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You are part of a small and select community of Orthoptists – when you are a member of BIOS you are helping to ensure that your professional development thrives, your managerial skills are honed, and you are protected against the financial risks of your clinical practice.

Professional development and insurance services are two of the obvious reasons to join BIOS. Also key is the chance to network and establish contacts across the whole spectrum of orthoptic activities including research, education, international and a whole host of specialist interests like stroke, glaucoma & retinal disease, specific learning difficulties, e-health and low vision. And new for 2016 is the Neuro Orthoptics/Neuro Ophthalmology Special Interest Group.

You will have access to a range of useful resources for professional and managerial best practice; and you can (if you wish) become involved with events and causes at national and regional level. Above all, by joining you will help to ensure that your distinctive profession is represented on both the national and local stage, continues to thrive and evolve, and is properly and uniquely valued as an integral part of eye health care teams.

1. BIOS is the only professional body purely for Orthoptists in Great Britain and Ireland.
2. BIOS lobbies and speaks on your behalf, to ensure that the profession is better known and understood.
3. BIOS membership includes insurance uniquely tailored to the specific requirements of orthoptists - and bought at group rates.
4. BIOS provides information and guidance on all the topics that you will encounter in your career as an orthoptist.
5. BIOS will support you in your practice and at your workplace with employment relations advice and has a network of British Orthoptic Society Trade Union Representatives.
6. BIOS has a tailored in-house CPD system which is regularly updated.
Welcome to membership of the British & Irish Orthoptic Society 2016

We are delighted that you have joined BIOS for 2016 and, we hope, much longer than that! We aim to provide you with a range of services which have a human face to them and also can be accessed 24/7 in e-form at your convenience. You said in the last membership survey that you would like the BIOS website to be refreshed and this was done in 2015 along with new microsites created for patients and commissioners.

Showcased on the BIOS website is all the work that has been and is being undertaken on your behalf and items produced for the benefit and development of the profession. This includes:

- Current and back issues of Parallel Vision – the monthly magazine for Orthoptists – and the BIOS Journal (an annual publication – now with its own site http://bioj.org/index.php/bioj)
- Regional and country network pages with resources and updates from your Trustees
- The CPD section and other resources including a Knowledge base with Standards & Guidelines, Research abstracts and Trade Union E-learning packages
- News posts created regularly with live and current issues listed and explained for you and links to Facebook and Twitter feeds.

We have a tried and tested system of support, communication and administration which provides the best value for money for you. The vast majority of officers of the Society are volunteers and undertake this work in addition to their day jobs. Only the Chair and Vice Chair are seconded and their employers are reimbursed for their time commitment to BIOS and BOSTU roles.

Those who volunteer include Trustees (Southern, Northern, Midlands & East, Scotland, Wales, NI and ROI), SIG leads as well as Education, Research, International, European and Journal leads. The local BOSTU reps provide an invaluable local resource especially during any NHS change. We are always looking for those keen individuals to undertake projects and roles either for the profession or for the Trade Union so please do contact us and get involved where you can. Those in the Republic of Ireland are not members of the Trade Union and we reflect this is reduced membership fees. We hope you enjoy being a member of BIOS and BOSTU and we look forward to hearing from you soon.
Membership categories & claiming tax relief

To be eligible for membership (other than student membership) an applicant of BIOS is required to be ‘qualified’ (that is, to hold a qualification recognised by the legal regulating body - currently the Health & Care Professions Council in the United Kingdom and CORU, when available, in the Republic of Ireland).

**Full membership** A qualified person who is actively engaged in the practice of orthoptics in a clinical, research, educational or management capacity and who is resident in the UK and I.

**Associate membership (orthoptic technicians and assistants)** An assistant or technician working under the supervision of a qualified orthoptist.

**Overseas membership** A qualified person who is non-resident in the UK and I.

**Non practising membership** A qualified person who is not currently practising as an orthoptist.

**Newly qualified membership** A category available only to newly qualified orthoptics graduates and which covers the period from graduation until the 31 December of the same year.

**Student membership** A person registered on a course of study in orthoptics currently recognised by the Health and Care Professions Council and any qualified person registered for a period of full time study or research leading to a higher degree.

