two and a half days per week.

* i.e. for 'AGIP' it would be the GI Physiology 'Scientist Training Programme' (STP) or GI Physiology 'Accredited Specialist Scientific Practice (ASSP) See page 14, Training Pathway for details.

'Associate' Membership – AGIP

Individuals interested in 'Associate' Membership of AGIP must first fulfill the criteria to join the BSG either as stipulated above (correct at time of producing the AGIP Handbook, May 2018) for Allied Health Professionals or be a Clinician who is actively involved in physiological measurements. Once you have joined the BSG at the appropriate level of membership you will then need to forward your CV to the Membership Secretary at the BSG for her to forward to the AGIP council to assess suitability.

In order to qualify for membership of AGIP, the following criteria should be fulfilled:-

- Applicants must be healthcare professionals with physiological, nursing, technical or scientific backgrounds or on a recognised training pathway.
- Currently employed by an institution responsible for healthcare or for the delivery of education or engaged in research and development.
- A minimum of one year's experience in GI Investigations.
- A continuing commitment to the investigation and measurement of GI function.
- Members of AGIP undertaking a career break of up to 2 years may retain membership but must inform the AGIP Council. On return to work Accredited Independent Healthcare Professionals will be required to submit evidence of competencies to retain status.

1.8 Retired

Associate members of the BSG will not be eligible for continued membership upon retirement. (See limitations in BSG handbook). However retired members may be considered for Honorary Associate Membership of the BSG.

2 Statement on the Role of an Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional in GI Physiology

Healthcare Professionals in GI Physiology provide a physiological assessment service in Gastroenterology. Investigative techniques of an invasive nature are used to investigate possible abnormalities or disease processes throughout the GI Tract. The role of the Healthcare Professional is to be responsible for performing all aspects of the required procedures and contributing to the overall clinical management of the patients. The majority of the investigations involve invasive techniques. An Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional in GI Physiology will provide expert advice on selection and reporting of the investigation for optimum diagnostic outcome.

The investigations are undertaken for the diagnosis of myopathic, neuropathic or functional disorders of the GI tract. This encompasses the following:-

- Motor dysfunction of the GI Tract.
- Sensory dysfunction of the GI Tract.
- Duodeno-gastro oesophageal reflux disease.
- Detection of microbial disorders.
- Pelvic floor dysfunction.

Therapeutic techniques are undertaken in pelvic floor disorders.

The Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional will provide a range of services, which will include:-

- The planning and performance of a wide range of investigations for the diagnosis and assessment of GI disease.
- Analysis and technical reporting of the data measurements from the diagnostic or therapeutic procedures undertaken.
- The provision of a safe working/clinical environment.
- Maintenance of records for all procedures for audit purposes.
- Direct management of implanted devices.
- Evaluation, procurement, calibration and quality control procedures for all equipment used within the GI physiological environment.
- Specialist education of other health care professionals.
- Involvement in research and development in the field of gastroenterology.
- Involvement in education, training and provision of continuing professional development of GI Physiologists.
- Advice and professional opinion on the appropriateness of investigations.
- Contribute to the overall clinical management of the patient.

3 AGIP Code of Professional Conduct

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this code of practice is to provide guidance for the expected standard of professional conduct for Healthcare Professionals in Gastrointestinal Physiology. All Healthcare Professionals must have regard to the physical and psychological needs of patients and their carers and have regard to all adults with mental incapacity and to children. This code is designed to provide advice to Healthcare Professionals and is for guidance only and should not be seen as a definitive statement.

3.2 Objective

To provide workable guidelines for the Healthcare Professional and so enable good working practice with respect to:-

- Relationships and responsibilities to patients.
- Professional integrity.
- Professional relationships and responsibilities.
- Maintenance of professional standards.
- Adherence to good clinical and scientific practice.

