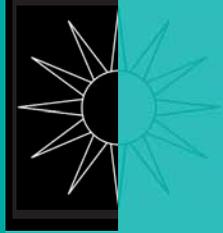


THE COLLEGE OF
RADIOGRAPHERS



RADIOGRAPHY

**The Approval and
Accreditation of
Education
Programmes
and Professional
Practice in
Radiography:
Guidance on
Implementation of
Policy and Principles**

THE SOCIETY OF
RADIOGRAPHERS



R A D I O G R A P H Y

**The Approval and Accreditation of Education
Programmes and Professional Practice in Radiography:
Guidance on Implementation of Policy and Principles**

College of Radiographers' Responsible Officer:

Anne Shaw

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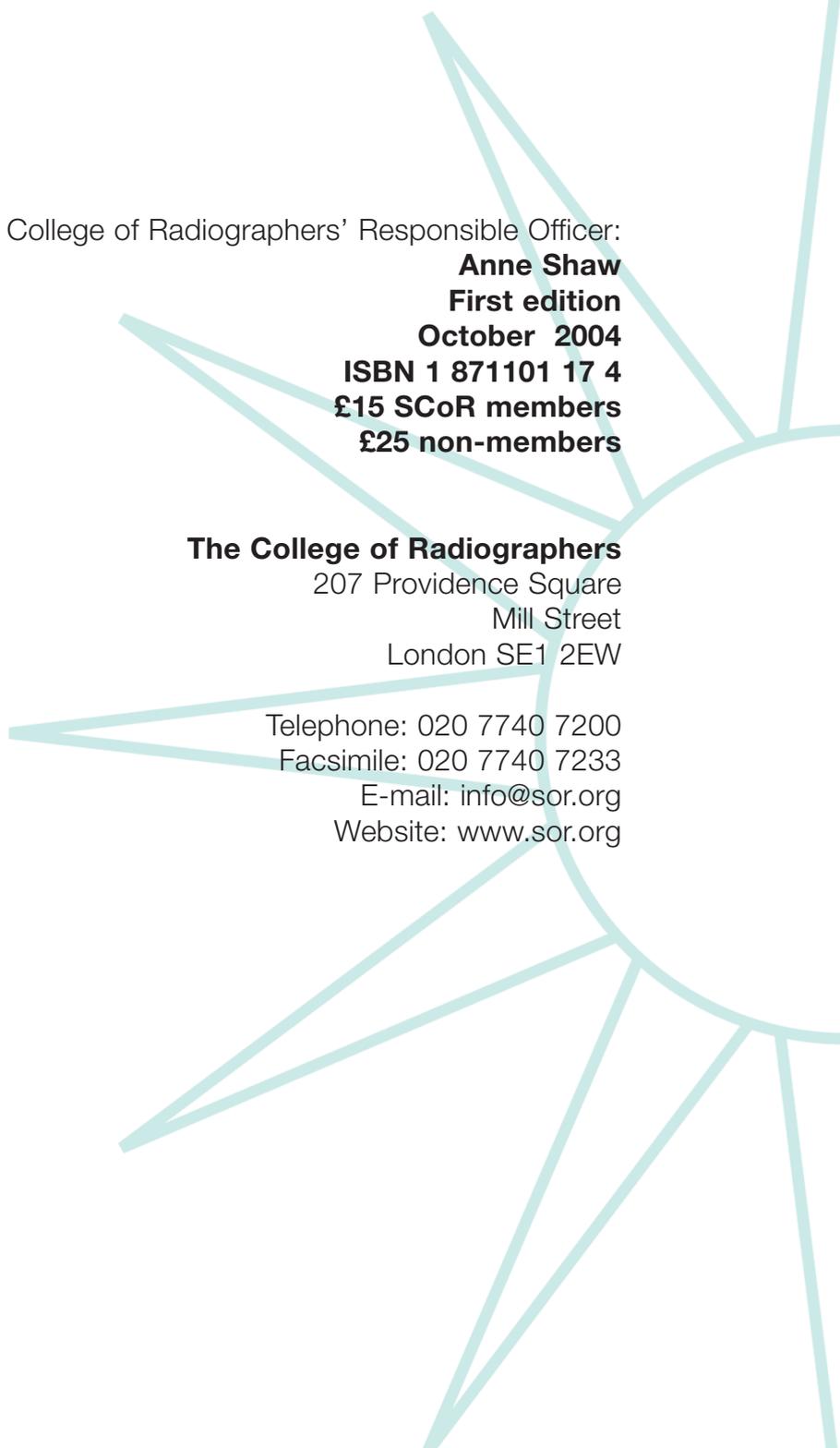
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Glossary of terms

