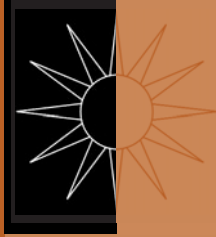


THE SOCIETY OF  
RADIOGRAPHERS



AGENDA FOR CHANGE

# Accelerated Career Progression: A Policy Briefing

THE COLLEGE OF  
RADIOGRAPHERS





A G E N D A   F O R   C H A N G E

## **Accelerated Career Progression: A Policy Briefing**

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**First edition  
July 2005**

**The Society of Radiographers**

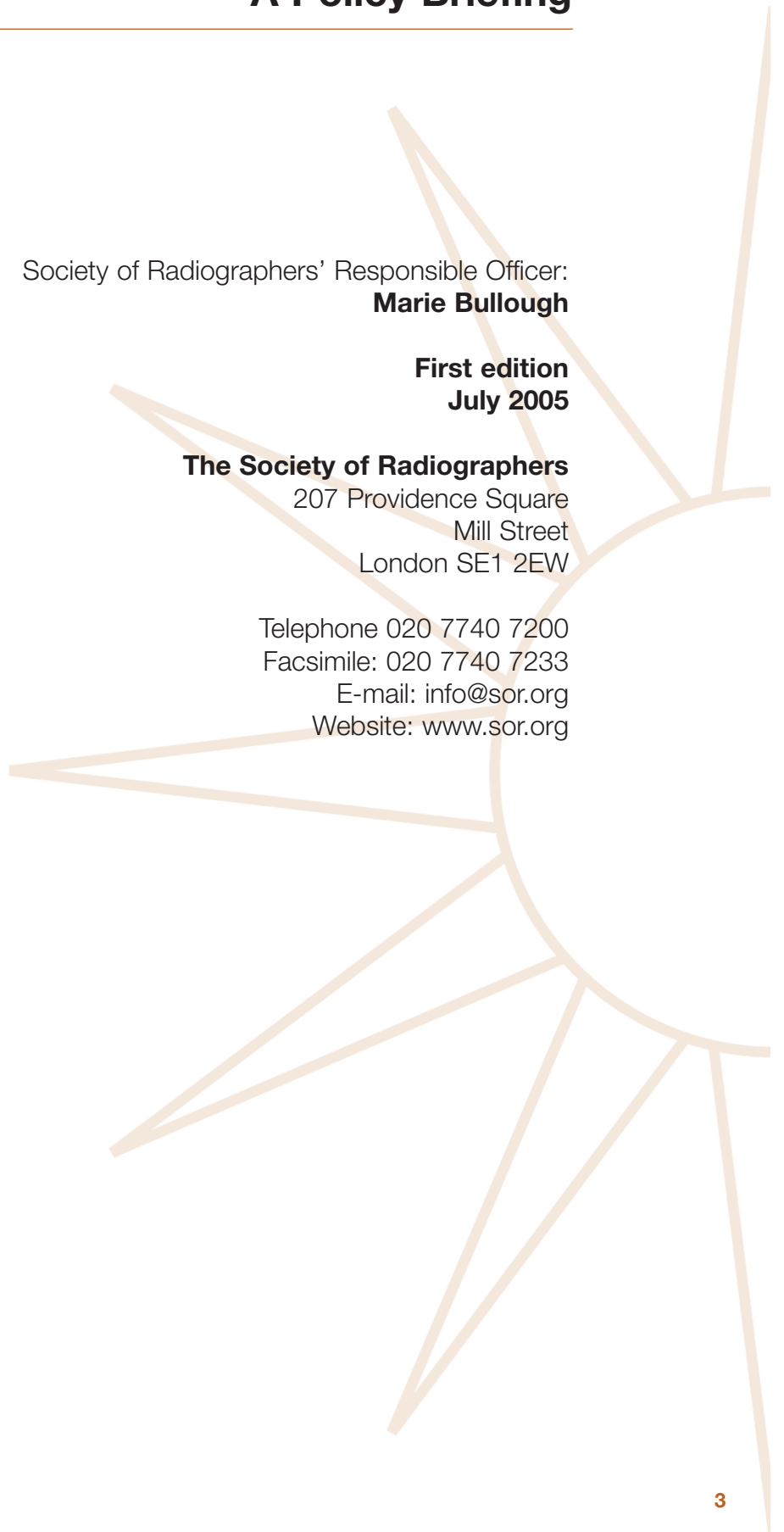
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## **Accelerated career progression and newly qualified radiographers: A Policy statement**

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The Society of Radiographers believes that Agenda for Change must facilitate accelerated career progression to enable radiographers to deliver the Government's health agenda, and to secure the support of the profession.

Career progression is one of the cornerstones of Agenda for Change and is enshrined in Annex T of the Terms and Conditions Handbook (and in Annex K of the Final Agreement). The Society of Radiographers' policy is that Annex T must apply to all newly qualified radiographers.

The Society of Radiographers recognises that Annex T requires radiographers to demonstrate accelerated development in their first two years' post qualification. This development must elevate their skills and knowledge beyond those required of a Band 5 radiographer, equipping them to undertake a level of autonomous decision-making associated with posts at Band 6.

