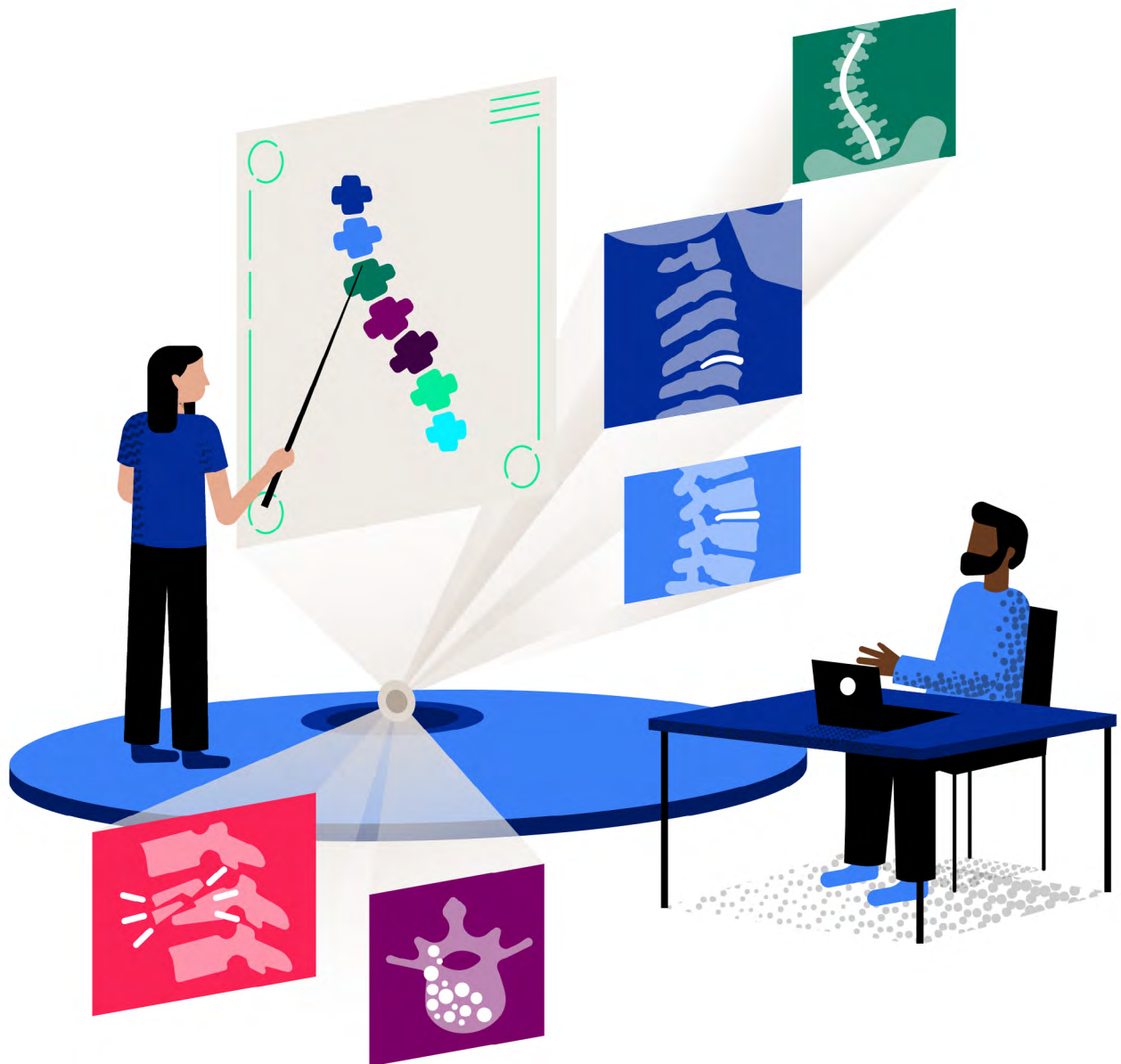


Global Spine Diploma Program





Welcome to the first global diploma program for spine surgery

The Global Spine Diploma Program is the first globally developed, systematic training for spine surgeons. It creates a new worldwide standard, helping orthopedic and neurosurgeons advance their knowledge and skills across multiple spinal pathologies. Its syllabus describes the curriculum content, educational methods, and resources, and supports participants to achieve defined learning objectives.