**Retired membership** A person who is no longer practising as an orthoptist and is of pensionable age.

**Academic staff membership** A qualified person employed as a teacher or lecturer in the subject of orthoptics.

**Non tax-paying part-timers** A qualified person whose earnings from orthoptics employment will not exceed his or her personal allowance for the relevant tax year.
### Claiming tax relief on your membership fee

If you are in paid employment you can claim tax relief on your BIOS membership fee via your tax return or by application to your tax office.

There are three different ways of claiming tax relief for your membership fee:

- If you receive a tax return, you can claim tax relief by detailing the amount paid and to whom. Relief will be granted for the tax year in which the payment was made.
- You can write to your own tax office. It is important that you include your National Insurance (NI) number, the amount, name of payee and date of payment. You can obtain a Form P358 from your local tax enquiry office and complete it as above (quoting your NI number). You should then send it to your tax office and relief should be given.
- If you have not been claiming tax relief, you can ask HMRC to backdate your claim for relief, again by letter to your tax office. Please note that tax relief is not likely to be available to retired members and other members whose membership fees cannot be considered professional expenses.

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<th>Non-practising</th>
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The Society is a fully virtual organisation, with all its component parts in all corners of the UK & I and connected by email, phone, teleconferences, Skype and face to face meetings. We use a tool which runs the website, membership database, events system and allows payment via PayPal. This helps to cut down on unnecessary systems or bureaucracy and focuses resources on member services.

We have a Chair, supported by a vice chair, these officers, all part-time seconded roles, campaign on your behalf at a professional level (e.g. Clinical Council for Eye Health Commissioning & Allied Health Professions Federation) and the BOSTU advisor and other volunteers represent us on union committees (like the NHS Pay Review Body, for example).

There are 7 other Trustees with local networks (Southern, Midlands & East, Northern, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland & Republic of Ireland) and local committees, a Research lead, SIG leads, IOA & OCE representatives, a BIOJ Editor and a Leads of Orthoptic Profession (LOOP) lead. All are listed on the BIOS website and have a dedicated page. Each year there may be paid opportunities to complete important work for BIOS e.g. Exemptions and Curriculum. Officers of the Society work at national and local level to highlight the contribution the profession makes to eye health care and to include orthoptists in the planning and development of relevant policy.

We draw on a pool of orthoptic experts who have different specialist areas and co-opt in a “virtual” way dipping in as and when needed for projects, policy papers, changes to practice etc. Leads in Education, Professional Development, Research, Journal, International and Special Interest Group areas all work hard to provide expert and timely input.

Local Networks - The Society is currently divided geographically into 7 areas – In England - Midlands & East, Northern, Southern and then Scotland, Wales, NI & ROI. Usually a member joins the area network where he or she works, but members may attend clinical meetings and in-service training in any area. Each organises its own clinical meetings and is responsible, in rotation, for organising the BIOS Scientific Conference. Local meetings are held at least once a year. Local networks exist within different areas and BIOS lists details of these.

Don’t miss out on the, often free, local networking opportunities that open up to you!
You will see that there are public and members only sections of the website www.orthoptics.org.uk and microsites for patients and commissioners. You can log in using your preferred email address and a password. Your preferred email address is the one that receives your BIOS emails – so please keep it up to date and change it if you want to receive emails via a different account. When registering for events – please always use the same preferred email address – otherwise the system will think you are a new contact and will not recognise you.

Logging into Your Profile
To log in, you need to set your password: the easiest way is to click on Forgot Password, which appears on every page just to the right of the Login button (in the top right corner of the BIOS window) and following the instructions there - be sure to use your preferred email address when asked, or the system will not recognize you as a member.

The system is now largely self-service: if you want to change any part of your profile (including your preferred email) you can do so by logging in and then clicking on View Profile (top right corner of the BIOS window, below your name) and choosing Edit on the page that is then displayed.
How to join a Special Interest Group (SIG)

If you have interests in particular areas and want to develop your career and CPD please opt-in to join the Special Interest Group or Groups of your choice. SIG members will get advance notice of events and priority booking rights.

Joining Groups

You can change almost anything in your profile. Log into the website.

- In the top right corner of the BIOS window, you will see your name; just below that is a link, View Profile - click on it.
- Immediately below the page heading (My Profile) you will see a button marked Edit Profile - click on it to open it.
- Make your changes - and remember to save them before logging out.