Accreditation

A statement by the Society and College of Radiographers that:

- an individual has been assessed as meeting stated criteria and judged as fit for practice and purpose, or
- an institution is recognised as delivering approved education programmes or courses, or
- a clinical department is an approved clinical placement provider, or
- a learning department or environment satisfies stated criteria that it supports individuals' development and the profession's career progression framework

Advisor

A person nominated by the Society and College of Radiographers to advise on programme development and to form judgments on course proposals to inform the Approvals and Accreditation Board.

Approval

(education programmes)

The process leading to the recognition of an education programme as being fit for award, and for developing individuals that are fit for purpose and practice.

Approval

(clinical departments)

The process leading to recognition of a clinical department as:

- an approved clinical placement in association with approved education programmes and education centres;
- an approved specialist clinical placement provider. For example, a dedicated paediatric department;
- an effective learning department or environment supporting career progression and the development of learners at all levels, including continuing professional development.

Assessor

An individual appointed by the Society and College of Radiographers to undertake assessment of, for example, programme or course proposals, individual portfolios of evidence, learning environments, and senior appointments. An assessor may undertake any or all of these activities on behalf of the Society and College.

Endorsement

A statement by the Society and College of Radiographers that a particular programme, course or activity is suitable for the professional development of radiographers. It is not intended for use in conjunction with formal academic awards which are subject to the process of approval (see above).

1.0 Introduction

The Society and College of Radiographers launched its *Approval and Accreditation: Policy and Principles* document in June 2004. This document follows on from that original document and provides information on the benefits of implementing the Society and College's Approval and Accreditation Framework. It also provides broad guidance on the implementation of the framework and acts as a source of reference for

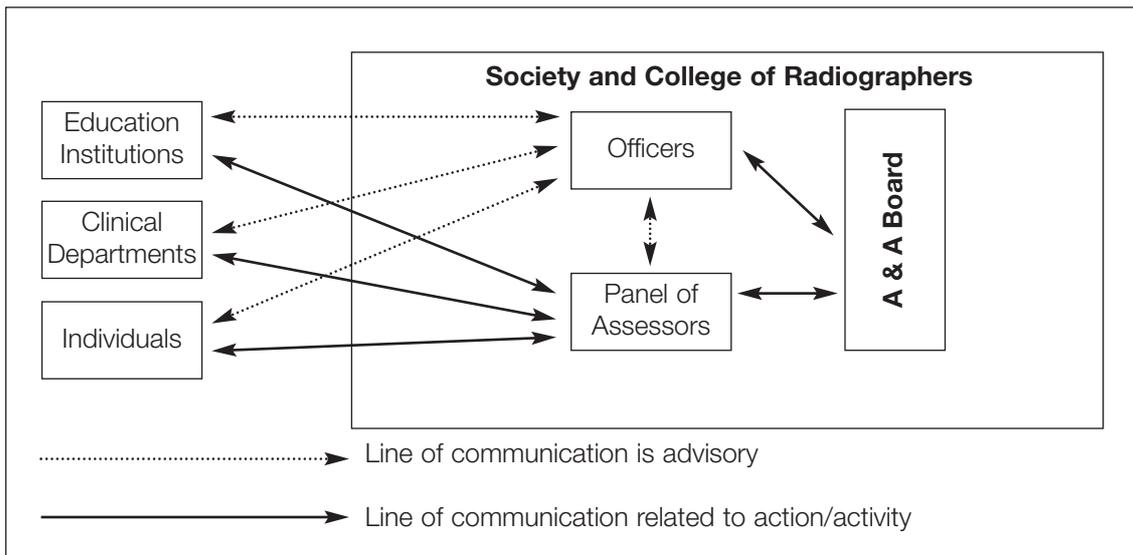
- education providers, both academic and clinical;
- education commissioners, purchasers and sponsors, and
- those acting for the Society and College of Radiographers (Society and College of Radiographers) on approval and accreditation functions.

It will be supplemented by additional, detailed documents on each aspect of the Approval and Accreditation Framework.

