

Position statement:

College of Radiographers Update on Advanced and Consultant Practitioner Accreditation and Planned Resources

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Following a period of review of its current accreditation schemes, the College of Radiographers (CoR) is making changes to advanced and consultant practitioner accreditation and will be embarking on the development of a new model to support CoR advanced and consultant level practice.

Background

The CoR Advanced and Consultant Practitioner Accreditation Schemes, were initially set up in the mid-2000s, with the intention of supporting ongoing engagement in level appropriate continuing professional development. However, since the introduction of the schemes, engagement has always remained [low](#). As of May 2024, a total of 22 advanced practitioners and 12 consultant practitioners currently hold CoR Accreditation.

In 2022 the CoR revised and relaunched the [Education & Career Framework \(ECF\) for the Radiography Workforce](#) outlining the levels of practice and anticipated educational standards at each level of practice, including the advanced and consultant levels. The overarching aim of the ECF is to improve outcomes for patients through the education, training and development of the workforce. The framework details the knowledge, skills and attributes across all levels and roles within radiography, in addition to the expected education, qualifications and practitioner contributions towards the four pillars of practice for each level of practice.

After publication of the ECF, a planned period of review of the CoR accreditation schemes commenced taking account of the rapidly changing external sector changes associated with advanced and consultant clinical practice.

The external sector changes have included growing awareness and implementation of national frameworks for advanced level practice (across all nations of the UK) and consultant level practice (England, Scotland, Wales), new systems for recognition, such as those established by the NHSE Centre for Advancing Practice (CfAP), and work from the regulators considering if regulation of advanced level practice should be introduced. Whilst the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) agreed in July 2021 that the case for additional regulation of advanced practice had not been made, the [Nursing and Midwifery Council \(NMC\)](#) recently announced that they will proceed to develop an approach to the additional regulation of advanced practice for nursing and midwifery. The HCPC input into this work and [recently published a statement that their position remains unchanged](#). The HCPC are planning further work on the development of a common understanding and guiding principles for advanced practice, in addition to work on the importance of practice level appropriate continuing professional development.

New Model

This changing external context, coupled with new government policy actively promoting and supporting transformation of the multi-professional workforce at scale, plus the publication of the CoR ECF providing greater clarity around the capabilities and educational requirements at the advanced and consultant levels of practice, have informed the College Board of Trustees' decision to close the accreditation schemes in favor of alternative provision. This will see the development of new resources which will support greater understanding and awareness of the expectations associated with the enhanced, advanced and consultant levels of practice for radiographers and sonographers. Practitioners will be able to use practice level-specific mapping tools to map their current education, training and expertise against the professional body expectations for each level of practice as detailed within the ECF. These resources will allow members to evaluate and identify any further education and development needs relative to either their current level of practice or future career goals.

Looking ahead

In the longer term, the CoR will be seeking to strengthen its work in post-registration programme approval as a further means to supporting the development of the workforce at the enhanced, advanced and consultant levels of practice. This work will be informed by a scoping project and other activities currently being undertaken within the Society of Radiographers through NHSE funding.

The CoR believes that in supporting practitioners through CoR approved programmes of study, practitioners, employers and service users will be assured of the quality of the education held by those at the enhanced, advanced and consultant levels of practice. This also reflects the intelligence and direction of travel being pursued by the CfAP, with a move towards recognition only through CfAP accredited programmes from 2027 onwards.

Charlotte Beardmore, Executive Director of Professional Policy said, *'importantly this new approach supports alignment to the levels of practice and education requirements identified within the ECF. The ECF was developed through a rigorous research methodology, by members and for members. As a professional body we must embrace the wider transformational changes and respond to the external context to support the understanding and consistent development of the advanced and consultant levels of practice within our profession. The planned work and College of Radiographers resources in this area will help to securely assure the position of the radiography profession, driving consistency which is comparable to other professions working at advancing levels.'*

To note

For those who currently hold active advanced or consultant accreditation, this will be honored by the CoR until the individual's current period of accreditation lapses.

For further information:

- [FAQs: Changes to College of Radiographers \(CoR\) Advanced and Consultant Practitioner Accreditation](#)
- [Accreditation](#)
- [College of Radiographers website](#)



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