All newly qualified radiographers must be subject to a preceptorship period of between one and two years during which they will be given appropriate support and funding to facilitate accelerated progression from Band 5 to Band 6. The Society of Radiographers expects that all newly qualified radiographers will be employed on the express understanding that they will progress from Band 5 to Band 6 within two years, and that all posts will be funded accordingly.

The Society of Radiographers recognises that it is imperative for the service, and for the development of the individuals concerned that, during the preceptorship period, Band 5 radiographers undertake some duties associated with Band 6. As part of a formal preceptorship programme, Band 5 radiographers may undertake some duties that require Band 6 levels of clinical judgement, autonomous decision-making and freedom to act. However, adequate supervision and support must be available at all times.

This policy applies to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. All agreements on accelerated career progression, whether at local or national level, should be aligned with this policy. The Society of Radiographers recognises that successful implementation of this policy depends on partnership between radiography managers and SoR accredited representatives.

**SoR Council, June 2005**

## **Agenda for Change and Annex T**

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Annex T of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook says:

### **Development of professional roles**

1. The NHS Job Evaluation Scheme recognises that all health care professionals who have, as a base level, graduate qualification evaluate at a similar level. Whilst there may be differences these are unlikely to be sufficient to justify a different pay band. This means that it is very likely that they will be placed on pay band 5. Thereafter most professionals will spend a period of several years in pay band 5 developing their role.
2. It is the case thereafter that for a minority of staff there is some divergence as different professions follow different career pathways. There are also often different organisational structures in place to deliver health care.
3. There are groups of staff (such as midwives) who tend to move quickly to operate in roles that demand a level of autonomous decision making in the overall delivery of care that exceeds that normally associated with jobs allocated to pay band 5. Typically, these roles operate without the influence of other professional groups. Where supervision operates, it is generally management supervision and does not normally impinge upon clinical practice. In such circumstances, job size should be reviewed no earlier than one year and no later than two years from the date of qualification, using the NHS job evaluation scheme. If the evaluation demonstrates that the post holder's job weight is of sufficient size to move to the next pay band (pay band 6) this should be effected without the need for application for a post at a higher level. It is not expected that the review will be widespread practice as the majority of staff will work in circumstances in which there is regular clinical supervision and the delivery of care and treatment is subject to control or influence from other health care professionals. There is no facility for this provision to operate in any other part of the pay structure.

## Why should Annex T be applied to newly qualified radiographers?

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The Society of Radiographers believes that Agenda for Change has greater potential to improve service delivery through career development than was possible under Whitley.

Career development is one of the cornerstones of the Agenda for Change agreement and is enshrined in Annex T of the Terms and Conditions Handbook. Annex T allows for accelerated progression between bands 5 and 6. The Society of Radiographers believes that Annex T is applicable to all newly qualified radiographers.

A Society of Radiographers' initiative from 1999 successfully introduced the concept of competency-based progression from the starter grade to the Senior II grade. The reason for this success was that most employers recognised that accelerating the development of newly qualified radiographers was beneficial to the service. Annex T provides the opportunity to translate this work into Agenda for Change.

- Radiographers are critical to any organisation's success in delivering the Government's health agenda and achieving waiting list targets. The quicker that radiographers can be developed from an inexperienced professional to one who undertakes a degree of autonomous decision making, the sooner the service will benefit from their skills and competencies.
- Many radiography jobs will fall into Band 6. Band 6 encompasses a broad range of jobs whose job scores lie between 396 and 465 points. Regardless of the weight of the job (providing the post holder meets the full KSF outline) all post holders of Band 6 jobs will reach the top of the pay scale. It therefore makes financial sense to employ newly qualified radiographers on the express understanding that they will be developed, over a number of years, to meet the KSF outline of a Band 6 job whose job score falls close to the maximum points for Band 6.
- Eliminating shortages. Although it now appears that sufficient numbers of radiographers are qualifying to fill vacancies at the entry level, it is apparent that there is a continuing shortage of radiographers with higher level skills. Accelerated development will provide the skills necessary to fill these higher level posts sooner than would happen if professionals were held in Band 5 posts for a number of years.
- Accelerated development. The vast majority of radiographers are expected to undertake duties that require Band 6 levels of clinical judgement, autonomous decision-making and freedom to act, including providing emergency duties outside of normal working hours. It is critical to the service that radiographers develop sufficiently rapidly to support this type of working.
- Recruiting and retaining. Annex T provides a clear career pathway for potential employees and this could be critical in recruiting and, equally crucially, retaining highly qualified staff.

## Implementing Annex T

The Society of Radiographers has provided members, accredited representatives and service managers with detailed advice on how to implement Annex T in both radiology and radiotherapy services. The Society is advising accredited representatives and managers to work in partnership for the benefit of the patients, the service and for the individual professionals concerned.

The Society of Radiographers hopes that all employers will recognise the benefits of investing in the accelerated development of radiographers and looks forward to taking this aspect of Agenda for Change forward.





**The College of Radiographers**

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