Key Points for Accreditors
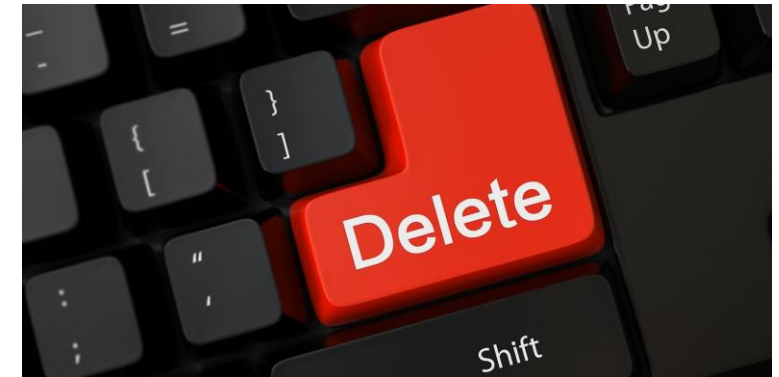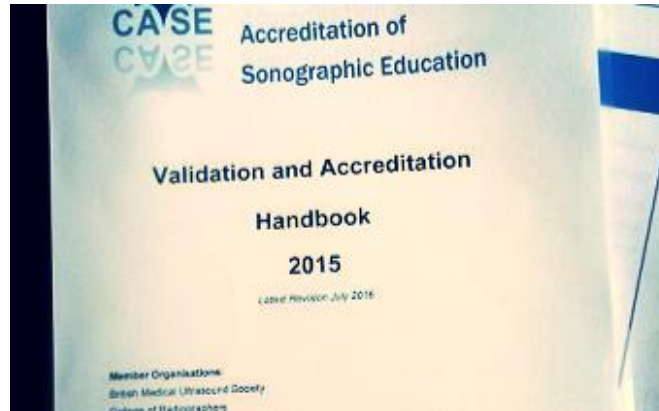
Accreditor training 14.01.26

Gill Dolbear – CASE Education Officer

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Key Point: Recycle and delete all copies of the old CASE Validation and Accreditation Handbook

Appointing accreditors

CASE Committee will propose three individuals to fulfil the roles required for accreditations, re-accreditations and interim reviews as follows:

- Lead Accreditor

- Co-accreditor

- Shadow Accreditor

Composition of the accrediting Team may be:

- Experienced Lead Accreditor

- Co-accreditor (a developmental role)

- Shadow Accreditor (a developmental role)

OR

- Inexperienced Lead Accreditor (a developmental role)

- Experienced Lead Accreditor acting as the Co-accreditor (to provide support to the Inexperienced Lead Accreditor)

- Shadow Accreditor (developmental role)

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First point of contact between CASE Co-ordinator and potential accreditors

This process is designed to:

- minimise disruption of accreditations, re-accreditations and interim reviews

- to maximise continuity of the overall accreditation process

- **KEY POINT:** to facilitate adherence to the agreed timetable for the accreditation process i.e. to eradicate delays as much as possible

Once the proposed Accreditation Team has been identified, the CASE Co-ordinator or other member of the IPEM Administration Team, will contact the three individuals concerned to determine their availability during the accreditation timeframe.

If an individual is available during the accreditation timeframe, the CASE Co-ordinator or other member of the IPEM Administration Team, will use the following checklist to double-check whether they meet the necessary criteria.

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Checklist for appointing accreditors

- Is the proposed accreditor an experienced Lead Accreditor capable of taking on the accreditation of a new type of programme?

- Is the proposed accreditor an experienced Lead Accreditor? Could they act as a Co-accreditor to mentor a new Lead Accreditor?

- Is the proposed accreditor an inexperienced Lead Accreditor or an experienced Co-accreditor who may need to be supported by a Lead Accreditor acting as their Co-accreditor?

- Is the proposed Co-accreditor currently gaining experience in this role?

- Has the proposed Co-accreditor gained experience as a Shadow Accreditor on at least two occasions?

- Is the proposed Shadow Accreditor currently gaining experience in this role?