Boost your career...

With the Global Spine Diploma Program by AO Spine, you participate in the worldwide advancement of spinal care, and acquire vast knowledge in spine surgery, conveyed by trained expert faculty.

The program is CME accredited by UEMS-EACCME®.

...conveniently and at your own pace

The outstanding online learning environment and the clearly defined syllabus assure efficient learning, permitting you to get the most out of your time. In the module's weekly schedule, learning mainly takes place in the form of self-study and asynchronous activities. This gives you maximum flexibility.



**Curriculum-
based**



**Efficient and
flexible learning**



**Program duration
12 months**



**International expert faculty
with regular live sessions**



**Value for
money**



**CME accredited by
UEMS-EACCME®**

Learn with a clear learning pathway

The AO Spine curriculum

The syllabus of the Global Spine Diploma Program follows the AO Spine curriculum, which forms the basis for all educational AO Spine events and programs. The curriculum-based approach ensures targeted development of cognitive, procedural, nontechnical, and nonoperative skills.

Up-to-date content

Our contributors review and align the AO Spine curriculum with current challenges in global spine surgery on a regular basis. The 2020 update introduced a new approach based on Entrustable Professional Activities (EPA). With this line of action, we ensure the curriculum remains fit for purpose as a framework for continuing professional development (CPD) in the surgical management of spinal disorders.

EPA: from competencies to competence

EPAs describe the units of day-to-day work of spine surgeons, and link them to the specific competencies required to perform this work. They convey broader skills beyond medical and surgical expertise, with each EPA defined by key competencies.



“Competence is the broader holistic view of professional practice that encompasses critical thinking, judgement, and experience when choosing which competencies to apply to a given clinical situation.”

De Cossart and Fish 2005

The domains of pathology

Trauma

Degeneration

Pediatric deformity

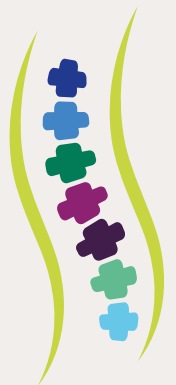
Adult deformity

Oncology

Infection

Spinal fragility fractures

**Inflammatory
spondyloarthropathy**



The core EPAs

1

Make a
diagnosis

4

Collaborate with
multidisciplinary teams

7

Participate in quality
improvement activities

2

Formulate a
treatment plan

5

Perform an appropriate
procedure when indicated

3

Explain treatment
options to patients

6

Review patient progress and
prevent or manage complication

We know your time is precious

The Global Spine Diploma Program follows the ultimate syllabus to expand your professional training. Flexible learning is assured through an attractive mix of different learning formats, self-study, and synchronous events. The amount of time required is approximately 3–5 hours weekly, including self-study time. Total program duration is 12 months.

Flexible and state-of-the-art learning

The Moodle-based learning management system features state-of-the-art multimedia-based learning tools for efficient self-study at an individual pace. In parallel, participants attend instructor-led training sessions and join informal forum discussions. Small groups of participants are supervised by a faculty-trained expert.

Exhaustive and up-to-date content

The modular training structure offers participants the chance to gain breadth of competencies and depth of experience at the same time. The program is structured into five modules, eight weeks each, for a total duration of 12 months.

Proof of knowledge

During each of the five core modules, the participants' progress is checked with a case assignment, weekly quizzes, and discussion forum contributions. Formative assessments take place after each module to evaluate participants' knowledge.





A vast mix of different learning formats: In parallel to small learning groups with individual mentoring, participants learn self-directed, which allows them to set their own schedule.

Global Spine Diploma Program

Modules

What's inside

There are **five modules**. Each consists of **live online case presentations**, plus **online resources** and **forum discussions** to be completed at your own pace.

