



CONSTITUTION OF GASOC CIC

Global Anaesthesia, Surgery and Obstetric Collaboration CIC

Our vision – *To Collaborate, Innovate & Unite for Global Surgery*



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1 History

GASOC (Global Anaesthesia, Surgery and Obstetric Collaboration) was originally established in 2015 to encourage resident/training doctors and specialty doctors to engage responsibly and impactfully in global surgery. The organisation's creation was inspired by the launch of the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery in London and the repeated question from trainees present at the meeting of 'how can I get involved?'

Initially, GASOC operated as an unregistered association and a non-profit organisation acting as an entry-level platform to signpost trainees and specialty doctors to information and resources that will enable them to further their knowledge and experience in this field. In 2022, as GASOC continued to grow both financially and in scale of activity it delivered, the 2022 Committee voted to incorporate GASOC as a Community Interest Company (CIC) and register in the UK. This incorporation was activated in 2023. The organisation consists of the GASOC Committee, Board of Directors and Advisory Panel.

The organisation's goal is to increase trainee engagement in global surgery activity during their training and to facilitate career-long leadership commitment post qualification.

Throughout this document, when the term "Global Surgery" is used, it incorporates all surgical specialities as well as Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anaesthesia and associated specialities.



2 Rules

2.1 Core Aims

Advocacy of responsible, impactful engagement of trainees within global surgery research, education and fieldwork.

2.2 Strategy

Collaborate - Share medical knowledge and experience with colleagues to advocate for improvement in surgical outcomes in low & middle-income countries.

Innovate - Generate new ideas to address global surgery issues.

Unite - Partnership with like-minded organisations in global surgery advocacy, involvement in capacity building in LMICs in terms of research and education. Bidirectional participation.

2.3 GASOC CIC Board of Directors

GASOC CIC has a board of founding directors listed on Companies House. The directors are legally responsible for submitting annual financial accounts and ensuring registration information remains up to date. Day-to-day running and activity of the organisation remains the responsibility of the elected committee. Past Presidents are invited to join the board of directors if they wish after their term. Financial decisions including raising and spending funds need to be discussed at a minimum of quarterly basis with the Chief Financial Officer. The Board of Directors should also be invited to the committee's AGM. The Executive Team (see section 3.2) on the Committee is responsible for updating the Board of Directors on GASOC activity.

2.4 Asset Lock

As stated in the GASOC CIC incorporation documentation, any profits raised through GASOC business must be utilised solely for the strategy mission outlined in this constitution. This is what is known as the Asset Lock.



3 The GASOC Committee

3.1 The committee and members

The organisation allows training surgeons, anaesthetists and obstetricians/gynaecologists as well as foundation doctors and medical students to collaborate as members. We recognise that improvement in global surgery requires a multidisciplinary approach and so GASOC welcomes other medical specialties, researchers and students as members regardless of their level of training. GASOC represents individuals with various levels of experience, from those already engaged in time out of training to pursue global surgery projects to those who are entirely new to the subject. The organisation actively promotes and demonstrates equality, diversity and inclusivity in its work. It also believes that universal health coverage is a fundamental human right of every individual (based on the WHO Constitution of 1948).

The committee aims to meet virtually every month. Any communication in between these times is carried out on our WhatsApp group or via email.

3.2 Committee roles

Executive Team roles

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer

This group will have responsibility in attending at least one Board of Directors Meeting per year, reporting GASOC activities to the Board and to be a liaison point for committee and Board of Directors

Core committee roles:

Surgical representative, Anaesthetic representative, Obstetrics and Gynaecology representative, Communications representative

Additional committee roles which will be determined by the committee as the need arises (and advertised ad hoc): Website Coordinator, Events representative, Research representative, International specialty representative, VRiMS representative, Innovations and Technology representative

Committee members have the right to leave the committee at any point with a minimum of four weeks' notice given to the President.



3.3 Minimum commitment

All successfully elected committee members are expected to meet the following minimum agreed commitments of GASOC:

1. Read the Generic Handover Document and take handover from outgoing committee member ideally within 4 weeks
2. Carry out your respective committee role as per the outlined handover you receive and communicate with team members relevant to your role
3. Attend all committee meetings when possible. If unable to attend send apology secretary as much notice as possible (ideally 48hrs, in extreme circumstances, post-meeting apology) and read minutes if meeting missed
4. Vote in GASOC recruitment rounds
5. Contribute to GASOC Annual Conference (can be virtually for non-UK residents)
6. Keep up to date with GASOC Committee WhatsApp conversation

We understand that GASOC activities and commitments come at a personal cost (time) to our committee members. We welcome any committee member to let the Executive Team know at any point if they are overwhelmed with work/life commitments and feel unable to contribute to GASOC.

