

C onsortium for the A ccreditation of S onographic E ducation

NEWS
July 2011

This newsletter aims to provide up to date information regarding CASE activities & requirements regarding validation, annual programme monitoring & other relevant issues.

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Report from the Chair

The latest meeting of CASE was held on 16th June at Hamilton House in London. As usual the meeting was well attended and a wide range of issues were discussed.

The move of CASE administration from the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) to the Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine (IPEM) has gone reasonably smoothly. IPEM produced the Annual Financial statement for CASE which showed a small balance in funds.

The Annual Performance Monitoring Review (APMR) was almost complete at the time of the meeting, thanks to the hard work of the APMR Committee, Andrew Fairhead Chair, David Oxborough and Rosemary Lee. Nineteen programmes that have been accredited were reviewed, and were all thought to be successful, however, there were still some outstanding minor issues at time of the meeting which needed clarification.

The use of the on-line reporting form had simplified matters to some extent but there were still some issues outstanding. It was interesting that many HEI's volunteered very useful information on how these could be rectified and Andrew and his team will be dealing with this over the summer. There was also some discussion on how to further improve the reporting of programmes and how Lead Accreditors may be able to contribute to this process. Further information will be forthcoming in the Autumn.

All HEI's should be receiving their individual reports in the near future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Programme Leads and the APMR committee for their involvement in this process.

The Accreditor Training Day in May at City University London was well attended and an enjoyable day for all due to the rather unusual presentation of the programme. See the review; perhaps it will encourage you to become an Accreditor for CASE.

I wish you all a very pleasant summer.

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CASE Chair

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Open Forum

CASE open forums are annual workshops which seek to address the work of the Consortium and are open not only to programme leaders, CASE accreditors and member organisation's representatives, but also to anyone who has an interest in ultrasound education, skills training and clinical practice. The Vice Chair is responsible for these events and works closely with a local organising team to ensure that each forum is a success. The idea of a roving location with an on-site organiser (supported by the CASE Coordinator) is to provide opportunities for as many people as possible to attend the events over a 3-4 year period.

I reported in the Newsletter exactly a year ago that CASE had received a significant number of queries related to clinical competency, skills training and the associated assessments and mentoring. In order to address these queries and provide an opportunity for delegates to explore contemporary ways of delivering clinical education in medical ultrasound, an Open Forum was arranged at the University of Portsmouth in May. Sue Halson-Brown, the programme leader, organised an excellent programme of talks supported by well-known national speakers. Its aim was to stimulate debate around what can be a controversial topic and possibly influence the accreditation process. The event had to be cancelled due to lack of interest and low registration numbers. Likely reasons for the cancellation were identified as CPD allocation constraints on staff, removal of nearly all financial support for staff development, poor advertising and the meeting's geographical location.

The disappointing outcome, not only for CASE but for Sue and her Portsmouth team, has prompted this electronic forum on these annual workshops. The 2012 workshop is in the planning stages with a draft programme in place but it would be helpful to hear as many of your views as possible now so that future workshops are fit for purpose.

The queries below are just some that have been raised at CASE meetings.

- Is London the most convenient venue for open forums?
- If the workshops are organised out of London, where is the most central UK venue?
- In what month is the most suitable time to organise an open forum?
- Should the workshop arrangements be shared between a local group and CASE representatives? Why?
- What topics should be included in an open forum?
- Do debates or focus group work enhance an open forum programme?
- Normally the registration fee is between £65-£85 depending on the venue location, is this value for money?
- To fix the registration fee even lower, it has been suggested that a BYOL (bring your own lunch) policy is adopted, is this a reasonable suggestion?
- Currently open forum advertising takes place through the CASE web-site and the e-mailing list to ensure costs are kept as low as possible, how can advertising of an event be improved without an associated increase in costs?
- Should the open forums be removed completely from the CASE annual timetable of proceedings?

