

AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program **Frequently asked questions (FAQ)**



1. What is the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

The AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program is the first globally developed, systematic online training for spine surgery, creating a new worldwide standard.

It helps orthopedic surgeons and neurosurgeons take their knowledge and skills across multiple spinal pathologies to a new level.

A syllabus describing the curriculum content, educational methods, and resources was developed to achieve defined learning objectives.

2. How can I benefit from the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

- The training program is offered online. Therefore, participants benefit from efficient, flexible online learning in small groups.
- The training is based on a thorough curriculum, written and taught by world-renowned surgeons.
- Training program participants gain profound knowledge in spine surgery.
- Participants gain access to a global spine network and learn from the best.

3. What is the duration of the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

In total, the training program is 21 months in length (see diagram below). It consists of two nine-month semesters with a three-month break between them. Each semester includes three three-month-long modules. Registration for single modules is not currently available.

4. What is the expected weekly time investment?

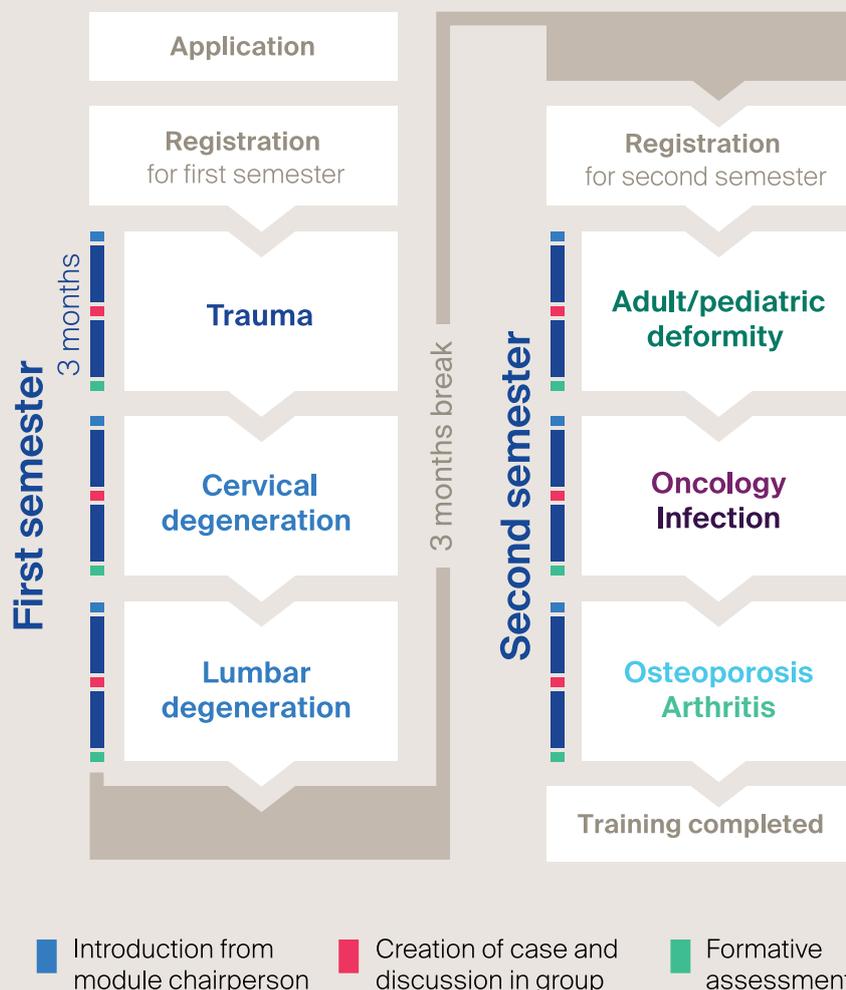
You can expect to invest 3–5 hours per week during the two nine-month semesters.

5. Who can register for the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

The program is available to AO Spine members and surgeons who have recently graduated from an orthopedic surgery or neurosurgery training program.

Important: Members of the AO Spine Faculty Management task force, AO Spine Training Program Committee members, the exam committee members, or surgeons who have been involved in the part I and/or part II exam preparation are ineligible for the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program.

Syllabus: 21 months of training activities



6. How can I apply for the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

Applicants for the training program must apply via the AO Spine website and provide the following information by e-mail:

- A curriculum vitae (CV) demonstrating practice experience in spinal surgery
- A certificate confirming recent graduation from an orthopedic surgery or neurosurgery training program

Only AO Spine members are eligible to register.

Applications will be assessed by the director of the Training Program Committee and AO Spine staff during the application period. For the application process, candidates must pay a non-refundable administrative fee of CHF 100.

Eligible candidates will be notified and invited to register for the training program by paying the nonrefundable CHF 750 registration fee for the first semester.

7. What are the application criteria?

To initiate the eligibility verification, you must be an AO Spine member and provide your CV and a confirmation of training completion as orthopedic surgeon or neurosurgeon to the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program director.