2.0 Partnership and mutual benefit

The Society and College intends to work in partnership with clinical and academic departments, external organisations and individuals to ensure that all UK programmes of education and training related to radiography maintain, and assist in the further development of, high standards of radiographic practice and conduct.

The figure sets out schematically the Society and College of Radiographers' partnership approach.



Wherever possible, the Society and College's Approval and Accreditation framework works within existing internal approval and quality assurance arrangements of education institutions and clinical departments. It also aims to work collaboratively with external bodies to provide a streamlined and integrated process.

Mutual benefit is also a cornerstone of implementation of the Approval and Accreditation Framework. Accordingly, the Framework and its implementation:

- secures consistency of standards of radiographic education throughout the United Kingdom, and assurance to service providers on these;
- enables alignment of standards of clinical practice with the profession's evolving career progression framework;
- supports and encourages academic and clinical departments to develop programmes that are at, and remain at, the forefront of education and developing radiography practice;
- promotes and supports flexibility in the design and delivery of education programmes and new roles in practice;
- enables dissemination of guidance on best practice in radiography education and practice;
- provides effective mechanisms for peer evaluation of the development, delivery and review of education programmes related to radiography;
- enables appropriate responses to the needs of academic and clinical departments, and to the needs of individuals;
- facilitates identification, accreditation and registration of practitioners at all levels within the radiographic profession;
- allows for the publication of a register of approved education provision;
- provides support for radiography students and learners, and safeguards their interests;
- strengthens links amongst the professional body, education providers, academic and clinical departments;
- assures equity and transparency in relation to the approval and accreditation processes;
- provides recognition of compliance with professional governance standards;
- accommodates interfacing with other relevant processes. For example, those of the Health Professions Council, the Quality Assurance Agency, the Departments of Health in the four countries of the United Kingdom, and funding bodies.

3.0 Responsibilities of the Society and College of Radiographers

Fundamental responsibilities of the Society and College of Radiographers are the continuing development of the scope of practice of the radiography workforce to the benefit of patients and health care services, and the holding of comprehensive information on the nature of radiography education and training provision available within the UK. Formulating, collecting, analysing and disseminating such information as widely as possible and particularly to the UK and devolved Government bodies, Regulatory Bodies, the Health Professions Council, Strategic Health Authorities, Health Boards, Education Bodies and Institutions, is also essential, and facilitates the development of a suitably educated and trained workforce, able to meet evolving needs of patients and health care services.

The Approval and Accreditation Framework enables the Society and College to fulfil these broad responsibilities and to continue to:

- advance professional practice to benefit patients, the public and health care services;
- develop the specific knowledge base and competences that underpin radiography;
- develop the scope of practice of radiography, underpinned by evidence;
- provide expertise to support development of appropriate education and training programmes for the profession and the radiographic workforce;
- ensure that curriculum content of education programmes is both current and anticipatory of changes in service delivery;
- provide expert support for developments that draw on the radiographic knowledge and practice base, for example dental practice;
- facilitate peer recognition of education and best practice;
- draw together and publish analyses and summaries of the standards of education and practice across the United Kingdom;
- disseminate information about radiography through networks, publications and communications;
- pursue with Government and other bodies proper support for the education and development of the profession and the radiography workforce.

4.0 Outcomes of the Approval and Accreditation Framework

The streamlined approach to approving education and training programmes, accrediting the practice of individuals, and the approval and accreditation of clinical placements and clinical learning departments and environments results in a number of outcomes. These include:

- A unified advice and support service provided by the Society and College of Radiographers accessible through a single point of contact, and bringing together its current work on education of the support staff and assistant practitioner workforce; undergraduate, postgraduate and short course approvals, and work on continuing professional development. In time, its work within existing accreditation consortia will also be consolidated. Henceforth, therefore, all enquiries regarding the Framework and the services it provides should be directed to the Approval and Accreditation Department at the Society and College of Radiographers at email approval@sor.org or telephone 020 7740 7226 in the first instance.
- An established network of advisors, able to provide the expertise and support necessary to facilitate education and practice developments, and to ensure that the Framework's policies and principles are implemented consistently and to the required high standard. The advisor network is pivotal to approval and accreditation, and to ensuring that all approved or endorsed programmes, courses, accredited individuals, and accredited departments and learning environments reflect the standards expected of and by the profession.
- The periodic publication of overviews of radiography education and practice across the United Kingdom, so providing consolidated evidence to support a range of activities, for example, workforce planning, funding and purchasing decisions, education development plans, service modernisation and delivery planning.
- Publication of a comprehensive directory of approved programmes, so providing a source of reference for prospective students or trainees, and those purchasing, sponsoring or funding education. The directory is available electronically and updated as new approvals occur.
- Provision of recognised "quality marks" for those clinical departments approved and accredited by the Society and College of Radiographers. This recognises them as approved clinical placements in association with approved education programmes and education centres or as specialist clinical placement providers. They may also gain recognition as effective learning departments or environments that are supporting development of learners at all levels and implementing the profession's career progression framework. Such quality marking supports effective recruitment and retention.
- Publication of an annual report of the work of the Approval and Accreditation Board.

