

A Course for the Expert Role in Specimen Dissection

Remote Learning - Wakefield Modular Programme 2026

Further information and application forms for any of our courses are available from our Administration Team:

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A Course for the Expert Role in Specimen Dissection

This Expert Role Course in Specimen Dissection is suitable for biomedical scientists who are currently or intend to train as histological tissue specimen dissectors, and particularly those undertaking the RCPATH/IBMS Diploma of expert practice in Histological Dissection. It can be taken in full over a one-year period or as individual one or two-day modules. **The course is IBMS accredited.**

The course is provided jointly by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with the North of England Pathology and Screening Education Centre. Guest speakers include nationwide Histopathologists and Biomedical Scientists. The training is delivered via Microsoft Teams. The course has run in this format for the past three years and is proving a good option for those attending. There is also now an opportunity to attend the centre to view past portfolios and bring your portfolio to share and gain ideas.

The course covers the theoretical knowledge required for the Diploma of Expert Practice in Histological Dissection examination and includes many opportunities for self-assessment. You will also gain practical knowledge to support your everyday practice as a specimen dissector. In addition, you will have clear evidence for your own Trust and those overseeing governance such as UKAS that you have received appropriate training, giving reassurance of safe practice. The course also provides the opportunity to meet and discuss local and nationwide issues with your colleagues who are going through the same process via the dedicated WhatsApp group.

NB All materials provided on the course have previously or are currently available on the IBMS website and we, as a training centre, play no role in the setting of the exam questions. The information provided is meant as guidance. This is delivered in conjunction with people who have sat the exam and/or are training staff within their current roles to become dissectors.

What are the course objectives?

The Expert Role Course in Specimen Dissection provides:

- The theoretical base required to undertake dissection practice and for the examination part of the Diploma, taught by specialists in their own field.
- Anatomical Nomenclature, Pathological Processes, Surgical Techniques, Clinical Governance and General Principles of dissection cover all aspects of the mandatory modules of the Diploma over a two-day course.
- Specialist modules run as two day courses through the year and will include; Gastrointestinal and Hepatobiliary, Gynaecological, Breast, Skin, Osteoarticular and Soft Tissues, Genito-urathology, Endocrine and Head and Neck.
- Modules on examination and portfolio skills and techniques
- Discussion with other colleagues who have undertaken the Specimen Dissection Training
- Advice for the collection of relevant material for the portfolio

Two Day Specialist Modules

The course can be accessed at a pace that suits your training, and the specialist modules covered are: Gastrointestinal and Hepatobiliary, Gynaecological, Breast, Skin, Osteoarticular and Soft Tissues, Genitourinary pathology, Exam and Portfolio sessions, Endocrine and Head and Neck.

The course runs successfully as a 7-month course for those training towards the Diploma.

People who are new to their role or those who wish to develop their practice over a longer time period may benefit from taking modules as needed, including spreading attendance over 2 or 3-years attending modules that are pertinent to their current practice.

Course Educational Methods

Lectures:

Each day, the students attend sessions designed around the Diploma curriculum on each module, with a taught element followed by questions and discussion.

Group Discussions:

Expert Role BMS and Histopathologists describe their own practice and present approaches for students to determine what may be best practice at their own hospital training base. This is more difficult when the sessions run over Microsoft Teams, to overcome this, a WhatsApp group will be set up for all attendees who wish to join. This is not compulsory.

Interactive Sessions:

Students will use these throughout the course, where applicable, to test their knowledge and practical skills. Example cases will be reviewed with the faculty and students to discuss practical approaches to dissection. This may include the use of apps for Turning Point or Kahoot.

Introductory Modules:

It is not mandatory that individuals wishing to access single day modules attend the first two days, but it is strongly recommended. These days will cover Portfolio compilation and mandatory modules: Anatomical Nomenclature, Pathological Processes, General principles of dissection, surgical techniques and Clinical Governance issues in addition to information around collection of numbers and collection of case details for reports.

Portfolio Preparation and Exam Preparation Days:

Participants, in conjunction with faculty, will study exam techniques and some previous exam questions.

Revision days:

These aim to provide a consolidation of the knowledge you have gained throughout your attendance at the course. They are to be used in conjunction with the optional modules and not as an alternative. The revision modules will not cover each module in sufficient detail to allow you to pass the exam without any other input. They are designed to complement the teaching and help you to consolidate learning from within the other modules.

Training dates 2026

Month	Date	AM	PM
January	21 st	Introduction to Expert Role Practice. <i>R. Purcell</i> Portfolio aspects <i>C. Leng</i> General Principles of Dissection <i>J. Morris</i>	
	22 nd	Clinical Governance <i>R. Purcell</i>	Anatomical Nomenclature <i>J. Stephenson</i> Surgical Procedures <i>H. Hawrot</i>
	27 th	Pathological Terminology & Processes <i>P. Bennett</i>	

Single Day Specialist Modules 2026

Month	Date	AM	PM
February	25 th	Portfolio Preparation, Presentation & Assessment and exam questions <i>S. Iles</i>	Head and Neck <i>A. Al-Omari</i>
February	26 th	Endocrine (minus pancreas) <i>F. Tahir</i>	Breast Pathology <i>R. Millican-Slater</i>
March	18 th	Portfolio viewing – onsite NEPSEC <i>R. Purcell</i>	
April	22 nd	Skin <i>T. Palmer</i>	Skin <i>P. Ellery</i>
April	23 rd	Placental Pathology <i>J. Stahlschmidt</i>	Gynaecological Pathology <i>S. Osborn</i>
May	13 th	Liver <i>A. Cratchley</i> Gastrointestinal pathology <i>M. Rourke</i>	Gastrointestinal pathology <i>M. Rourke</i>
May	14 th	Uro pathology <i>S. Bhatteai and Jo-an Roulson</i>	Osteoarticular and soft tissues <i>P. Bennett</i>
July	22 nd & 23 rd	Revision Days <i>P. Bennett</i>	

Faculty members

General and compulsory modules:

Dr H Hawrot, Leeds
Dr P Bennett, Dewsbury
Dr J Stephenson, Leeds
Mrs J Morris, Dewsbury
Mrs C Leng, Sheffield
Mrs R Purcell, Calderdale

**Portfolio Preparation,
Presentation & Assessment
Exam Questions**

Ms S Iles, London

Endocrine, Head and Neck

Dr F Tahir, Dr A Al-Omari, Sheffield

Skin

Dr T Palmer, Leeds and **Dr P Ellery**, Leeds

Gastrointestinal and hepatobiliary

Ms M Rourke, Hull
Dr A Cratchley, Leeds

Osteoarticular and soft tissues

Dr P Bennett, Dewsbury

Gynaecological

Dr S Osborn, Calderdale

Placental Pathology

Dr J. Stahlschmidt, Leeds

Breast

Dr R. Millican-Slater, Leeds

Genito-uropathology

Dr S Bhattarai, Leeds
Dr J Roulson, Leeds

Revision

Dr P Bennett, Dewsbury

Course Directors

Dr Selina Bhattarai

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Dr Paul Bennett

Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Dr Rebecca Millican-Slater

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Course Facilitator

Mrs Rachael Purcell

Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust

Information on the facilities and how to find us can be downloaded from the training centre website;

www.nepsec.org.uk

www.nepsec.org.uk

Director: Dr P Kitsanta MD, FRCPath, MBA, PGCert