Other things you may want to do in My Profile

- Join Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Update your email address and postal address every time these change

BIOS volunteers organised and ran 8 Special Interest Group days in 2015

- 66 attended the Vision Screening SIG day
- 60 attended the Stroke & Neuro Rehab SIG day
- 55 went to the Low Vision SIG study day (also open to Rehab Workers for the Visually Impaired)
- 36 took part in the Glaucoma & Retinal Disease event
Which membership grades are covered by BIOS insurance?
All BIOS members are covered by insurance, except overseas and retired members. This includes those working in the NHS and/or private practice within competency levels and the range of listed extended roles ratified by the BIOS Professional Development Committee.

Why does BIOS provide insurance cover, when many members have their employer’s insurance to fall back on?
Your employer’s interests and your personal interests are not identical. We are advised that it is possible, in cases where personal negligence plays a part, for the employer (or the employer’s insurers) to involve the employee personally either in defending the claim or as the target of a counter-claim.

BIOS cover applies to all your orthoptic activities for the whole time that you are a member, whatever your employment status, whatever form your practice takes, and whether or not those activities are related to your employment. This will not necessarily be true of insurance supplied by any employer. If you engage in any form of private practice, you MUST have your own insurance. The BIOS insurance covers you in private practice as long as you are working within your competencies. The support supplied by BIOS is not limited to professional indemnity insurance. Medical Malpractice and Public Liability cover are also included and essential; the sums paid in compensation are potentially large.
What is the advantage of having insurance through BIOS?
BIOS negotiates on behalf of all members (more than 1,200 people). This allows it to secure the best rates and range of services for members when you most need it.

What cover do I have?
- Medical & Professional Indemnity (which includes Medical Malpractice, Good Samaritan Acts, Professional Indemnity, Libel and Slander, Loss of Documents)
- Public Liability

Who is covered by the policies?
Any qualified member of the BIOS (or Student or Associate member acting under supervision of a qualified Orthoptist or Medical Practitioner) resident in the UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands or Republic of Ireland. The cover allows all Orthoptic work within the scope of practice to be undertaken outside of Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland for up to 180 days in any 12 month period, subject to restrictions in Australia, USA and Canada. Membership of BIOS and HCPC registration, if applicable, must be held at the time of treatment.

Are there any geographical limitations on cover?
Yes. None of the policies offer any cover for activities in USA, Canada, and Australia.

Where can I find more detailed information?
Our brokers' dedicated BIOS page http://graybrook.co.uk/bios-members

What should I do if I think I may need to claim?
You have a duty to notify insurers via BIOS as soon as you become aware of a claim, or of an adverse incident which may give rise to a claim. Failure to do so may prejudice your rights under the policy.

In the first instance, contact BIOS - email bios@orthoptics.org.uk or telephone +44 (0)1353 66 55 41 with brief details of the incident.
The British Orthoptic Society (BOS) Trade Union is registered as a separate trade union for Full and Non Tax Paying BIOS members (except for members in the Republic of Ireland) and provides you with:

- Local representation and advice on work matters from local BOSTU representatives, including grievance and disciplinary issues, terms and conditions of employment and changes in the workplace, for example.
- National representation by BOSTU council members;
- Professional advice from the BOSTU advisor when there are changes in the workplace, terms & conditions of employment and employer changes;
- Good advice on what to do if you find things are changing in your place of work; this is much needed in the current climate.
- A local representative - accredited by the BOS Trade Union and represents members within your hospital on local staff side groups. If they are able, she/he should be your first port of call to discuss any employment relations matters and/or changes in the workplace or to terms and conditions. Otherwise the rep or the member should contact the BIOS office direct.

We campaign on your behalf and take part in negotiations each year for pay, pensions and conditions. As a separate trade union we have a seat at most key national meetings and conferences in order to better represent you. We have all the benefits of being a part of the Trades Union Council and voting rights at TUC congress each year.

Employment relations advice is additionally provided by a separate organization, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. In some cases employment relations issues overlap with those relating to BIOS professional indemnity insurance. In order to ensure that members are given the most appropriate and comprehensive advice, please contact the BIOS office.

Phone: 01353 665541 or email: bios@orthoptics.org.uk

Each year, on-line training and face to face training is offered to ensure that TU reps are up to date/refreshed and can offer local support to BOSTU members when they need it.

**Over 100 members**

were in touch with us during 2015 for telephone, email and face-to-face support. We helped them deal with restructures, bullying & harassment, capability, sickness absence and down-banding issues. 15 of these were escalated and representation formally given by a case officer.
Continuing professional development

The Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) defines CPD as, “A range of learning activities through which health professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure they retain their capacity to practise safely, effectively and legally within their evolving scope of practice.” In addition to being linked to your HCPC registration and BIOS membership, CPD is an essential part of your professional practice.

