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# British and Irish Orthoptic Society definition of professional leadership

Professional leadership for an orthoptist or orthoptists can only be provided by an orthoptist. Unlike clinical leadership or operational management, professional leadership requires in-depth knowledge of the profession and a link to the relevant professional body.

A professional leader will have an understanding of the strategy of both the employing organisation and the relevant professional body, and have the freedom and autonomy to ensure the staff they lead work in a way which complies with both. They will have in-depth knowledge of the standards of their profession and apply those standards whilst working within the rules of governance and financial constraints of the employer. If at any point clinical or professional standards are compromised by employer directives, the professional leader will have a responsibility to reject the directive and a level of authority that enables them to have management decisions changed.

The level of knowledge, freedom to act and responsibilities required to properly provide professional leadership would mean that it cannot be properly delivered by anyone in a role that is banded at Band 7 or lower. A professional leader should have a role banded at a minimum of Band 8a. If the post also requires operational management, clinical leadership and/or advanced clinical skills then higher bandings are appropriate.