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## Ref.: EFAS - Routes to Eligibility for the EFAS Examination

Dear Presidents,

The **EFAS Certificate in Trauma and Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Surgery** represents the highest standard of excellence in foot and ankle surgery in Europe. The certificate has been developed and is organised by the **European Foot and Ankle Society (EFAS)** with the aim of promoting excellence in patient care, education, and professional development within the specialty.

The certification programme is **open to certified orthopaedic surgeons and trauma surgeons** who demonstrate a **specific and sustained interest in foot and ankle surgery**.

By decision of the EFAS Council, the EFAS Certificate is **also open to non-EFAS members and international applicants**, provided that they fulfil **the same training, experience, and eligibility criteria** as EFAS members. Applicants accepted through this pathway **agree to formally apply for official EFAS membership** as part of the certification process.

The EFAS Certificate is fully aligned with the requirements and principles of the **Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes (UEMS)**. Adherence to these criteria is essential to safeguard the integrity of the EFAS Certificate as a protected quality label and to ensure its recognition at the European level.

The EFAS Certification Programme evaluates not only theoretical knowledge and clinical competence, but also continuous professional development, academic engagement, and structured progression within foot and ankle surgery. Final eligibility and admission to the examination remain under the authority of the EFAS Certification Committee.

### Routes to Eligibility for the EFAS Examination

#### 1. Traditional Route (as published on [EFAS.net](http://EFAS.net))

The traditional route is intended for experienced orthopaedic surgeons and trauma surgeons with established clinical practice in foot and ankle surgery. Candidates must fulfil the established EFAS eligibility criteria, including:

- Completion of a recognised orthopaedic or trauma surgery training programme,
- A **minimum of five years of professional activity as a certified orthopaedic or trauma surgeon with a specific interest and dedicated clinical practice in foot and ankle surgery**,
- Submission of a **validated surgical logbook** documenting a broad spectrum of foot and ankle procedures,
- Participation in relevant educational activities and sufficient independent clinical exposure within the specialty,
- A **minimum of two peer-reviewed scientific publications** in the field of foot and ankle surgery.

Following approval of eligibility by the EFAS Certification Committee, candidates may proceed to the formal EFAS examination, consisting of a written component and an oral (viva) examination.

#### 2. Curriculum-Based Route (effective from 2026)

In addition to the traditional route, a **second, curriculum-based route** has been developed. This route has been **formally approved by the EFAS Council** and will **commence in 2026**. It is designed to prospectively follow candidates within a structured educational framework, enabling progressive learning, early EFAS engagement, and transparent competency development over time. This pathway is particularly suited to **younger orthopaedic and trauma surgeons with a dedicated interest in foot and ankle surgery**.

The requirements for the curriculum-based route include:

- Participation in a **minimum of five EFAS-recognised cadaveric courses**, completed over a **minimum period of two years**.



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EFAS cadaveric courses are organised according to **five recurring core modules**, all of which are **mandatory** and must be successfully completed:

- Forefoot
- Hindfoot
- Ankle osteoarthritis
- Sports-related foot and ankle pathology
- Minimally invasive foot and ankle surgery

These five core modules are **complemented by biannually organised specialised topics**, allowing candidates to broaden, update, and deepen their surgical exposure in focused areas of foot and ankle surgery.

EFAS-recognised cadaveric courses include EFAS-organised courses as well as externally organised cadaveric courses that have received formal EFAS recognition. **A maximum of two externally organised cadaveric courses covering identical or overlapping topics may be accepted**, provided that these courses are **organised exclusively by EFAS National Membership Societies**. Such externally organised cadaveric courses will be **evaluated jointly by the EFAS Certification Committee and the relevant National Membership Societies**. Approved courses will be **published on the EFAS website** to ensure transparency and uniform application of recognition criteria.

**Repetition of identical cadaveric modules shall not be considered eligible and will not be counted toward the mandatory requirements.** Each completed module must represent a distinct educational component ensuring adequate diversity, progression, and comprehensive surgical exposure.

- Attendance at **EFAS Instructional Courses and EFAS Congresses**.
- **Provision of a structured surgical logbook**, documenting **specific foot and ankle procedures**, which will be reviewed by the EFAS Certification Committee as part of the overall assessment of clinical exposure and progression.
- Participation in the **EFAS Fellowship Programme is not mandatory** within the curriculum-based route. However, **successful completion of an EFAS Fellowship constitutes a strong supporting factor** in the evaluation of a candidate's clinical maturity, technical skills, and readiness for the EFAS examination.
- Submission of a **formal written letter of recommendation**, preferably from an EFAS Fellowship Supervisor or another recognised senior foot and ankle surgeon, confirming that the candidate demonstrates appropriate surgical skills, clinical judgement, and professional conduct consistent with EFAS standards.

Entry into the curriculum-based route is possible **from the moment a candidate participates in an EFAS-recognised cadaveric course**, at which point formal curriculum-based monitoring begins. Applicants must clearly indicate the route through which they apply. Transition between routes may be considered on an individual basis but requires formal review and approval by the EFAS Certification Committee.

Through these two complementary routes, EFAS combines flexibility with strict quality assurance, thereby reinforcing the EFAS Certificate as a **leading European quality standard in trauma and orthopaedic foot and ankle surgery**.

With kind regards,

Dr. Manfred Thomas  
EFAS President

Dr Kris Buedts  
EFAS Past President