Whenever a profession renews its registration, usually every 2 years, the HCPC randomly audits 2.5 per cent of that profession. Those registrants who are chosen for audit must submit a CPD profile to show how it meets a certain standard.

The BIOS has its own online CPD diary system to help you to meet your own CPD goals and the HCPC’s standards.

During 2015,

- **29** events were run for BIOS members in the UK & Ireland
- **14%** of BIOS members attended the 2-day BIOS Scientific Conference in Birmingham
- **72** Heads/Leads attended in May and **69** in November targeting areas of interest for this group
- **57** attended BIOS Clinical Tutors Courses in London, Hull & Leeds
Summary of BIOS benefits & facts

- Online CPD diary - record your professional development in one easy to use system to help ensure you are ready for HCPC (or CORU) audits.
- A wide range of conferences, events and study days organised by BIOS at a substantially reduced rate – see BIOS EVENTS on the website.
- A large network of like-minded professionals: over 97% of all orthoptists in the UK are BIOS members.
- Advice and Guidance available including online publications, professional competency standards and BIOS regional and professional representatives waiting to hear from you.
- Leaflets for careers events and patient information is also available to you.
- BIOS Parallel Vision online magazine, annual BIOS Journal and regular updates to help keep you in touch with your profession.
- We organise a Scientific Conference in three out of every four years for members and the fourth year is the International Orthoptic Association (IOA) Conference.
- Insurance and Trade Union membership when you need it.
- AHP Rewards – specially negotiated offers and deals for BIOS members – see more on page 17.

Each Special Interest Group (SIG) organises one study day a year for members to attend – please register with your preferred SIG or SIGs in your BIOS profile. These are: Glaucoma & Retinal Disease, Specific Learning Difficulties, Stroke & Neuro Rehab, Low Vision, Special Educational Needs, Vision Screening, Exemptions, E-Health, Neuro-Orthoptics/Neuro-Ophthalmology SIG and Private Practice.

In addition, there are courses each year to aid you with your professional development, these include Clinical Tutors courses and IVT workshops. We also have a group for Heads of Departments/Leads of the Orthoptic Profession to join, share experiences and network – and organise a Managers’ Forum every year for this group, usually in the Autumn.

Find out more from www.orthoptics.org.uk and click EVENTS.
Useful information

About BIOS
Founded in 1937, BIOS is a professional and educational body for the UK and Republic of Ireland; it is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Most of its members live and work in the British Isles, with the remainder spread throughout the world.
Orthoptics is a small profession of fewer than 2,000 in the British Isles; its all-graduate workforce comes from two universities, Liverpool and Sheffield with a third university, Glasgow Caledonian, producing new Orthoptists soon.

Professional meetings, courses and conferences are organised by the British & Irish Orthoptic Society and it is a founder member of the International Orthoptic Association. Membership is open to all Orthoptists holding the Diploma of the British and Irish Orthoptic Society or a recognised degree in orthoptics from the UK, European Union or worldwide.

Subscriptions are recommended by the Trustees and Council and approved by the Society at its Annual General Meeting. Subscriptions are due by 31st December each year for the following year. BIOS is affiliated to the Allied Health Professionals Federation, a grouping of 12 bodies together representing more than 130,000 health professionals in the UK. It also shares many members with the TUC. You can access the website via: http://www.ahpf.org.uk.

National and World Eye Health Events
Each country often has a day or week of Eye Health Awareness. For example, the Wales Eye Health Day (pictured) and the National Eye Health Week. And each year the IOA promotes world orthoptic day - a chance to celebrate being a part of the global orthoptic community. http://www.internationalorthoptics.org

BIOS members are encouraged to celebrate their profession and organise local events to mark these opportunities to highlight the work of orthoptists and the importance of eye health.

WORLD ORTHOPTIC DAY
JUNE 6, 2016
About the International Orthoptic Association
As a member of BIOS you are automatically enrolled as a member of the IOA. Founded in 1967, the IOA is a world organisation of professional orthoptic bodies and has approx. 20,000 individual members. The website features an array of information from around the world including features, contacts, event information, news, views and other items of interest.