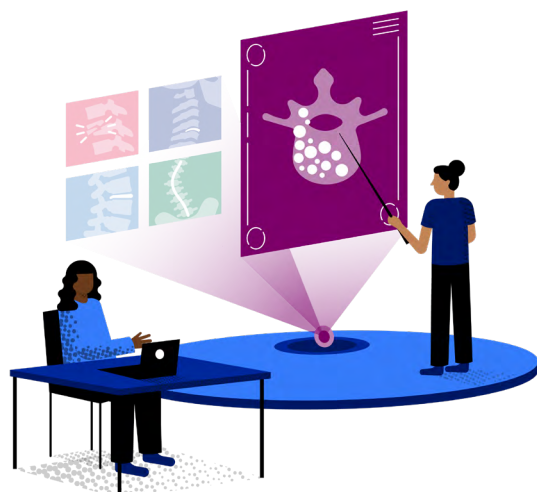
Assessment tasks for modules include a pre-module quiz, contributions to forum discussions, participation in live case presentation sessions, and post-module feedback.

Each participant is part of a regional learning group. The group is led by faculty members who lead the weekly discussion forums.

Trauma

Module outline

- Acute spinal trauma—initial management
- Radiological assessment and injury classification systems
- Upper cervical injuries
- Lower cervical injuries
- Thoracolumbar injuries
- Osteoporotic and ankylosis fractures
- Sacral and spinopelvic injuries
- Outcomes and complications



Oncology and Infection

Module outline

- Assessment of the patient with a spinal tumor
- Treatment planning
- Surgical procedures—primary
- Surgical procedures—metastatic
- Assessing the patient with spinal infection
- Postoperative infection
- Pyogenic spondylodiscitis
- Spinal tuberculosis

Cervical degeneration

Module outline

Clinical and radiological assessment
Non-operative management
Cervical radiculopathy
Degenerative cervical myelopathy
Anterior surgery for DCM
Posterior surgery for DCM
Cervical rheumatoid disease
Outcomes and complications



Lumbar degeneration

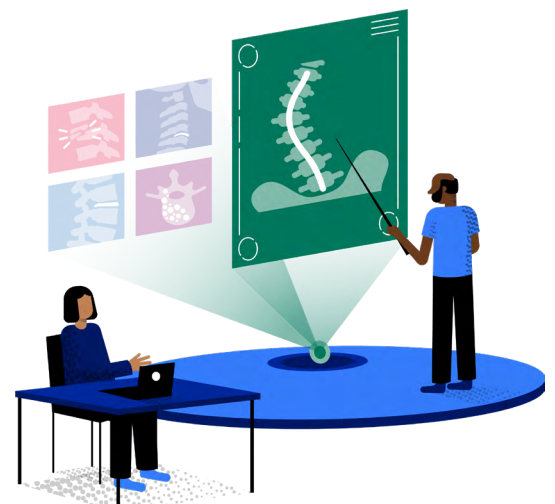
Module outline

Clinical and radiological assessment
Biopsychosocial model of pain
Non-operative treatment
Lumbar disc herniation
Degenerative spondylolisthesis
Lumbar stenosis
Lumbar fusion—open and MISS
Outcomes and complications

Adult/pediatric deformity

Module outline

Adult deformity—assessment and treatment planning
Surgical procedures—choosing the approach: anterior, posterior, or both
Surgical procedures—augmentation and proximal junctional fixation
Cervical deformity
Outcomes and complications
Paediatric deformity—assessment and treatment planning
Surgical procedures—idiopathic scoliosis
Spondylolisthesis
Complications and outcomes



