

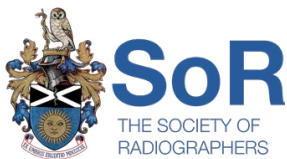
Position statement:

Regarding the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency 2023

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

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Background

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) publish the [standards of proficiency for radiographers](#) (SOPs). These are the threshold (entry-level) standards required to be met by radiographers to be eligible to apply for HCPC registration. The latest version (effective from September 2023) specifically states that diagnostic radiographers should be able to **“perform standard magnetic resonance imaging procedures”** (13.36). To support understanding and encourage consistency across pre-registration education and training provision, the Society of Radiographers (SoR) is providing the following guidance statement in relation to the HCPC SOP 13.36 and further general associated expectations relating to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Expectations of radiographers’ knowledge and use of MRI

The purpose of the HCPC SOPs is to express the level of proficiency for a radiographer at the point of qualification, after which time the radiographer’s scope of practice may broaden and expand in keeping with their role as their career develops through further education, training and continuing professional development.

However, all radiographers should understand the basic hazards of MRI in keeping with standard 14.7 (“ensure the physical safety of all individuals in the imaging/therapeutic work environment, especially with regard to radiation safety and high-strength magnetic fields”). This would include their responsibilities regarding the safety of patients, colleagues and referrers. This includes knowledge of the static magnetic field, time-varying magnetic fields, radiofrequency fields, acoustic noise and cryogenics. This knowledge should include the understanding and application of safety screening of those involved in the MRI process, including service users and staff, in keeping with Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Guidelines.

Awareness of the service user’s experience in MRI, which can prove to be a challenge for some patients, is essential for all radiographers. This encompasses standard 12.15 (“understand the capability, applications and range of equipment used in their profession”), standard 7.11 for diagnostic radiographers (“provide appropriate information and support for service users throughout their diagnostic imaging examinations”) and standard 7.13 for therapeutic radiographers (“provide appropriate information and support for service users throughout their radiotherapy treatment and care or related diagnostic imaging examinations”).

Diagnostic radiographers in all areas are expected to be aware of new developments in MRI so that they can advise other healthcare professionals about the relevance and application of imaging modalities to the service user’s needs (7.10).

Specialist MR radiographers are expected to have a full understanding of all aspects of MR radiography, having undertaken further education, training and development in MR in alignment with the [CoR Education and Career Framework](#).

Pre-registration competency in MRI and determination of “standard MRI procedures”

Pre-registration diagnostic radiography learners are expected to have exposure to MRI as part of their practice placement or work-based learning experiences as they are working towards meeting the HCPC SOPs.

It is the SoR's view that examples of “standard MRI procedures” may include MRI imaging of the brain, lumbar spine and knee. However, it is recognised that not all MRI units perform these examinations, and therefore “standard” procedures may include alternative examinations that are deemed to be routinely performed at the given MRI department where the learner is placed.

In addition to gaining experience of routine examinations, part of performing standard MRI procedures could include performing a 3-point ID check of the patient, gaining informed consent for the examination, completing the MR patient safety checklist, providing explanation of the scan, slice planning in line with anatomy, and completion of the examination under the supervision of an MR radiographer. To perform the examination with supervision, the student will have an awareness of the safety procedures of the department, supported by theoretical underpinning of MRI safety and physical principles covered during academic study at their university.

Further considerations

Reasonable adjustments should be made where a learner cannot enter the MR environment due to a medical implant or condition. Where reasonable adjustments in practice prevent the learner from entering the scan room to physically position the patient and operate the scanner, subsequent reasonable adjustments for assessment of the learner's ability to “perform standard MRI procedures” may include verbal or written assessment of patient positioning and scanner alignment, with practical assessment of the control room operations as an alternative.

Resources

[Education and Career Framework for the Radiography Workforce 4th Edition](#)

[Clinical Imaging e-learning programme](#): offers a comprehensive range of MRI modules

[National e-learning programme for MRI Safety](#): freely available to NHS staff and academic institutions (access for others is available via the [e -integrity platform](#))

[Directory of College of Radiographers approved post-registration courses](#)