5.0 Guidance on Implementation of the Framework

As indicated earlier, this document provides broad guidance on each aspect of the Approval and Accreditation Framework. A definitive guidance document on each of these aspects is, or will be, published separately, and these will be updated and circulated regularly in hard copy format or other media, as appropriate. All documents published are also made available on the public section of the Society of Radiographers' website www.sor.org.

5.1 Approval of new education programmes

When new programmes are being considered, education providers are expected to involve the Society and College of Radiographers from the outset, initially through the Approval and Accreditation Department, as outlined earlier. Depending upon the nature of the new development the Society and College will nominate an advisor or advisors to offer advice during the development of the programme and, when appropriate, for the roll-out period of a new programme. These individuals are able to consider evidence for the developments; advise on curriculum designs and the resources needed to deliver these effectively, including the number and nature of the staff required, and to act as 'critical friends' during the development. Subsequently, when the development processes have been completed to their satisfaction, they will make recommendations regarding approval to the Approval and Accreditation Board of the Society and College of Radiographers.

Advisors are able to exercise this role by working conjointly with education providers in their internal and/or external validation procedures, or by working in parallel with these procedures, according to the particular preferences of education providers.

Approval by the Society and College of Radiographers is an important criterion in gaining approval from other external bodies and agencies, notably the Health Professions Council and, in England, the Department of Health's Partnership Quality Assurance Framework. The Society and College's approval processes have been designed to provide approval either prior to or co-terminus with approval by these other bodies. Hence, education providers and their clinical partners can be confident that their provision meets the standards set by the profession, and can demonstrate this clearly to other bodies.

In the case of ultrasound, magnetic resonance and nuclear medicine education programmes, approval by the Society and College of Radiographers is facilitated through consortia arrangements with other relevant bodies. For the time being, these continue, although they remain under review.

Approval by the Society and College of Radiographers is given for a specified period, agreed during or at the end of the approval process.

5.2 Re-approval of established education programmes

The process is very similar to that of approving new programmes, with education providers contacting the Society and College early in the review, or redevelopment period, so that an appropriate advisor/advisors can be appointed, according to the needs of the programme under review. Advisors carry similar responsibilities during re-approvals as during new approvals, and are responsible for making recommendations for continuing approval to the Board, including recommendations on the period for which this will apply. Similarly, too, the consortia arrangements for ultrasound, magnetic resonance and nuclear medicine education programmes are continuing, but subject to review.

Again, advisors are able to work as part of or in parallel to education providers' own internal and external procedures; and in concert with other external agencies or bodies as appropriate.

The following charts the stages of the approval/re-approval process

Education Programme Approval/Re-Approval

Education provider notifies Approval and Accreditation Department (AAD) of intention to develop a new, or review an existing programme
AAD sends most recent guidance information to education provider
Lead AAD officer nominates an advisor(s)
Education provider contacts nominated advisor(s)
Advisor provides advice on programme design and development, curriculum, resources, professional body requirements, and provides peer review.
Advisor works within the education providers normal procedures, and with other external bodies as appropriate
When satisfied that the Society and College of Radiographers requirements have been met, the advisor(s) submits a recommendation for approval, together with a summary report to the AAD
Approval and Accreditation Board considers summary report and recommendation(s) and determines outcome
AAD notifies education provider and advisor of outcome

A number of roles relationships, and role functions underpin the above and are outlined in Appendix A to this document.

5.3 Accreditation of individuals

Individuals may submit evidence of their development, including any relevant qualifications, in support of an application for recognition of their level and scope of practice. This is particularly relevant to those individuals undertaking development as assistant practitioners in the workplace, ie not attending formal, approved programmes of education and training. It is also a significant process for those claiming recognition as advanced or specialist practitioners because practice and underpinning education and development at this level is so diverse; and it is relevant, too, to practitioners and consultant practitioners.