The AO Spine curriculum

Key competencies

EPA	Trauma	Degeneration	Pediatric deformity	Adult deformity
Make a diagnosis	Examine the patient for a possible spinal cord injury and reexamine serially if a neurological deficit is found	Analyze the patient history, comorbidities, disability, and quality of life	Analyze the patient history and understand the conditions associated with childhood spinal deformity	Analyze the patient history, comorbidities, disability, and quality of life
	Suspect a spinal injury in the unconscious polytrauma patient	Examine the patient, including neurological assessment, to exclude myelopathy/radiculopathy	Examine the child with spinal deformity, including neurology, abdominal reflexes, and syndromic features	Examine the patient for spinal imbalance and neurological deficit
	Maintain spinal immobilization until spinal trauma is excluded	Select the appropriate diagnostic tests and exclude non-spinal conditions	Order and interpret appropriate imaging to assess spinal alignment	Order appropriate imaging, including bone density
	Arrange appropriate imaging	Measure and interpret spinal alignment and spinopelvic parameters	Describe the classifications of pediatric deformities: scoliosis, kyphosis, spondylolisthesis	Measure and interpret spinal alignment and spinopelvic parameters
	Recognize the radiographic features of instability and cord injury	Correlate clinical and imaging findings, distinguishing between aging changes and pathology		Describe the classifications of adult deformities
Formulate a treatment plan	Classify the spinal injury using the AO Spine classification systems	Critically review the best available evidence when considering operative and nonoperative interventions	Critically review the best available evidence to support surgical intervention for severe or progressive deformity	Critically review the best available evidence to support surgical intervention
	Use evidence-based decision-making for treatment of the spinal injury, including spinal cord injury management	Describe the biopsychosocial model of pain and recognize the risks for chronification	Monitor mild to moderate deformities and identify factors that indicate the possibility of progression	Assess the need for medical optimization of the patient before surgery, including osteoporosis treatment
			Understand the natural history of untreated deformity and future disability	Plan for augmentation of instrumentation and dealing with the proximal junction
				Discriminate between deformity with and without stenosis and the different management required
Explain treatment options to patients	Describe the risks and benefits of surgical versus conservative management	Recognize the indications for, and limitations of, surgical intervention	Discuss with patients/parents the risks and benefits of surgery compared with conservative treatment	Discuss with patients the risks and benefits of surgery compared with conservative treatment
	Consider the patient's preferences and expectations	Consider the patient's preferences and expectations	Consider the patient's/parents' concerns and expectations	Consider the patient's preferences and expectations
Collaborate with MDTs	Be involved in rehabilitation planning	Recognize the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in nonoperative treatment, including pain management	Involve medical colleagues in preoperative assessment and postoperative care	Involve medical colleagues in preoperative optimization and postoperative care
		Describe the importance of postoperative activity and rehabilitation		
Perform appropriate procedures	Reduction/stabilization/decompression/fusion when indicated	Reduction/stabilization/decompression/fusion when indicated	Consider the need for reduction, osteotomies, instrumentation, distal fixation, posterior and/or anterior fusion	Address spinal balance and consider osteotomies, stabilization, augmentation, distal fixation, proximal junction, posterior and/or anterior fusion
	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members
	Preserve function at uninjured levels where possible	Describe the biological agents and other techniques available to increase fusion rate		
Manage or prevent complications	Postinjury, intraoperative, and postoperative	Intraoperative and postoperative	Monitor spinal cord function intraoperatively	Be prepared for the challenges of revision surgery
			Identify postoperative complications early and treat promptly	
Participate in quality improvement	Perform surgical audit on outcomes and complications	Use validated outcome measures to assess effectiveness of interventions	Use validated outcome measures to monitor safety and quality	Use validated outcome measures to assess effectiveness of interventions
	Enroll patients in a trauma registry/database	Enroll patients in a surgical registry/database	Enroll patients in a surgical registry/database	Enroll patients in a surgical registry/database

