



# The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

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## Document for the Annual General Meeting:

**Submitted/sponsored by:** Professor Suzanne Mason, Treasurer

**Topic:** Merging Trainee Administration Fee (TAF) with Membership Subscriptions

**Summary:** Following approval from Executive and Council, this paper explains the implementation plan to merge the Trainee Administration Fee and E-Portfolio charges into Membership Subscriptions. The approval of the Annual General Meeting is sought for the proposed merging of the membership and training fees.

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## **Background**

For many years there has been confusion for many of our trainees when it comes to paying a College Membership Fee and a Trainee Administration Fee. This is not helped by the fact that the College financial year runs with the calendar whilst the training year starts in August. To make this more straightforward for the trainees and lower cost and simpler to administer it has been proposed that we should merge the two fees.

Initial discussions took place last year to consider the options and viability of merging the Trainee Administration Fee (TAF) into membership subscriptions. This principle was supported by the Executive Committee and Council but additional time was required to finalise the proposal in order to seek the approval of members at the Annual General Meeting.

Council discussed the award of the post-nominals for candidates following the new examination system in November 2015. From August 2018, trainees will no longer be required to sit the MRCEM OSCE (Part C) and therefore will not be awarded Membership by Examination unless they voluntarily opt to sit the MRCEM clinical examination (OSCE).

Council agreed that the creation of a flat, associate membership rate for trainees for the duration of their training was reflective of the new examination structure. Council also noted that it was highly desirable to trainees, and frequently requested, for the payment of the Trainee Administration Fee (TAF) to be combined with membership subscriptions.

Council agreed that incorporating TAF with membership subscriptions could be achieved on a cost-neutral basis to trainees (so that they would not pay more over the six year training programme than with the current system) and to the College (to ensure the proposal did not create a deficit in subscription income necessitating an increase in subscriptions for this or other membership categories).

## **Proposal**

A short life working group (SLWG) consisting of the Chief Executive, Director of Education, Membership & IT Manager and the Training Manager have met in recent months to review and finalise the proposal for merging the TAF with subscriptions. The aim has been to balance any change so that is fair to the trainees whilst practical to implement. The principle that the Fellows continue to subsidise the costs of training administration has been preserved in these proposals.

Consideration has been given to international trainees where the College has an existing agreement with the relevant training authority (Ireland and Iceland). The College also notes that there is likely to remain a group of non-trainees who wish to access the e-portfolio but propose to remove the financial incentive not to become a member.

The proposed subscription structure is as follows:

Category	Current Costs	Proposed Subs	Proposed Category
UK Trainees	£282 average	£293 (inc subs + eportfolio + EMJ)	Associate Member (Training)
Irish Trainees	£100	£130 (incs subs but not EMJ)	Associate Member (Approved Overseas Training)
Icelandic Trainees	£80 sub + £50	£130 (incs subs but not EMJ)	
ACP	£59 sub + £50	£109 (inc subs + eportfolio)	Associate Member (ACP)
Trainee (non-member)	£300	£400	E-portfolio Only
Associate non-trainee	£100	£293	E-portfolio Only

### Transitional arrangements

The TAF of £90 is collected annually in August whilst membership subscriptions cover the calendar year and are collected in February. Trainees are already paying their TAF for the 2016/17 training year. It is therefore proposed to phase out the payment of the TAF by revising the membership subscriptions in two stages.

The proposed subscriptions take into account that trainees have already paid TAF for a 12 month period: 5 months in 2016 (August-December) and 7 months in 2017 (January-July). The pro-rata rate for 7 months being £52.50, which is deducted from the 2017 subscriptions. Allowances have also been incorporated for approved overseas trainees from Ireland (who have already paid a £100 e-portfolio fee for 2016/17) and from Iceland (who have already paid £50 e-portfolio fee).

The proposed 2017 and 2018 subscriptions are as follows:

Category	2017 Subs	2018 Subs
UK Trainees	£240.50	£293
Irish Trainees	£71.70	£130
Icelandic Trainees	£100.85	£130
ACP	£79.85	£109

### Additional benefits to trainees

By incorporating the TAF into membership subscriptions the entire sum is payable by direct debit and trainees remain eligible to obtain tax relief on their subscription. Furthermore, by including the EMJ as a member benefit for this category, trainees will have access to back issue copies of the EMJ online, from the point of joining the College.

The revised membership subscription structure for trainees is also more appropriately aligned to the new FRC EM examination model whereby trainees

remain associate members for the majority of their training whilst progressing towards obtaining Fellowship by Examination.

Less than full time trainees were previously assured that they would not pay more than 6 years of TAF. The phasing out of TAF adheres to this promise. Any member earning less than £25,000 per annum remains eligible to claim a 50% reduction in their subscriptions via the Membership Office.

### **Recommendations and Required Actions**

1. Members and Fellows are asked to approve the proposed subscription structure for 2017 and 2018 at the Annual General Meeting on 20 September 2016.

Professor Suzanne Mason  
**Treasurer**

13 September 2016