It is likely there are a host more questions. Many of you will have other points to raise and questions that you would like answering. The CASE representatives would like to hear from anyone with an opinion on these open forums. It would be helpful if we could have your responses in time for the next

meeting in early October to influence the discussion. Please respond to me, hrlsupportus@googlemail.com or Cathy at the CASE Office.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Information for Programme and Course Teams and Accreditors

There are several programme and course (re)accreditations and applications for changes to existing provision at various stages of review by the CASE accreditors. These were discussed at the latest meeting on 16 June and programme and course leaders will be hearing from Cathy Brown shortly.

Application proformas for postgraduate programmes, focused courses and changes to provision have been amended and are available on the website or from Cathy Brown. Please note that CASE requires a completed proforma in all cases in order to proceed. Similarly for CASE accreditors revised reporting proformas for postgraduate programmes and focused course accreditation are now ready. Cathy will attach the relevant reporting proforma to your invitation to accredit.

The standards associated with accreditations have been slightly adjusted so that programme or course leaders will be informed of their accreditation team with contact details by the Coordinator early after their appointment. The lead accreditor will be expected to contact the programme team as soon as possible. It is hoped that this will speed-up the initial phase of the accreditation process. Also, accreditation reports are required for discussion at each CASE meeting. Similarly this process will ensure a timely response to the programme team of successful accreditation.

CASE representatives have taken notice of some minor criticisms from institutions about the number of accreditors attending accreditation meetings. After considerable discussion, the representatives are in agreement that at least two accreditors must be present at the event especially if the programme is complex. It has also strongly advised that a shadow accreditor in training should also attend especially as expenses for this person are covered by CASE. A shadow accreditor will attend in place of a lead or co-accreditor who has given their apologies. It is expected that lead accreditors will inform the appropriate person at the institution who from CASE will be attending the event.

CASE is mindful of the challenges and pressures currently facing ultrasound programme and course teams across UK. These situations are probably influencing the unexpected requests for early accreditation reviews or changes to current educational and training provision. However, we would like to respectfully remind all programme and course leaders of the need to inform the Coordinator of any impending accreditation reviews or changes to their provision as soon as possible. This request is also linked to the arrangements for setting a date for the accreditation meeting as late changes can be very difficult to arrange. This is due mainly to the fact that organising time-out from work to attend an accreditation event, which might last up to two or three days with travel time included, needs carefully planning by the accreditation team with at least six or even eight weeks' notice for absence required by employers.

Any reader who is or has been an accreditor will know the amount of work that is required to complete an accreditation process successfully – all undertaken voluntarily with support from a very small CASE

team, with no fee. With little time allocated for professional development by employers, the reading and associated cross-referencing can be challenging tasks especially when the process takes longer than expected. CASE has determined that the total period for completion of an accreditation is approximately one year (Handbook, p15), depending on the complexity of the educational provision and whether there are any exceptional circumstances. If the process is prolonged, currency of information can be threatened, accreditation may lapse and enrolled students may not be studying on an accredited programme. Only in very unusual situations does CASE extend a current accreditation period for more than one year. Most of our accreditations are completed in twelve months but if circumstances arise that may prolong the process please can all programme teams keep up communication with their lead accreditor and the Coordinator whenever possible. *(Recently an excellent accreditation review was completed within four months – well done to that university team!).*

As already mentioned, programme and course teams are facing unprecedented challenges which appear to be influencing innovative new developments within postgraduate programmes. Several recent accreditations have included work-based or negotiated learning modules in both certificate and diploma pathways. These are generally accredited by CASE but the documentation must demonstrate that in all cases where it is the only negotiated clinical module in an ultrasound pathway, a clinical competency assessment with a Pass/Fail mark must be included. Where a negotiated module is included in a pathway that does not directly lead to an ultrasound award, a clinical competency assessment is not required.

For focused course accreditation, CASE requires that the course team identifies a specific competency route and it does not accredit, at the moment, a generic-titled focused course in medical ultrasound.