About the BIOS Awards
Started in 2013, these awards are to recognise exceptional service to the profession and to the Society. The BIOS & BOSTU Service awards have a number of categories; these are:
• Automatic - for those having served on regional Committees, as SIG Leads, as Honorary Officers etc
• Region/country awards - requiring nomination for exceptional service to members and the profession including for Trade Union service
• Fellowship awards - a CV and form to be submitted for those demonstrating a wide-ranging career across countries and has influenced policy and practice in the profession

The awards are often given at AGM and Scientific Conference each year.
AHP rewards has been put together to save you time and money, whether at work or in your own leisure time. AHP Rewards is a discount scheme negotiated by a group of Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF) members, of which the BIOS is one.

It is available to you as a benefit of your BIOS membership.

The scheme gives you access to a wide range of products and services at reduced prices. Offers cover:

- lifestyle
- advice
- travel
- insurance
- business services

If you have questions about any aspect of the scheme, please call the AHP Rewards hotline on 08450 756 281.

PLEASE NOTE: You must always access the scheme’s website from a special page on the BIOS website open to members only: entering by any other route is blocked, to prevent non-members from accessing it.
Useful information

**Chairman & Trustee**
Rowena McNamara  -  rowena.mcnamara@nhs.net

**Vice Chair & Trustee**
(Professional Development, Education and SIGs)
Alison Stanley  -  a.stanley@blueyonder.co.uk

**BIOS Business Managers**
(Parallel Vision, Website, Membership, Employment Relations, Trades Union and Events Enquiries)
Anita & Hamish McCallum  -  bios@orthoptics.org.uk

**Full BIOS Trustee list (incorporating Finance and General Purpose Committee)**
Chair, British & Irish Orthoptic Society  -  Rowena McNamara
Vice Chair, British & Irish Orthoptic Society  -  Alison Stanley
Northern Trustee (England) - Veronica Greenwood
Southern Trustee (England) - Joy White & Chloe Lafferty, Deputy
Midlands & East Trustee (England) - Julie Clarke
Scottish Trustee  -  Vacant
Wales Trustee  -  Vacant and Suzanne Martin, Deputy
Northern Ireland Trustee  -  Jane Hanley
Republic of Ireland Trustee  -  Gillian O’Mullane

**Non-voting members**
Lesley-Anne Baxter  -  BIOS & BOSTU Advisor
Helen Davis, Chair  -  Education Committee
Julie Cartledge  -  Lead/Chair, Leads of Orthoptic Profession (LOOP)

David Newsham  -  BIOJ Editor and BIOS IOA Representative
Anna Horwood  -  Research Director & Curriculum/ Education Project Lead
Anne Bjerre  -  QCE Representative
Jill Carlton  -  Shadow BIOJ Editor

**Special Interest Group / Forum Leads**
Glaucoma & Retinal Disease:
Lorraine North  -  lorraine.north@fph-tr.nhs.uk and Michael Harmsworth
Low vision:
Kate Witkiss  -  kate.witkiss@wwl.nhs.uk and Nana Theodorou
Stroke and Neuro rehab:
Claire Howard  -  claire.howard@nhs.net
Specific Learning Difficulties:
Annette Dillon  -  annettelli@nhs.net and Pam Bowen  -  pamela.bowen@wwl.nhs.uk
Special Educational Needs:
Annette Dillon  -  annettelli@nhs.net and Pam Bowen  -  pamela.bowen@wwl.nhs.uk
Vision Screening:
Helen Griffiths  -  h.griffiths@sheffield.ac.uk
Sarah Shea  -  sarah.shea@wales.nhs.uk
Private Practice forum:
Liz Tomlin  -  liz.tomlin@gsst.nhs.uk
Helen Collett  -  helen@privateorthoptist.com
E-Health SIG Group:
Michelle Wood  -  michelle.wood@nhs.net and Carla Eccleston  -  carla.eccleston@nhs.net
Neuro orthoptics/neuro ophthalmology:
Joanne Adeoye  -  j.adeoye@liverpool.ac.uk
Exemptions project lead:
Claire Saha  -  claire.saha@nhs.net

Follow us and join in on Twitter – Latest news and updates from us and our followers! https://orthoptics-org.wildapricot.org/twitter

Let us know what’s happening on Facebook and hear about events happening of interest to you https://www.facebook.com/BritishIrishOrthopticSociety

https://www.facebook.com/BOSTTradeUnion