EPA	Oncology	Infection	Inflammatory spondyloarthropathy and Arthritis	Spinal fragility fractures and Osteoporosis
Make a diagnosis	Clinically assess and stage patients with spinal neoplasm	Describe the clinical features of and differences between pyogenic spondylodiscitis, epidural abscess, and spinal tuberculosis	Assess the patient history, physical findings, disability, and quality of life	Recognize that acute vertebral and sacral fragility fractures may be associated with significant morbidity in the elderly
	Classify spinal column neoplasms	Describe the general risk factors for spine infections	Describe the classification of inflammatory spondyloarthropathy	List diagnostic tests and imaging modalities for assessing bone density
	Describe the pathology of tumors of the spinal column and spinal cord	Order and interpret hematological, microbiological, and imaging tests to confirm spinal infection	List diagnostic tests and imaging modalities	Recognize the radiographic features of spinal fragility fractures
	List diagnostic imaging appropriate for tumors of the spine	Isolate and identify the causative organism by aspiration or biopsy, if possible	Recognize the radiographic features of spinal instability or ankylosis	Classify osteoporotic fractures of the spine and sacrum
	Describe mechanical instability as it relates to spinal column tumors			
	Establish a diagnosis based on histological verification (biopsy)			
Formulate a treatment plan	Critically review the evidence supporting surgical versus nonsurgical treatment of spinal tumors	Identify preoperative risk factors for developing surgical-site infections after spine surgery and discuss the preventive strategies to minimize risks	Describe the principles of medical management of inflammatory arthritis	Describe the medical management of osteoporosis
	For primary tumors, discuss the balance between cure and morbidity	Consider surgical intervention for neurological compression, spinal instability, and debridement	List surgical indications in the management of spondyloarthropathy	Critically review the best evidence for surgical management of acute spinal fragility fractures
	For metastatic tumors, discuss the balance between prognosis and quality of life		Describe surgical strategies in ankylosing spondylitis for kyphosis correction, fracture fixation	
			Describe surgical strategies in rheumatoid arthritis for occipitocervical decompression/stabilization	
Explain treatment options to patients	List the options for radiotherapy and chemotherapy for primary and secondary tumors	Discuss with patients the indications for surgical intervention in spinal infection and the potential risks and benefits	Discuss with patients the indications for surgical intervention in spondyloarthropathy and the potential risks and benefits	Discuss the relative risks and benefits of medical versus surgical treatment of acute vertebral fragility fractures
	Discuss with patients and family the surgical and nonsurgical options in view of expected prognosis, risks, outcomes, and quality of life		Consider the patient's preferences and expectations	Consider the patient's preferences and expectations
	Review the unique considerations in the management of pediatric spinal column tumors			
Collaborate with MDTs	Discuss the importance of a multidisciplinary team approach to the management of spinal column tumors	Collaborate with the infectious diseases team to prescribe appropriate antimicrobial therapy according to the sensitivities of the isolated organism and evidence-based guidelines	Involve rheumatology colleagues in preoperative optimization and postoperative care	Participate in joint care with an orthogeriatric service
Perform appropriate procedures	Discuss the surgical principles of resection of primary vertebral tumors	Debridement, decompression, reconstruction, fusion	Reduction, stabilization, decompression, osteotomies, fusion	Vertebroplasty, kyphoplasty, sacroplasty
	Describe the principles of surgical tumor resection for metastatic tumors	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members
	Review the role of minimally invasive surgical techniques/separation surgery for treatment of spinal metastases	Describe the place of instrumentation in spinal infection	Preserve function at unaffected levels where possible	Consider prophylactic treatment at unaffected levels where indicated
	Discuss reconstruction options for resected spinal tumors			
	Use safety protocols to protect the patient and team members			
Manage or prevent complications	Recognize the increased risk of wound problems in patients with debility, prior surgery, or radiation	Manage post-infective complications, including deformity, loss of fixation, pseudarthrosis	Intraoperative and postoperative	Intraoperative (cement leakage) and postoperative (neuro deficit)
	Anticipate intraoperative complications	Emphasize and review patient compliance with frequency and duration of treatment		Describe strategies for preventing future fractures
	Recognize recurrent disease postoperatively	Perform regular clinical and hematological review until resolution of the infection		
Participate in quality improvement	Use validated outcome measures to monitor safety and quality	Regularly review the incidence and outcomes of spinal infections in the local healthcare setting	Perform surgical audit on outcomes and complications	Perform surgical audit on outcomes and complications
	Enroll patients in a tumor registry/database		Enroll patients in a registry/database	Enroll patients in a registry/database

Expand your network

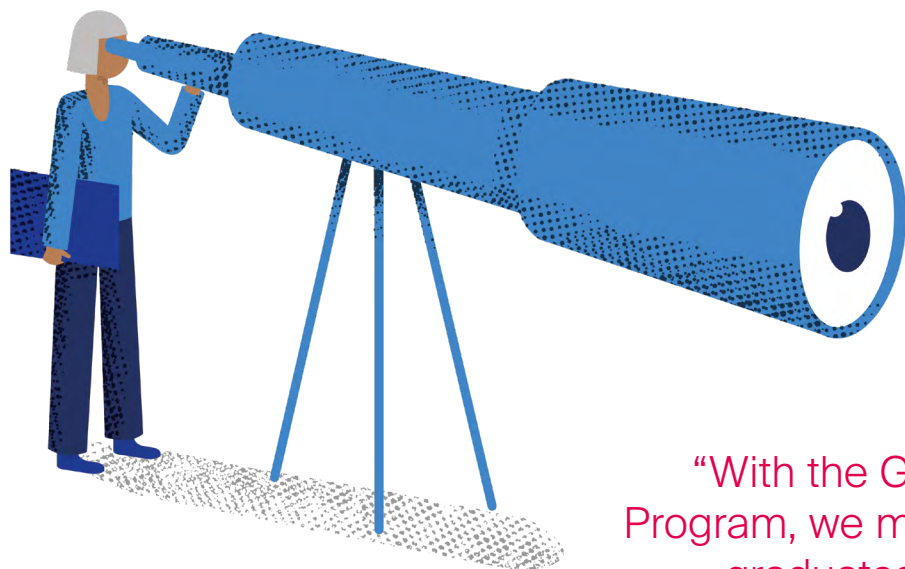
The Global Spine Diploma Program is driven, written, and taught by world-renowned surgeons, tailored to surgeons' needs. With their vast experience, local and international faculty members give mentoring support throughout the program.