If a committee member is noticed to not be meeting the above minimum requirements, this concern should be escalated to the Executive Team (or Advisory Panel, Board of Directors, contactable via Secretary). It is then the Executive Team's responsibility to support the committee member (which may include: exploring current workload, pastoral issues, checking understanding of role, checking adequacy of handover, personal circumstance, potential for leave of absence, further support required).

If the committee member continues to not meet the above minimum requirements despite such support, the Executive Team has the right to ask the committee member to step down, and the role will be readvertised for recruitment.



3.4 Election to committee positions

Each committee member is elected via a vote by the existing committee after applying for an open position with a CV and a statement of intent for the position.

Committee positions last for 2 years as standard (except for vice/president, see section 3.7). The application will be open to anyone, regardless of membership status. Any pre-existing knowledge of the applicant must be shared with other committee members. If an applicant is unsuccessful for the role they have applied for then the committee can offer them an application for, or appointment to, one of the other committee roles to which they think they will be more suited.

In certain circumstances, if committee members would like to swap roles, this can happen at the discretion of the committee after a meeting to agree on the decision. However, this cannot extend the overall tenure of the committee member.

The committee has the overall authority over voting for the President, Vice-President, new committee members guided by the Secretary. If the committee has a concern regarding the leadership, then a separate vote will be considered in an extraordinary meeting.

3.5 Extension of positions

All committee members have the option to extend their role to a 3rd year, after which the position will be re-advertised. The same committee member would not be eligible for re-application if there are other applicants to the post.

Committee members may choose to apply for a different post, in which case, the 2 year tenure will apply again.

3.6 Voting process

Members of the committee will vote on which applicant will be best for the role. More than half of the committee will be required to cast their votes for the voting process to be valid (this includes recruitment to any role).



3.7 President and Vice President

The Vice President will be voted in annually (usually just prior to AGM), with a natural progression of Vice President to the role of President at the AGM. The role of President will then be held for one year, followed by a year as 'Immediate Past President' in a supportive role of the incoming President.

In the first instance, Vice President applications will be open to existing committee members only, to ensure leadership by someone with working knowledge of the organisation.

Applications for Vice President will be made with a CV and statement of suitability and proposed activity within the role.

The role of President and Vice-President is to

- Strategically network and advance the work of GASOC
- Represent GASOC at relevant trainee and Royal College events/committees
- Guide the committee in achieving the core aims of GASOC
- Ensure the engagement of all committee members
- Maintain the integrity and reputation of the organisation as a responsible, risk-averse organisation

The President and Vice-President are accountable to the committee, the Advisory Panel and the Board of Directors; and will act as the main point of contact between GASOC and other organisations. They can also be approached by and should handle any concerns of general members of GASOC. If the committee has concerns about the President/Vice-President, they should contact them directly. If unsatisfied, they should then liaise with another member of the Executive Team, or a member of the Advisory Panel or the Board of Directors.

In the event of equivocal voting results (i.e a draw), the Advisory Panel will be consulted for further advice and votes.

In the unusual event that the Vice President does not want to progress to President, they should inform the other Executive Team members at least 1 month prior to AGM to allow a recruitment process for a new President from amongst the current committee prior to AGM. This includes an option for the existing President to run for a second term (maximum 2 years) alongside other committee members.

In the extraordinary event that no existing committee member applies for the role of Vice President or President, an emergency committee meeting will be held to inform existing committee members and a round of advertisement will commence following this.

Consideration will also be given to past committee members who wish to apply for the role of President in this second round.



3.8 Elect Role

Committee members have the option to recruit an ‘Elect Representative (Rep)’ for a maximum period of 6-months. The role of the ‘Elect Representative’ involves working within the committee alongside other committee members, with the support and advice of the sitting Rep. The Elect Rep will have voting powers within the committee during this 6-month period, but should work collegiately with the sitting Rep to discuss any votes i.e one vote shared between the two. The main aim is to aid smooth handover and transition within the team.

An Elect Rep would be expected to transition to a full Rep within the same committee role after the 6-month period (without the requirement for further vetting or selection), alternatively, their term may end after 6 months without extension if they are deemed unsuitable for the full Rep role by the sitting Rep, the Executive Team and relevant specialty roles, or at discretion of the Elect Rep.

