Position statement:

Education and training of diagnostic radiographers working in Magnetic Resonance Imaging

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SoR
THE SOCIETY OF RADIOGRAPHERS

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Introduction

The Society of Radiographers (SoR) receives enquiries regarding the requirements for, and provision of, the training and education of radiographers working in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), with particular reference to associated safety considerations. Whilst it is the employer's responsibility to ensure that staff are appropriately trained and educated to carry out a job role competently and safely, this statement sets out the position of the SoR as the professional body for the radiographic workforce in relation to the training and education of radiographers working in MRI.

Pre-registration education and training

Understanding the physical principles of image formation and radiation safety in MRI has long been a component of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) *Standards of proficiency for Radiographers*. Updated *Standards of proficiency for Radiographers* came into effect in September 2023, with the requirement that at the point of registration, diagnostic radiographers must be able to "perform standard magnetic resonance imaging procedures" and "ensure the physical safety of all individuals in the imaging/therapeutic work environment, especially with regard to radiation safety and high-strength magnetic fields".

Postgraduate education and training

The SoR expects diagnostic radiographers to build upon their pre-registration knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology recognition and technology to effectively deliver high-quality services for patients through postgraduate education and training, facilitating their development as outlined in the College of Radiographers *Education and Career Framework for the Radiography Workforce*.

Diagnostic radiographers are required to have a highly developed understanding of the physical principles of MRI and a detailed anatomical knowledge, including micro-anatomical structures now demonstrated by higher field strength magnets, when working within MRI services. To produce high-quality images, practitioners must also understand the structure and function of organs and systems within the human body, contrast agent mechanisms and other medicines utilised in MRI. The use of high-strength static magnetic fields present significant safety considerations and require radiographers to have extensive knowledge and understanding as outlined in the publication *Safety in Magnetic Resonance Imaging*. This knowledge ensures the safety of patients and others entering the MR (Magnetic Resonance) environment.

It is essential that a practitioner's development is underpinned by appropriate postgraduate education and training to support the safe delivery of professional practice. The SoR recognises that there are many opportunities and programmes available to achieve this; however, the SoR recommends that programmes should hold College of Radiographers programme approval or CPD (Continuing Professional Development) Now endorsement. Programmes range from practical and online CPD courses through to PG Certificate, PG Diploma and MSc qualifications in MRI.

MR safety training, education and competence

The SoR position on MR safety training, education and competence is that it expects all radiographers working in MRI to have the required knowledge, skills and competencies relative to their role and level of practice to ensure a safe environment for patients, carers and other staff.

The minimum safety requirements are outlined in the publication *Safety in Magnetic Resonance Imaging*.

The SoR recognises that MR safety training, education and competence could be achieved via several routes that may include postgraduate qualifications, in house training, e-learning packages and CoR-approved programmes or CPD-endorsed short courses.

Competence of diagnostic radiographers to practice safely in MRI is the responsibility of the employer and the practitioner.

MRSO certification

Regarding safety education and training in MRI, the SoR receives the following enquiry: whether the MR Safety Officer, MRSO certification, is a requirement for a radiographer to work in MRI in the UK.

In the UK there is no mandatory requirement to complete the MRSO examination. The core curriculum for radiographers in the UK includes the development of knowledge, skills and competencies in MRI (at the registration level), and these are further built upon through achieving additional qualifications supporting practice at enhanced, advanced and consultant levels within an MRI service to meet local need.

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