CASE FOCUSED COURSES

Introduction

Focused Courses are normally developed as stand-alone courses to address a particular service delivery need in a specific limited area of clinical practice in order to ensure that, on completion of training, the practitioner is competent and safe to undertake, interpret, analyse and report focused ultrasound examinations in that defined area of clinical practice. Trainees completing a short focused course will be expected to achieve competence in a clearly defined set of skills that are a subset of those covered by a full CASE accredited module in that area.

CASE will only accredit such courses where the training and education includes practical clinical skills development for which a formal assessment of competence to practice is included, meeting the requirements stipulated in the CASE handbook. Furthermore, focused courses will only be accredited if the scope of practice proposed is distinct and less than that of a clinical module within a PG medical ultrasound programme and includes the pertinent physics, technology and professional issues to ensure safe practice.

Any Focused Courses accredited by CASE must be in line with the same clinical practice and academic standards as found in any full programme that CASE accredits. This is to ensure a national standard across all training programmes and courses, albeit in a well-defined and restricted area of practice.

CASE will need to be assured at the time of accreditation that the title evidenced on the course competency certificate, issued on successful completion, reflects the defined area of clinical competency and is otherwise fit for purpose. It is also appropriate for institutions to formally award credits; for example, 20 Level 7 credits, to students upon successful completion of a Focused Course. If a student wishes to import these credits, via APCL/RPCL into an MSc they are doing elsewhere, the decision to allow this via a process of ‘general credit recognition’ will rest with that University however a Focused Course should not be imported into a full ultrasound programme.

Theory-based short courses lasting from one to a few days are not eligible for CASE accreditation, but may apply directly for individual professional body endorsement (see Appendix 1).

The Accreditation Process

The accreditation process for a Focused Course is broadly similar to that of a full programme (see Handbook chapter 2) and only differs in some details. In particular, there may not be a
formal validation event, and a visit to the institution/organisation offering the course may not always be necessary as it may be sufficient to conduct the approval process by electronic communication alone. The timeline of events is shown below:
Application for Accreditation

The host institution/course leader needs to apply to CASE, using the appropriate form, to indicate that they wish to seek accreditation for their Focused Course. The form is available on the CASE website.

**NOTE: Only the current form from the website should be used.**

Focused Course documentation is to be sent to CASE and a decision as to whether the course satisfied the conditions for CASE validation and accreditation will be made at the next CASE committee meeting. Where a Focused Course does not meet the criteria for entry into the accreditation process, an explanation will be given and advice may be offered to enable a successful application to be made. For example, this may be because the proposed course is too broad in terms of subject matter or lacks practical clinical competency training and assessment.

Course documentation should include similar information to that listed for full programmes (see Appendix 2), as appropriate for a Focused Course. In particular, it should give clear detail regarding the following:

- Does the course title reflect the defined scope of the course?
- What is the specialist area to be covered and are there any limitations to the scope of practice?
- The duration of the course;
- The amount of face-to-face contact time between the course team and the students (this must be a minimum equivalent of 4 days; however, where blended e-learning is included there must be a minimum of 2 full contact days);
- The content of the teaching given and any assessment of theory used;
- How the core topics of science and technology and professional issues will be covered;
- What practical training is given;
- How the students will gain practical experience;
- Who will supervise students’ practice training throughout the course
- How the students are to be assessed to ensure competence to practice (See Handbook Chapter 4);
- The competency certificate issued on successful completion of the course.
Validation and CASE Accreditation

CASE will appoint a Lead Accrider and a Co-accreditor. The Lead Accrider will contact the Focused Course Leader and liaise with them to agree a way to proceed. In particular, they will indicate whether a formal meeting/event is required and what form it should take.

Student and stakeholder feedback may be required even if no formal meeting occurs. In the case of a formal validation meeting, a secretariat to minute proceedings is normally arranged by the course faculty. Accrider expenses are paid by the course faculty.

Following any formal meeting/event, and after reviewing the documentation, the Lead Accrider, on behalf of the accreditors, will prepare a formal report on a specific proforma for consideration and action by CASE Committee at its next meeting.

CASE will then inform the Course Leader of the result of the accreditation process as detailed in section 2.9 (of the Handbook) or request further information, as required.

CASE accreditation for a Focused Course will normally be for 3 years.