Individuals' portfolios are assessed by assessors appointed by the Approval and Accreditation Board against published criteria, with accreditation being granted where portfolios can be seen to provide the necessary evidence. Successful applicants gain a statement of accreditation detailing their level and scope of practice, and are expected to maintain that accreditation through continuing professional development. It is anticipated that accreditation will support those individuals seeking to transfer to another employer, and will provide assurance to a new employer of their fitness for employment. Additionally, accreditation helps support individuals applying to step on to education programmes that lead to the next level of practice, and provides evidence to support continuing registration with the Health Professions Council.

5.4 Continuing professional development (CPD) monitoring and accreditation

The Society and College of Radiographers' policy with regard to the accreditation of CPD, is set out in the document *A Strategy for Continuing Professional Development* (Society of Radiographers, 2003). This provides for three streams of accreditation or endorsement specific to individuals' CPD needs:

- CPD accreditation of individual practitioners. The web-based CPD tool (to be launched at the end of 2004) provides a CPD framework for practitioners at all levels. This links CPD activity to clinical practice and is based on the learning and professional outcomes identified in *A Curriculum Framework for Radiography* (College of Radiographers, 2003). The CPD tool enables members to submit their CPD portfolio to the College on a two-year cycle for accreditation.
- The endorsement of short courses, study days, seminars and similar types of learning provision. This endorsement guides members in their choice of learning events and activities and provides a guarantee of quality and an indication of expected learning outcomes. Assessors appointed by the Approval and Accreditation Board carry out the necessary evaluation leading endorsement.
- The approval and accreditation of clinical learning departments or environments. This is outlined later in this document.

5.5 Professional Register

The Society and College of Radiographers has established a professional register onto which members are entered on achieving particular qualifications or posts, for example, a qualification approved for membership of the Society and College of Radiographers or registration with the Health Professions Council; or obtaining a consultant radiographer post in accordance with the criteria established by the UK Health Departments for consultant allied health professionals.

Periodically members are invited to update their entry on the register to reflect their current scope and level of practice. For assistant and advanced practitioners, this normally takes place through the accreditation process.

The professional register is open to those who are not members of the Society of Radiographers (non-members) on receipt of the appropriate fees. This enables them to use the CPD tool and to gain CPD accreditation.

5.6 Voluntary Public Register of Assistant Practitioners

In order to properly discharge its duty to the public, the Society and College of Radiographers has also established a voluntary public register of assistant practitioners. This lists those who hold a qualification recognised by the Society and College, and provides a statement of their competences, as well as the geographical area in which they are practicing.

The register is available to the public on the Society of Radiographers' website at www.sor.org

5.7 Student and Trainee Registers

The Society has also established a register and index for student radiographers and assistant practitioner trainees. This provides a number of benefits for students and trainees, including access to the full range of professional body services during their education or training.

It is a condition of approval, continuing approval and re-approval of pre-registration radiography programmes and trainee assistant practitioner programmes, that students and trainees are registered with the College of Radiographers. Registration is maintained throughout the education or training period and a registration fee is payable. Normally, this is paid by the education provider in the case of student radiographers, and may be paid by the education provider, the clinical department sponsor, or the individual in the case of trainee assistant practitioners, according to local circumstances.

Where student radiographers undertake extra-mural jobs that expect them to carry out the duties of an assistant practitioner and where they are accredited by the Society of Radiographers as assistant practitioners, for the time being they should also be advised to apply for Assistant Practitioner membership of the Society of Radiographers. This is in order to gain personal indemnity insurance for the purposes of their employment.

5.8 Approval and accreditation of clinical placements

The Society and College of Radiographers recognises the invaluable contributions made by clinical departments in providing support for formal programmes of clinical education and training and in supporting CPD. It is also acknowledged that clinical departments are faced with increasing workload pressures leading to increased demands on the existing clinical workforce. The new approval and accreditation procedures aim to provide advice and support to clinical departments to ensure that they are able to provide effective learning for learners at all levels without compromising the quality of service provision, or overburdening clinical staff.

Clinical departments find that they are asked to provide learning opportunities for a number of different groups of learners; undergraduates, assistants; radiologists in training; postgraduate students of various disciplines; and a variety of work experience or modern apprenticeship students. The College of Radiographers has recently published the results of a study *Clinical Education and Training: Capacity and Quality* (2004). This investigated capacity and demand for clinical training placements and identified limited or under capacity in a number of areas.