3.9 Leave of absence

Committee members have the option to apply for leave from their role at the discretion of the Executive Team i.e. for maternity/ paternity/ parental/ adoption/ compassionate leave / mental health. We ask committee members to give sufficient notice when feasible (i.e. 1-2 months), and to organise cover of their roles and responsibilities by other committee members whenever possible. The length of leave is flexible based on the committee member’s individual needs (up to a year), and the remaining GASOC committee members will endeavour to facilitate this option whenever possible. There is an option to extend the overall term/tenure of committee members depending on their personal circumstances.

In circumstances of high workload or extended leave by a committee member, there is an option for the committee to recruit (an) additional committee member(s) at the discretion of the GASOC executive. The additional committee member could be an existing or past committee member who is familiar with the role and is able to fill in for the predetermined period of time. Alternative options include highly recommended individuals or an entirely new recruit. Any committee members on leave still have the right/are encouraged to vote in GASOC decisions/recruitment.



3.10 Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel is made up of practitioners experienced in global surgery, anaesthesia and obstetrics & gynaecology. Their role is to assist the GASOC committee in achieving the ideals set out in the Constitution and assist in maintaining institutional memory. The Panel may consist of previous committee members and past presidents as well as several senior global surgery/anaesthetic/obstetric and gynaecology leaders.

The Advisory Panel member will be formally invited by the Executive Team member. All committee members are welcome to put forward suggestions for suitable candidates to join the Advisory Panel. Members on the Advisory Panel have the option to step down at any point and should contact the Executive Team to inform them.

The Advisory Panel should meet once a year over teleconference with the sitting GASOC Executive Team and other committee members as required, to hear an update on current and proposed activities. Their advice would then be sought on the following:

1. Are the projects in line with GASOC's core aims and objectives?
2. Are the organisation's plans overly ambitious and if so, would they benefit from oversight by another organisation, e.g. educational committee or registered institution?
3. Have proposed projects been previously tried by other individuals or groups and not succeeded?
4. Any significant spending of the organisation's funds (over £500 not on conference or events) or travel grants/bursaries/prizes awarded would also be presented here
5. Future plans/outlook/vision for the organisation to be presented to the Advisory Panel

Individual members of the Advisory Panel would also be willing to be contacted for advice in between these meetings. However, this would not be compulsory and would be on an 'opt-in' basis by individuals.. If any member of the Advisory Panel were to see information on GASOC activities on social media or via the newsletter that they were concerned was not in the organisation's best interests, they could call an extraordinary meeting to discuss this with the GASOC Executive Team..



4 Output

Journal Clubs:

GASOC hosts a bi-monthly journal club.. These events can be run either solely by the GASOC or in collaboration with another organisation. The journal clubs are advertised online and via email to allow members and interested non-members to attend. It is held virtually or in hybrid format to enable multi-way discussions between all attendees.

Annual Conference:

The GASOC Committee holds hybrid annual conferences which have previously attracted between 100-200 attendees and attempts to target themes which are relevant to the three represented specialties.

Collaboration:

GASOC will work in conjunction with other organisations to support and contribute to other projects, disseminate their work and represent trainee interests. Specifically, GASOC will work with international advocacy organisations and Royal Colleges to advance global surgery advocacy work.

5 Subscriptions

There is currently no subscription charge to become a member of GASOC. An annual subscription charge may be introduced as the organisation expands.

6 Meeting of members

The organisation shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) (which has historically been held towards the end of the year, following the GASOC Annual Conference, but the timing will be at the discretion of the committee) to present and discuss subjects on the agenda and annual accounts. This is often when the newly appointed President/Vice-President shall be announced for the following year.



7 Alterations to the Constitution

The Annual General Meeting, or any extraordinary meeting, must be attended by at least 50% of the committee. Failing this, any decisions made shall be voided.

Committee members who are unable to attend can vote by-proxy and voting power can be delegated to another representative on the committee. This should be made known to the Secretary at least 48h in advance.

Changes to the Constitution must be agreed by at least two-thirds of total votes.

8 Dissolution

The organisation may be wound up at any time if agreed by the two-thirds majority as per point 7 above. In the event of winding up, any assets remaining after all debts have been paid shall be given to other organisations with similar aims.

Constitution reviewed:

13th December 2021, 21st November 2022, 23rd March 2023, 17th November 2023, 27th November 2024

GASOC Committee 2024