CASE has always accredited postgraduate programmes with *medical, clinical or diagnostic ultrasound* in the award titles (Handbook, p11). Possibly in an attempt to address the current educational situation, postgraduate programmes across healthcare are being combined and generic pathway and award titles are appearing on CASE accreditation application proformas. CASE will accredit programmes with such titles as Postgraduate Diploma in Medical Imaging or Postgraduate Certificate in Healthcare Practice but the accreditors will expect to identify clear and well-defined learning outcomes for medical ultrasound, appropriate curriculum and learning strategies and a competency assessment in ultrasound in all the relevant documentation. Also, CASE will expect that all students from such programmes as identified above are issued with an exit transcript that clearly identifies the ultrasound component and related clinical assessments in the award.

(The previous two points related to programme/course titles and pathways will be expanded in our Hot Tips for Accreditation in the autumn.)

Finally a reminder to all accreditors that training, which is critical to a successful and timely accreditation process outcome, is offered annually and there is no registration fee to attend this workshop. Unfortunately, attendance at training days has been less than satisfactory over the last two years, even with personal invitations being extended to those concerned. It has been necessary following a review of the attendance at the latest workshop in May to identify those accreditors on the register where training is outstanding. These individuals will be contacted either personally or through their member organisation in September to request they attend training by May 2012 or to remove themselves from the register.

Rosemary Lee, Past Chair

Feedback on Accredited Courses

We are quite pleased with our new on-line reporting system, and feedback from the programme leaders has been largely positive. We have received some constructive criticism which we will try to take into account before the next cycle.

We have noted the following general points about the CASE-accredited courses:

- Overall, the 09/10 academic year has been successful for most HEIs and programme teams, in spite of considerable challenges for some.
- Attrition is low across most programmes.
- Almost all of the received external examiner reports are very positive and complimentary.
- Many programmes offer a Negotiated/Focused Module for Practice and we commend this response to service needs.
- The number of students studying for an MSc is low, and we would encourage HEIs to consider ways of increasing it.

Study methods are evolving, with blended learning appearing in some programmes. Properly implemented, blended learning should be an appropriate mix of methods, not just virtual (on-line) learning.

We were glad to receive permission to publish the following programme leader's report (slightly edited), which we felt would be inspiring to other teams who are similarly striving to provide and develop good-quality teaching:

"Recruitment was again excellent this year. Two students with 3rd class degrees were offered PgC places initially. Both have shown adequate progress and are continuing to PgD.

"Programme team's activities: The project funded by CETL (Centre for Excellence in Teaching & Learning) to provide an on-line package for assisting academic and clinical staff in providing feedback is now complete and available on the website http://www.cetl.org.uk/learning/feedback_opportunities/player.html.

Feedback has been sought from clinical supervisors, including ultrasound mentors & has been presented locally & at the Association for Medical Education in Europe conference (see presentations below). The package has gained CPD Now accreditation from the College of Radiographers. On-line case discussions were introduced to the course this year and despite some initial challenges have provided students with an excellent range of interesting cases to discuss or observe. Students are encouraged to become involved in writing up articles on these cases with their fetal medicine colleagues.

The programme team have been involved in a number of conference & study day presentations to share experiences (see presentations below).

The CRA (Centre for Recording Achievement) conference was a national event at which the programme director facilitated a workshop following a presentation. This enabled the team to get some advice and feedback about on-line and patchwork learning from a number of experienced educationalists and patchwork learning experts. Some of these suggestions have helped to improve

the on-line case-discussion assessments further & have been utilised to prepare the patchwork teaching and assessment for the new Developing Advanced Practice module.

The programme team were successful in gaining funding for fetal heart models, to demonstrate the views recommended by FASP (2010). These will be used in clinical skills sessions and fetal heart lectures. Funding was also gained for an ergometer and other equipment to help demonstrate good ergonomic techniques. Initially this has been used to demonstrate normal movements and the effect on muscles for on-line lectures, but will also be utilised during the formative clinical assessments within the skills suite. Students have requested we demonstrate the muscle strain associated with the use of pressure when scanning to the clinical supervisors during the forthcoming training sessions, as some supervisors are telling colleagues they need to push harder.