Learn from the best

Continuously improve your expertise, not only during the Global Spine Diploma Program itself, but also after graduation: The program opens the door to the AO's large network of the world's leading spine surgery experts and other participants. Mentors make sure that spine surgeons of tomorrow who completed the program use well-established, evidence-based, approaches and techniques.

Over 60 expert online faculty based worldwide

Each faculty member has undergone a dedicated faculty training program. Based on adult learning principles, this program promotes excellence in teaching, facilitation of surgeon learning, and curriculum development, and provides constructive feedback to the participating faculty members. The skills and strategies developed in this program have a positive impact on all our educational activities and contribute to our mission to deliver high-quality education—ultimately translating into clinical practice for the benefit of patients.



“With the Global Spine Diploma Program, we make sure that recent graduates from an orthopedic or a neurosurgery training mark the next generation of leading spine surgeons worldwide.”

Global Spine Diploma Program Committee



Atiq Uz Zaman

Lahore, Pakistan

Program Chair

Current Infection Module Chair



Luiz Gustavo da Rocha

Curitiba, Brazil

Current Trauma

Module Chair



Jeremy Reynolds

Oxford, England

Current Oncology

Module Chair



Adetunji Toluse

Lagos, Nigeria

Current Cervical Degeneration

Module Chair



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Deformity Module Chair



Bradley Jacobs

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Sub-Committee Chair



Apply now

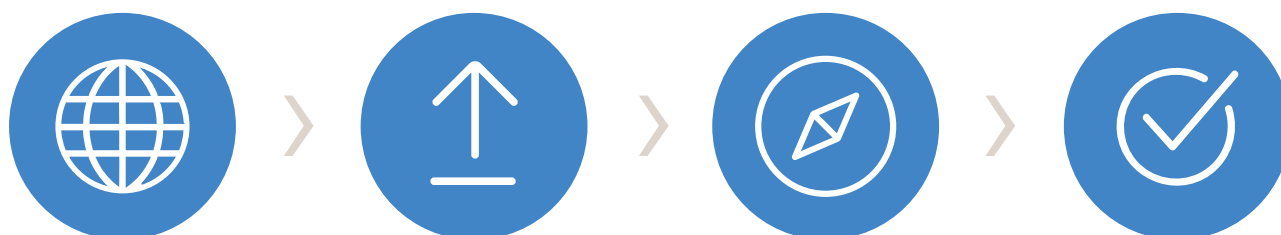
Join the spine surgery elite of tomorrow

- First globally developed, systematic training for spine surgery
- Driven, written, and taught by world-renowned surgeons
- Syllabus based on thorough curriculum, flexible online learning
- Small groups of recent graduates from orthopedic or neurosurgery training
- 12-month duration
- On average 3–5 hours of work to be completed each week
- Choice of two start dates to suit your needs: January and August

Fees

The program consists of two semesters. The full program fee is CHF 2,500, which may be paid in two separate installments.

How to apply



Visit the website

- Read terms and conditions
- Valid AO Spine membership required

Complete application requirements

- Upload certificate confirming completion of training as orthopedic surgeon/neurosurgeon
- Upload CV
- Complete application form
- Apply online
- Submit administration fee: CHF 100

Review of application

- Application is reviewed by Program Chair and AO Spine program manager

Registration

- Eligible candidates are notified that they can register

Questions?

Our AO Spine staff are happy to answer your questions and provide you with additional information. Contact us at globalspinediploma@aospine.org.

Apply now for the world's first global diploma training program for spine surgery:

www.aofoundation.org/spine





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