



MANAGERS' BRIEFING



Accelerated career progression for newly qualified radiographers

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

Annex T says...

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.

Turn over to find out why Annex T should be applied to newly qualified radiographers...

Why should Annex T be applied to newly qualified radiographers?

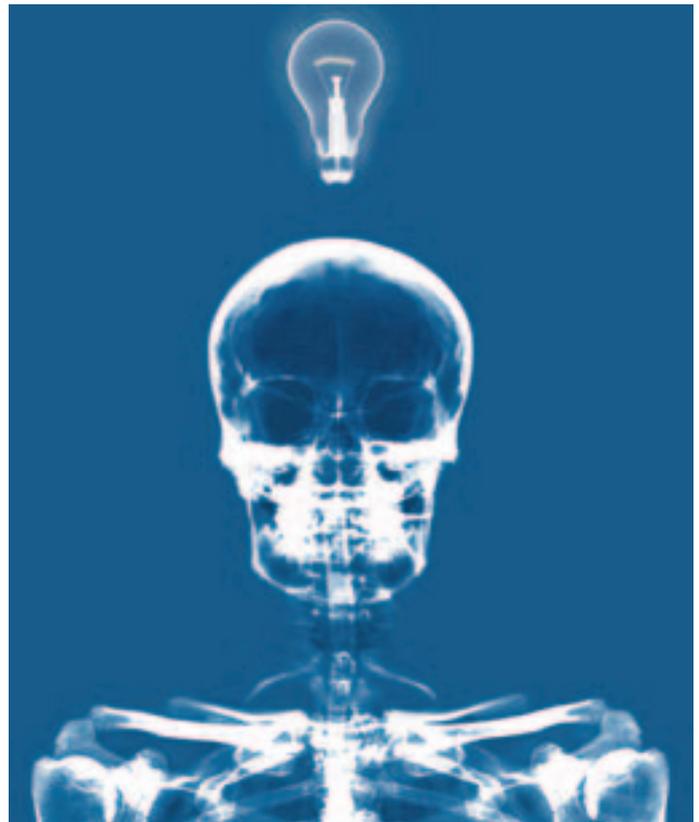
The Society of Radiographers believes that Agenda for Change has greater potential to improve service delivery through career development than was possible under Whitley.

Career development is one of the cornerstones of the Agenda for Change (AfC) 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 AfC.

The Society of Radiographers is encouraging service managers and accredited representatives to work together to implement the Society of Radiographers' policy for the benefit of patients and the good of the service, the profession and individual professionals. A similar briefing has been sent to accredited representatives.

Career development is one of the key elements of AfC. Annex T of the new Terms and Conditions of Employment sets out how accelerated progression between bands 5 and 6 for all newly qualified clinical professionals will operate. For radiographers, this reflects the now familiar linked grade agreements which many departments introduced under Whitley. The Society of Radiographers now wants to build on the work done by service managers and accredited representatives to ensure future career development prospects for radiographers.



Accelerated career progression! What a great idea!

Key Q&As

Who is eligible?

All newly qualified radiographers appointed on Band 5. This is the minimum point for all newly qualified clinical staff. Radiographers should be appointed on the clear

understanding that they will be expected to develop their skills and responsibilities rapidly during the first two years post qualification, to a level which will be equal to the Band 6 level, albeit at the lower end. The Society of Radiographers expects that all newly qualified staff will be appointed to posts to which Annex T of AfC Terms and Conditions applies.

How will it work?

There will be a period of 'preceptorship' of between 12 and 24 months post qualification.