As a result of its holistic approach to approval and accreditation, and drawing on its experience of the Joint Validation Committee, the Society and College of Radiographers is now able to identify the total learning capacity of a department and offer guidance in regard to both numbers of learners and capacity relative to the diversity of clinical education and training provision.

The Society and College of Radiographers approves and accredits clinical placements on an NHS Trust- or Board-wide, or employer-wide basis in order to identify and recognise all potential learning opportunities available. Advice on appropriate support mechanisms such as clinical supervision and mentorship is provided as part of this.

Some clinical departments have specialist facilities available that are in great demand as learning opportunities from a number of education providers and other clinical service providers. Where necessary, the College of Radiographers advises to ensure that all learners have equity in learning opportunities, again, without compromising the quality of clinical service delivery or clinical education and training provision.

The Society and College of Radiographers expects that, normally, there will be a main agreement or contract in place between an education provider and associated clinical placement providers, under the aegis of the local education commissioning, contracting or funding arrangements as appropriate. This should assist in safeguarding the quality of clinical learning for those learners from the education and clinical service partners, and should enable spare capacity to be identified and made available through secondary agreements or contracts to other education institutions or individual learners. Again, the Society and College of Radiographers is able to recognise these agreements or contracts, and to advise on how these are managed effectively.

It is likely that changes in contractual arrangements for radiography education may from time to time result in clinical departments being faced with competing demands for clinical placements. As part of its approval processes, the Society and College of Radiographers is able to facilitate approval of transitional arrangements such that students' learning is not compromised and clinical departments are supported in their delivery of the different learning programmes.

More detailed guidance on approval and accreditation of clinical departments will be published shortly.

5.9 Approval and Accreditation of Clinical Learning Departments and Environments

In time, it is the intention of the Society and College of Radiographers to support clinical departments to be approved and accredited both as clinical placement providers and as recognised learning departments and environments. This latter will require departments to demonstrate that they are as focused on education and development as they are on service delivery. In particular, they will need to demonstrate that they not only provide high quality clinical placements but are also actively supporting career development of the radiography workforce, in line with the profession's career progression framework, outlined in the document *Education and Professional Development: Moving Ahead* (College of Radiographers, 2003).

Further guidance and criteria will be published in due course.

6.0 Summary

This document is the second in a series of documents that explain and provide more detail on the Society and College's Approval and Accreditation procedures. Further documents will follow in due course. It is the Society and College's policy that copies of all its Approval and Accreditation documents are made available to all relevant bodies as they are published, and are placed on the public side of its web site www.sor.org. Organisations and individuals are also reminded that they should, in the first instance, direct queries to the Approval and Accreditation Department at the Society and College of Radiographers at approval@sor.org or on 020 7740 7226.

Appendix A

	Role/ Function	Networks with	Reports to	Takes instruction from
Administrator, Approval & Accreditation Board (AAB)	Receives and processes initial enquiries from education providers, clinical departments or individuals Advises on procedures Maintains effective communication with enquirers Data and schedules management	AAB Lead Officer CPD Officer of Society & College of Radiographers (SCoR)	Director of Professional Policy (DPP) of SCoR	DPP AAB Lead Officer CPD Officer
AAB Lead Officer	Advises on existing policy Allocates advisors and assessors Monitors effectiveness of accredited programmes Monitors effectiveness of clinical learning departments	Education Providers Advisors Clinical Departments Other Experts and Assessors, as necessary or appropriate	DPP	DPP AAB Chairperson
CPD Officer of SCoR	Monitors effectiveness of CPD accreditation	Regional Committees National Councils AAB Lead Officer	DPP	DPP
DPP	Develops policy Oversees policy implementation and monitoring Manages resources	Education Providers Clinical Departments External Bodies and Agencies Government Departments	AAB	Chief Executive Officer of SCoR / Council of the Society of Radiographers / College or Radiographers Board of Trustees
Advisor	Advises Education Provider/Clinical Departments of requirements for approval Undertakes peer review Provides expert advice Requests additional support/advice from Society & College of Radiographers, as necessary	AAB Lead officer DPP AAB Administrator	AAB	AAB
Assessor	Assesses portfolios Undertakes other assessments as required by AAB, e.g. short courses, learning materials	AAB Lead Officer Other assessors / advisors as appropriate	AAB	AAB



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