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Checklist for appointing accreditors (continued)

- Do the proposed accreditors have appropriate HE or clinical experience of and/or currency in the clinical applications of ultrasound included within the programme?

- Are any of the proposed accreditors an External Examiner for the programme?

- Do any of the proposed accreditors work for close competitors?

- Do any of the proposed accreditors have any affiliations with the HEI?

- **KEY POINT:** Do any of the proposed accreditors have annual leave, other planned leave or a peak in workload during the timeframe of the accreditation?

- The number of accreditations the proposed accreditors have undertaken recently i.e. to distribute the workload fairly

- PLEASE NOTE: HEIs can identify individuals they do not wish to be involved in their accreditation, re-accreditation or interim review.

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First point of contact between Lead Accreditor and HEI Team

The Lead Accreditor will contact the Programme/Course Lead/Quality Team to:

- Introduce themself and confirm their contact details

- Provide the names and contact details of the other accreditors

- **KEY POINT:** Confirm that case@ipem.ac.uk must be copied into all emails

- **KEY POINT:** Stress the importance of adherence to the CASE Timeframe for Accreditation

- Finalise the Timeframe for Accreditation by agreeing the date of the event

- Confirm whether the event will be a joint event; ideally it should be a joint event

- Confirm whether the event will be virtual or in-person

- **KEY POINT:** Check the Programme/Course team are using the correct CASE Guidance Document

- **KEY POINT:** Remind the Programme/Course team to use the 'Documentation Requirements' form

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Documentation Requirements for Accreditation / Reaccreditation

This electronic form, previously known as the 'tick list' for accreditors, has been updated to align with the CASE Compendium Guidance Documents and can be downloaded from the CASE website.

KEY POINT:

The Lead Accreditor should remind the Programme/Course Leads that they are now required to complete and submit the Documentation Requirements form, as part of their accreditation/ re-accreditation pack, to highlight in which document and which section the relevant information is located.

The Programme/Course Leads also need to be informed that their responses must be as specific as possible to streamline the accreditation process and enable the accreditors to complete their work in a timely manner.

Roles of accreditation team members

- **KEY POINT:** Once the accreditors have been appointed; the Lead Accreditor should convene an initial online pre-meeting with the accrediting team to outline the process and ensure that each member understands their role. Facilitating a buddy system can be very helpful at this stage.

- **KEY POINT:** All three accreditors are expected to read and annotate the programme/ course documentation with a view to formulating questions

- **KEY POINT:** the Lead Accreditor is expected to convene an online meeting to discuss the Shadow Accreditor's notes and questions to support their development. This allows review of the Shadow Accreditor's feedback to explore areas they have covered and identify if there are any gaps. If this would be of benefit for the Co-accreditor, that can also be considered.

- **KEY POINT:** Once the date of the event is known, the Co-accreditor should contact CASE@ipem.ac.uk to request a Doodle Poll to identify a date and time for the debrief

- **KEY POINT:** Once the date of the event is known, the Lead Accreditor should convene a pre-event meeting with the accrediting team to identify the lines of enquiry and who will ask each question

- All three accreditors are expected to attend and contribute to the accreditation event if it is a virtual event.

- **KEY POINT:** The Shadow Accreditor is expected to contribute questions before the event if the event is in-person

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Roles of accreditation team members (continued)

- The Lead and Co-accreditor are expected to attend if the event is in-person

- **KEY POINT:** All three accreditors are expected to attend the de-brief.

- **KEY POINT:** The Lead accreditor must ensure that the correct Programme Reporting Template for CASE Committee approval is being used

- The templates have recently been updated and now include a version for CASE Committee and a slightly different version for HEIs

- The version for CASE Committee includes a new section entitled **Identify Specific Concerns Regarding Course Content, Delivery or Assessment for Future Review**

- This new section is where accreditors can note any concerns which cannot be made a condition (e.g. staff to student ratio) but which should be picked up again by the APMR process and/or an interim review.

HEI interactions with CASE Accreditors

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- Programme/Course Leads need to be made aware of the following statements to reinforce the use of the Documentation Checklist and to understand that poor documentation can cause a delay in the process.