Course Dimensions of Clinical Experience

The emphasis needs to be on demonstration of competence. The number of scans completed and period of supervision needed to achieve this may vary considerably between different areas of practice and individual prior experience. For example, there may be some specialist areas where ultrasound is used infrequently (eg. ultrasound guided injection) and a flexible or extended period of training may be required. Self-audit against an agreed standard is recommended to provide evidence that learning outcomes have been met.

As the clinical supervision and experience required is dependent on the scope of intended learning outcomes, CASE will consider each individual course to ensure that these are achievable within the proposed clinical practice arrangements.
APPENDIX 1: Accreditation by CoR and CASE

Approval and accreditation requests made to CoR and CASE

CoR receives application for programme/short course approval or study day endorsement

CASE receives application for AAA screening assistant practitioner programme

CoR undertakes the approval for all pathways except ultrasound

CASE undertakes the accreditation process for the ultrasound pathway

Single electronic AAB accreditation process (visit not normally required)

CASE completes the accreditation process for the ultrasound pathway

CASE informs CoR EA

CoR adds/amends programme information in CPD Now

CoR completes approval process for all pathways except ultrasound

CASE completes accreditation process for ultrasound pathway

CASE completes the accreditation process for the focused Ultrasound Course

CASE completes the accreditation process for the ultrasound study day

CASE undertakes the accreditation process for the AP programme

AAA screening assistant practitioner programme

CASE completes the accreditation process for the Focused Ultrasound Course

Single electronic AAB endorsement process (visit not required)

CASE undertakes the accreditation process for the ultrasound study day

CoR undertakes the accreditation process for the ultrasound study day

CoR undertakes the accreditation process for the ultrasound pathway

EA directs EI to CASE for US pathway

EA directs EI to CASE

Combined validation event attended by CoR AAB Assessor and CASE Accrualor

Combined programme E.g. MS/EC Medical Imaging

CoR = College of Radiographers
AAB = Approval and Accreditation Board
CASE = Consortium for the Accreditation of Sonographic Education
EA = Education Administrator
CPDA@sor.org
### APPENDIX 2: Information which may be included in a Programme Document

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<th>Programme Organisation</th>
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<td>• Management</td>
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<td>• Faculty or Department or School</td>
<td>• Financing, including budget proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Socio-geographic outline</td>
<td>• Arrangements for staff to discuss educational policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Arrangements for consultation between academic, clinical</td>
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<td>staff and students</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Review (if appropriate)</th>
<th>Programme Philosophy</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rationale</td>
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<td>• Aims and Outcomes</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme Syllabus</th>
<th>Programme Specification Document</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rationale, aims, objectives, learning outcomes</td>
<td>• Mapping exercise to include a programme flow chart</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Content</td>
<td>• Mapping exercise to learning outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Timetables for each level</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Integration of academic education with clinical practice</td>
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<tr>
<th>Learning Methods</th>
<th>Module Specification Documents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rationale</td>
<td>• Mapping exercise to include a programme flow chart</td>
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<td>• Core teaching, team approaches</td>
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<td>• Clinical education</td>
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<td>• Types of academic and clinical assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Marking and assessment criteria</td>
<td>• Health/welfare facilities available</td>
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<td>• Schedule and weighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Examples</td>
<td>• Equality and Diversity policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Regulations</td>
<td>• Handbooks</td>
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| Clinical Education | **Aims and objectives**  
|--------------------|--------------------------|
|                    | **Length of clinical placement (hours)**  
|                    | **Availability and range of clinical placements**  
|                    | **Criteria for approving clinical placements**  
|                    | **Quality assurance procedure**  
|                    | **Criteria for the selection and appointment of practice educators and assessors**  
|                    | **Teaching and learning resources, including personnel**  
|                    | **Ultrasound and ancillary equipment**  
|                    | **Practice Handbooks**  
| Course Resource Provision | **Teaching/lecturing/practical provision**  
|                        | **Library facilities**  
|                        | **Technological resources**  
|                        | **Clinical and laboratory facilities**  
|                        | **I.T. provision**  
| Regulations | **Internal Course Monitoring**  
|            | **Arrangements for programme review**  
|            | **Evidence of appropriate involvement of academic and clinical staff**  
|            | **Quality assurance processes**  
| Staffing | **Programme team**  
|          | **Number of WTE staff in post**  
|          | **Curriculum Vitaes**  
|          | **Staff/student ratio**  
| Support Mechanisms for Students + Staff | **Arrangements for programme review**  
|                             | **Evidence of appropriate involvement of academic and clinical staff**  
|                             | **Quality assurance processes**  
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