“Quality management: Module feedback has been generally positive. All modules scored between 3.5 - 5 / 5 in each category. Most modules scored >4 in all categories. Students wanted more challenging mock OSE questions and more mock sessions, although all the film viewing (which has been increased in the past year or two) is relevant for the OSE revision and clinical practice. The newly revised programme starting in September 2010 will provide more opportunity for small group film viewing, which students value highly. The ultrasound-specific induction day was well received by students. They particularly valued the sessions on paraphrasing and reflection. These will be continued, as there is an increasing trend for students with BSc qualifications to have poor academic writing and referencing skills.

“Changes for 2010: The University is moving to a new virtual learning environment. The programme director is a key member of the university implementation team and all new ultrasound students will have access to this resource, with additional on-line lectures, activities and self study quizzes. There are additional student support resources available & all students will be directed to this information, particularly those who need additional help with academic skills. External Examiners: The programme team were pleased that the external examiner commended the ‘range of innovative assessment methods used in this programme’ and the detailed feedback provided to students. The team have worked hard to develop the feedback to students, using both grade-related criteria and assessment criteria for the on-line case discussions. Student feedback has also been obtained and considered when developing this further.

“The team have given presentations or posters about their teaching developments and innovations at the British Medical Ultrasound Society 42nd Annual Scientific Meeting, the Association for Medical Education in Europe Conference, the Institute of Health Sciences Education research afternoon, the Centre for Recording Achievement Conference; and at locally-organised colloquium and in an on-line resource.”

Report on Accreditor Training Day

The Accreditor Training Day held at City University, London on Friday 20th May 2011 was very successful. It was well attended, with six new potential accreditors from across the country.

Lynda Mulhair, CASE Chair facilitated the day, but it was lead by Jennifer Edie and Gill Harrison, Lead Accreditors for CASE and very experienced Senior Lecturers in Ultrasound at City University.

The Programme for the day included an overview of the role of the Lead Accreditor by Jennifer Edie. The Workshop sessions for document review used Role Play on our rather unsuspecting participants. The

participants were asked to take on the role of CASE Accreditors during an Accreditation Event, and had to review the document with this in mind. The Education Panel, of Jennifer, Gill and Lynda played the roles of Chair, Education Lead and Programme Director. The participants then had time to question the Panel on any issues they felt were important with the documentation.

The participants were then asked to consider issues they thought should be discussed with students and clinical staff on the proposed course, and again had the opportunity to question the supposed 'clinical staff'.

Whilst this might sound a rather onerous task, the day was fun and quite different from previous Accreditor Training Days. It highlighted the issues involved in an accreditation event, particularly how intensively the documentation must be reviewed. It also highlighted the fact that clinicians and educationalists review the

documentation in almost entirely different ways, each bringing a different view on what is presented. This is one of the reasons why CASE insists that two Accreditors attend Accreditation Events, one clinical, one academic.

The feedback from the day was uniformly very good. All participants liked the informality of the day and all enjoyed the role play.

Comments included:

"Role playing" accreditation event was fantastic. I have gained good insight into the accreditation process, largely due to the teaching methods used during the day".

"a very stimulating programme and interestingly presented!"

"it was good to realise that sometimes one can read a document and miss things that one "assumes", but are not explicit".

"excellent day and "mock" accreditation visit highlighted issues necessary to be discussed!"

"programme was good, felt confident that I had an understanding of the process".

All in all, a good day for both participants and slightly reluctant Role Players.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jennifer Edie and Gill Harrison for providing an excellent venue and lovely lunch, and, for the hard work they put into making the day so successful and enjoyable.

Lynda Mulhair, CASE Chair