- **KEY POINT:** CASE accreditors undertake this work in addition to their substantive roles. It is therefore important that their volunteer time is respected and that no unsolicited telephone contact is made. To ensure timely and effective accreditation processes, documentation should be complete, in a logical order with clear indexing and sent in a timely manner.

- **KEY POINT:** Inaccurate, incomplete, contradictory or disorganised documentation takes up an enormous amount of accreditor time; therefore, CASE will no longer be able to review substandard documentation.

- If the documentation is deemed to be substandard, the Programme/Course team will be asked to follow CASE guidance and complete the documents to an acceptable standard. A deadline must be agreed to avoid delaying the accreditation / reaccreditation. If the deadline is missed, CASE accreditors should contact CASE for advice.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

CASE expects the following:

- Clarity on which RPL processes are available to learners e.g. recognition of certified learning (RP(C)L) only or certified and experiential (RP(E)L) learning

- An evidenced process for reviewing RPL applications and appropriate supporting documentation

- Support for the learner to evidence their prior learning at the appropriate academic level

- Clarification on the mechanisms in place for faculty to evaluate the RPL processes and ensure consistency

- Details about how the academic assessment board and external examiner oversee the standards of RPL evidence and mapping to module and programme learning outcomes, including clinical competency where relevant

- Evidence to ensure that assessors involved in the RPL process are adequately trained and possess the necessary expertise to evaluate prior ultrasound learning effectively.

CASE does not stipulate credits that can be bought forward; however, the education provider should have clear processes to demonstrate:

- **KEY POINT:** Maximum credit that can be transferred from another CASE accredited programme

- **KEY POINT:** If applicable, maximum credit that can be transferred from a non-CASE accredited award

- Currency of learning and credit transfer.

- The RPL process must be transparent, with clear guidelines and criteria available to all applicants. Fairness must be ensured by applying consistent standards and providing applicants with feedback and opportunities for appeal.

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Student time spent on clinical placement

KEY POINT:

CASE recognises that a number of scans/contact hours are required to achieve clinical competence; however, this can be hard to specify precisely in a set of criteria. The real outcome required is clinical competence.

For sonographers, CASE expects this to be an average of 14-16 hours per week clinical scanning across the whole programme/course.

Theoretical and clinical assessments

KEY POINT:

- In the absence of evidenced exceptional/mitigating circumstances or equivalent, CASE permits two attempts at each assessment (a first attempt and one reassessment)

- CASE does not permit the use of compensation or condonement in relation to failed elements of assessment; all assessments must be passed

- CASE does not support undefined assessment length or 're-take' modules where a student has exhausted both first and reassessment opportunities on the first attempt at a given module.

Standards for Sonographic Education 2025 (V5)

- Updated the minimum qualification in order to practise as a sonographer in the UK to reflect the BSc (Hons) programmes available and the requirements for registering with the RCT

- Added 'actionable' reports to level 7 and 8 learning outcomes to reflect RCR standards

- Added AI and deep learning to the learning outcomes at the different levels

- Changed the wording of advanced clinical practice to advanced practice in line with NHSE documentation

- Updated the Standards of Proficiency for a Sonographer to reflect changes in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency for a Radiographer

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Artificial intelligence and deep learning technology

KEY POINT:

- Level 6 Learning Outcome

Demonstrate awareness of the principles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deep learning technology, and its application to practice. This includes having an understanding of the sonographer's legal, ethical and moral duties when using AI

KEY POINT:

- Level 7 Learning Outcome

Demonstrate a critical awareness of the principles of AI and deep learning technology, and its development and application to practice. This includes having an understanding of the sonographer's legal, ethical and moral duties when using AI

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Moderation of summative clinical assessments

Work is currently underway to identify a range of approaches to the moderation of summative clinical assessments that are deemed to be appropriate by CASE and achievable by HEIs.

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Accreditor training webinars

- **KEY POINT:** It is important to attend the training webinars in order to maintain your accreditor role

- If you have not done so already, please confirm that you have either attended or watched the 2025 training webinars by contacting the CASE Co-ordinator at CASE@ipem.ac.uk

Your attendance today will be logged automatically.

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