



### **A71 Accreditation of Forensic Anthropology and Practice in the United Kingdom**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have gained an understanding of the current state of professional practice in forensic anthropology in the United Kingdom, providing a valuable insight and opportunity for discussion in relation to the development of the discipline.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing an update of the procedures, code of practice and ethics, and the certification of forensic anthropology practitioners in the United Kingdom. With the increasing focus on admissibility of evidence and the weight given to expert evidence, it is imperative that appropriate standards are set and maintained. By providing an update of the status of forensic anthropology in the United Kingdom, this presentation will provide an opportunity for discussion of best practices from an international perspective.

The establishment and maintenance of professional standards and codes of conduct and ethics are fundamental to the practice of forensic anthropology in the modern medicolegal landscape. The process of instigating such practices began in the United Kingdom in 2013, with the positioning of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland as the professional body for forensic anthropology. Since that time, the process of certification of practitioners has completed a full three-year cycle, with practitioners certified at each of the three levels and recertification of practitioners ongoing.

With the increasing attention on standard setting and suitability of evidence and expert witnesses in the court room, the importance of professional certification and development of professional standards has never been higher. Cooperation between government offices, legal practitioners, professional bodies, forensic providers and individual forensic practitioners, and end users is vital if this is to be achieved and maintained. As this process is in its relative infancy in the United Kingdom, the opportunity to discuss these issues with international colleagues will provide wider insight into the process. It is hoped that establishing such dialogue will facilitate cross-fertilization of ideas and best practices in forensic anthropology, leading to a holistic appreciation of the position of certification and professionalization of the discipline, in addition to scientific expert witness evidence in general. This study will present experiences of this process in the United Kingdom, share the difficulties and benefits encountered, and establish knowledge exchanges with international colleagues who may have encountered similar or different challenges.

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#### **Forensic Anthropology, Certification, Professionalization**