8. What is the language requirement?

If English is not your first language, it is essential that your English language skills are good enough for you to understand, speak, and present throughout the duration of the intensive and challenging training program.

9. Will I need to apply for visa?

No. Since the training program will be offered online, no travel is required.

Depending on your decision for the additionally offered, mandatory elective modules, you may need to apply for visa; for example, if you participate in an on-site AO Spine course.

10. How much does the training program cost?

The nonrefundable administrative fee is CHF 100; it is due during the application process. The registration fee per semester is CHF 750; it is due when registering for each semester.

The registration fee includes access to all learning materials and virtual discussions provided through the learning management system throughout the duration of the program.

Additional costs apply for the mandatory elective modules. These are not included in the price and must be considered in addition to the registration fee. The costs vary based on the additional module(s) chosen.

11. Can I pay the registration fee in installments?

No. Payment is required upon registration for each semester.

12. What is the refund and cancellation policy?

For detailed cancellation and refund policies, please read the Terms and Conditions.

13. What is the deferral policy?

For the detailed deferral policy, please read the Terms and Conditions.

14. Are scholarships available?

No, there are no scholarships available.

15. How will I know if I have been accepted for the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

Applications will be assessed by the director and AO Spine project manager of the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program Committee within a given period after the application has been submitted.

16. Where does the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program take place?

The training program is an online program administered through our learning management system. The synchronous, live activities will be offered online and dates will be announced at the beginning of the program.

With the training program, we offer mandatory elective modules.

Should you choose to participate in an on-site AO Spine course, you will need to travel to the event location. The elective modules are not included in the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program registration fee.

17. What is the format of the AO Spine Global Diploma Training Program?

The training content contains one module per pathology. Each module has a duration of three months.

Within each module, learning assets such as journal articles, book chapters, and teaching videos are offered. Furthermore, mandatory online events such as webinars and case discussions are organized. On a weekly basis, you will have the opportunity to discuss questions with your assigned peers and faculty members.

In addition, during each module, each participant will be expected to prepare and present a case for a peer assessment.

To finalize the module, a formative assessment will be conducted at the end of each module.

The program covers the following spinal pathologies: trauma, degeneration, pediatric and adult deformity, oncology, infection, spinal fragility fractures, and inflammatory spondyloarthropathy.

18. Will I receive continuing medical education (CME) points for this program?

An application will be made to the UEMS-EACCME® for CME accreditation of this online program.

The CME points will be provided at the end of the program.

19. What elective modules are available?

During the training program, you will have the opportunity to sign up for an AO Spine course in your region. Based in your interest, this can be a course focusing on a pathology (trauma, degeneration, deformity, tumors, etc) or a course focusing on minimally invasive spine surgery (MISS). Alternatively, you can choose to participate in the AO Program for Excellence in Education and Research (AO PEER) online program.

20. How long can I access each module's training materials?

All training material will be accessible for the duration of the program. Once you have completed all six training modules, you will lose access to the training system.

21. How were the faculty members chosen?

Faculty members have completed an application process and were chosen according to the defined prerequisites, including expertise in the field and completion of an AO Spine fellowship, locally allocated to the participant cohort group.

22. Who are the faculty members?

Faculty members are AO Spine fellowship alumni who are well-known in their fields of expertise.

23. Where are the faculty members from?

We assign faculty members from the same region/country where the participants are from in order to support live discussions. This allows participants to easily reach their assigned faculty member(s).

Webinar presenters are global experts on the assigned topics.

24. What is the role of the faculty members?

They will:

- Introduce participants to the module content.
- Lay out the expectations for each module.
- Be your first point of contact for content-related questions during each module.
- Moderate case discussions.
- Lead and steer the weekly case discussions.

25. What are the criteria to receive the AO Spine Training Program Diploma?

You must participate in a minimum of 80 percent of the training program activities in order to be eligible to receive the AO Spine Global Training Program Diploma.

26. Is there a pass/fail grading system for the diploma?

No, there is not a pass or fail grading system, but a minimum requirement to participate in the assignments during the two semesters.

27. Is it mandatory to obtain the AO Spine Global Diploma to become faculty at AO Spine educational events?

No, the AO Spine Global Diploma Exam is not a mandatory to be eligible as AO Spine faculty.

28. When will I receive my diploma?

You will receive the diploma once you have fulfilled the criteria, finished all training program modules, and completed the second semester.

29. How long is the diploma valid?

The diploma is valid for a period of five years after the date of issue.

30. What are the technical requirements?

You will need an AO Spine member profile and a stable internet connection to access our learning management system and the learning assets.

31. Will I need special software to access the program?

The learning management system is a password-secured, web-based platform. You can access it from your mobile phone, tablet, and personal computer (PC). No additional software is needed.

32. Who do I contact if I have content-related questions?

We will allocate faculty members per module and learning group. These faculty members will be available to answer any content-related questions.

33. Who do I contact if I have problems with the learning management system or if I have technology-related questions?

If you have any questions, please contact AO Spine via e-mail at: globalspinediploma@aospine.org.



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