3.3 Statement of Standard to be Achieved

3.3.1 Relationships and responsibilities to patients

- Confidentiality of patient information must be maintained. In exceptional circumstance, where divulgence of information is required, the consent of the patient must be obtained where possible.
- The safety, privacy, autonomy and dignity of the patient must be respected at all times and informed consent must be obtained prior to any procedure undertaken. This should be written consent for all invasive procedures. The Healthcare Professional must accept that the patient may withdraw their consent for the procedure at any time.

3.3.2 Professional integrity

- The privileged relationship between the Healthcare Professional and the patient and carer must not be abused.
- The Healthcare Professional must work to the highest standard of integrity and must adhere to national guidelines for equal opportunities.
- The Healthcare Professional must not work when under the influence of any substances that may influence their performance.
- The Healthcare Professional must not accept gifts or favours that may be offered in exchange for preferential management.

3.3.3 Professional relationships and responsibilities

- Both public and patient interest must be served, ensuring that the good standard and reputation of the profession is upheld.
- Loyalty to colleagues must not override the Healthcare Professional's responsibility to report any conduct not conducive with correct practice to their line manager.

3.3.4 Maintenance of professional standards

- Procedures should only be undertaken on patients according to established criteria.
- Healthcare Professionals must ensure safe standard of practice at all times.
- Where the Healthcare Professional is involved in research it is their responsibility to ensure that the project has been approved by the appropriate body and/or ethics committee and that the work is undertaken in a manner which will not jeopardise the subject's welfare. All results must be presented without prejudice and all research should adhere to the most recent Declaration of Helsinki principles.
- Professional development must be maintained throughout the working career and where appropriate the Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional should be actively involved in the development of students and other health care professionals.
- It is the responsibility of the Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional to seek suitable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to facilitate personal development and to submit evidence of this to the AGIP Accreditation Officer as part of the ongoing AGIP CPD process
- Healthcare Professionals in GI Physiology are legally accountable for any action undertaken as part of their professional duties.
- Healthcare Professionals in GI Physiology must not allow themselves to be misrepresented as other qualified Healthcare Professionals.

3.3.5 Adherence to good clinical and scientific practice

- A formal portfolio should be maintained and should include academic and clinical experiential history and current activity.
- The portfolio should have evidence to demonstrate good clinical and scientific practice and cover the domains of:-
 - Professional Practice
 - Scientific Practice
 - Clinical Practice
 - Research and development and innovation
 - Clinical Leadership
- The contents of the portfolio should meet the standards required by national regulatory bodies and should be available for review if required.

3.4 AGIP Disciplinary Procedures

A complaint or notification of misconduct arising from certain judicial proceedings or from contravention of the Professional Code of Conduct received by the AGIP Council will be considered and may be referred on to the appropriate body. This may be the Employing Authority, the BSG Council or the relevant regulatory/registration body. A substantiated complaint may result in suspension or termination of AGIP membership.

Judicial proceedings include: -

- Proven fraud or dishonesty
- Conviction for any other criminal offence
- Proven professional negligence.

Non Judicial proceedings include: -

- Expelled from membership of a professional or registration body on grounds of misconduct.

A sub-committee will be convened to address individual breaches of the Code of Conduct and will consist of the Chair or an appropriate appointee, a full member of the BSG, and at least 2 other members of the AGIP Council.

4 Criteria for Entry to the Accreditation Register

4.1 Accredited Independent Membership

AGIP registration as an 'Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional' in GI Physiology will be given to those Healthcare Professionals who:

- Are associate members of AGIP (BSG)
- Are State Registered where appropriate
- Have a minimum of 3 year experience in GI Physiology
- Have followed an approved training pathway and obtained appropriate academic qualifications and professional competencies defined in section 5 'training pathways' (page 14).
- Have a formal portfolio that evidences practice conforming to the highest standards of good clinical and scientific practice (see 3.3.5 above)
- Members whose primary qualification and training was undertaken outside of the United Kingdom may apply directly to the Council for consideration for Accreditation

To retain registration as an 'Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional in GI Physiology' members must:

- Demonstrate a commitment to continuing professional development. This must be evidenced by attendance at appropriate continuing professional education. **This should be a minimum of 10 hours** per annum of which 5 hours may be obtained from mandatory in-house training and 5 hours external training / courses (the AGIP symposium including the AGM fulfills 2½ hours of external CPD, attendance at 1 full day of the BSG annual conference fulfills all 5 hours of external CPD required per annum)
- Practitioners must reflect on any development activity undertaken. A separate Reflective Practice Account should be submitted for each of the six (3 per year) reports required for submission
- Each Reflective Practice Account must be signed and dated by the appropriate Line manager (or equivalent senior colleague) and the applicant, or they will not be accepted
- Give a brief list of any planned CPD for the year to come, there is no need to list any more than five objectives
- Appropriate CPD forms must be returned to the Accreditation Officer (on time or you could be subjected to a late submission fee, payable to the BSG)
- Maintain a portfolio of CPD which should be available for scrutiny
- Comply with codes of professional conduct
- Maintain Registration status where appropriate
- Independent Healthcare Professionals who develop and expand into new modalities, as part of a personal development programme, must obtain appropriate training
- Submit appropriate evidence of having fulfilled the requirements of CPD every other year before the end of April to the AGIP Accreditation Officer
- Independent Healthcare Professionals whose role now includes a high percentage of management, specialism or teaching must ensure that competencies in direct patient testing are retained at a level that ensures

compliance with safety and diagnostic testing criteria.

Application for '**Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional in GI Physiology**' membership should be made using Form 1

4.2 Fellowship Status

Fellowship status will be available to Accredited Independent Healthcare Professionals who:

- Have a minimum of 10 years' experience in GI Physiology.
- Have taken an active role in the Association.
- Are considered by the AGIP Council to have made an outstanding contribution to GI Physiology.

Fellowship status will also be available to those associate members with no clinical experience who have been employed in academic research or development or teaching and who fulfill the criteria for fellowship. Those Healthcare Professionals who have attained the status of Fellows would be recognised as having the appropriate experience to give expert advice in their field of practice.

Such individuals must be proposed by two Fellows of AGIP, scrutinised by the Accreditation Officer and ratified by the full Council. Fellows may use the designatory letters FAGIP.

Application for '**Fellowship of AGIP**' should be made using Form 2

5 Training Pathways

AGIP recognises the Scientist Training Programme for Gastrointestinal Physiology and Urodynamic Science (Modernising Scientific Careers) as a suitable training pathway for Gastrointestinal Physiologists.

AGIP also recognises the new Accredited Specialist Scientific Practice (ASSP) route open to individuals working in the arena of GI Physiology in conjunction with The National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) and the relevant University. Individual modules within this programme are available to healthcare professionals as part of CPD in either 'Upper GI' and/or 'Lower GI' Physiology

Members given Independent Healthcare Professional status in GI Physiology will have successfully completed an AGIP recognised training pathway.

AGIP recognises the Higher Specialist Scientist Training Programme (Modernising Scientific Careers) as suitable training pathway for Consultant Clinical Scientist in Gastrointestinal Physiology.

6 Criteria for Unit Accreditation

AGIP recognises the processes for unit accreditation provided by the Improving Quality in Physiological Services (IQIPS) programme and the assessment process provided by the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) for units involved in the formal training of Clinical Scientists. All units should work towards the standards set out in the above mentioned schemes.

7 Application Forms

Please note that these application forms must be filled in to initiate the process of scrutiny. Additional detailed information may then be requested from the applicant.

Membership of the British Society of Gastroenterology (available online: <https://www.bsg.org.uk/join-online.html>)

The following application forms can be downloaded from the Associations web page:

- Form 1:** AGIP registration as an Accredited Independent Healthcare Professional in GI Physiology
- Form 2:** Fellowship of AGIP
- Form 3:** Nomination for consideration to become an AGIP committee member
- Form 4:** Continuing Professional Development