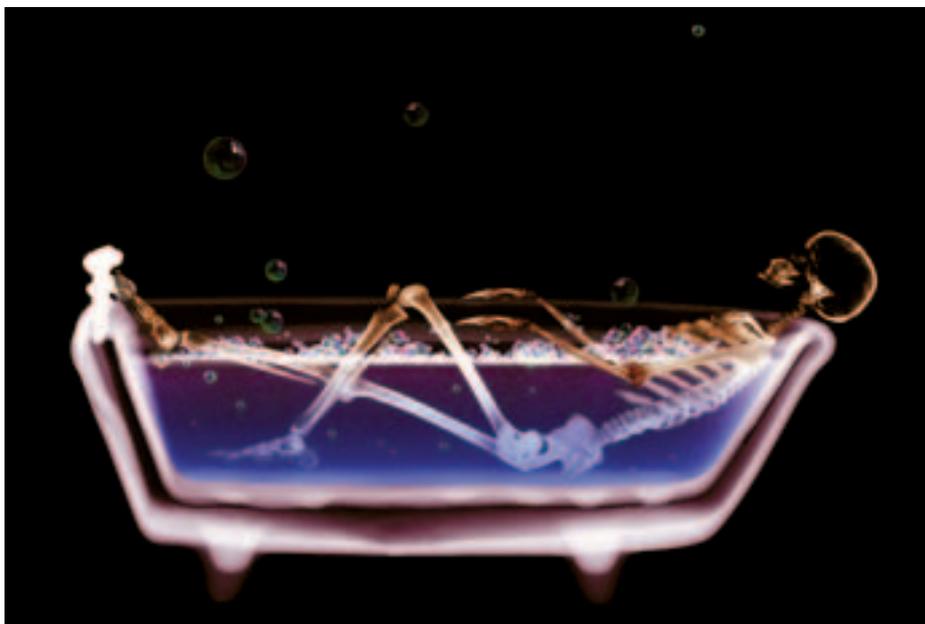
During this time the radiographer will undertake a role that:

- Demands a level of autonomous decision making in the overall delivery of care that exceeds that normally allocated to Pay Band 5, and
- Operates without the influence of other professional groups, and
- Where supervision operates, it is generally management supervision and does not normally impinge upon clinical practice.

Departments will need to put in place a system for mentoring and supporting these staff.

How does it link with the Knowledge and Skills Framework?

Section 3 of the KSF provides for regular development review meetings during the preceptorship period. The KSF outline for the newly qualified radiographer should reflect the range of development that would be expected within 24 months of qualifying. The full KSF outline for the Band 5 radiographer on accelerated progression



Not the time to lie back and ignore the potential in the workforce.

should equate to the KSF sub-outline of the substantive Band 6 post. Fulfilling this outline will allow them to move from Band 5 to Band 6 and on through the first gateway of Band 6. The understanding must be that radiographers are employed on an accelerated career pathway from the outset and posts must be funded accordingly as was the case with the link grade posts.

How does it fit with the Job Evaluation Scheme?

Band 6 encompasses a wide range of jobs. Scores for band 6 jobs lie between 396 and 465 points. Some jobs in Band 6 will score at the lower end of this range and some will be at the very top.

Regardless of the points scores, once a postholder has been appointed to a Band, they are able to progress to the top of that Band, provided that they meet the full KSF outline for that job. The clear expectation is that staff will continue to develop as they move through the Band, generating benefits both for the service and their own career development.

The range of responsibilities and skills which the newly qualified radiographer will acquire during their preceptorship period must be aimed at ensuring that they satisfy the KSF sub-outline for a job with a points score at the lower end of Band 6 by 24 months, in the ways outlined above.

How can that be done?

The JE scheme places great emphasis on autonomous decision-making, levels of clinical judgement and freedom to act. Here are some examples of work that require Band 6 levels of clinical judgement and autonomous decision making:

- Lone working, eg on separate site or in theatre;
- On call, standby, provision of emergency service outside normal hours;
- Working on a radiotherapy unit as the only qualified practitioner;
- Working on a radiotherapy unit and making clinical decisions, eg checking critical clinical parameters.

These examples are chosen because they demonstrate the type of situations that require the individual to act on their own professional judgement, without the influence of other professional groups, and without clinical supervision. Hence, the criteria for Annex T are fulfilled.

Of course, as with the linked grade, it is envisaged that newly qualified staff will be undertaking these duties during their development period. However, they will be mentored and supervised during this period, and there will be gradual introduction of these duties with the accompanying levels of



The Society is encouraging managers and reps to work together

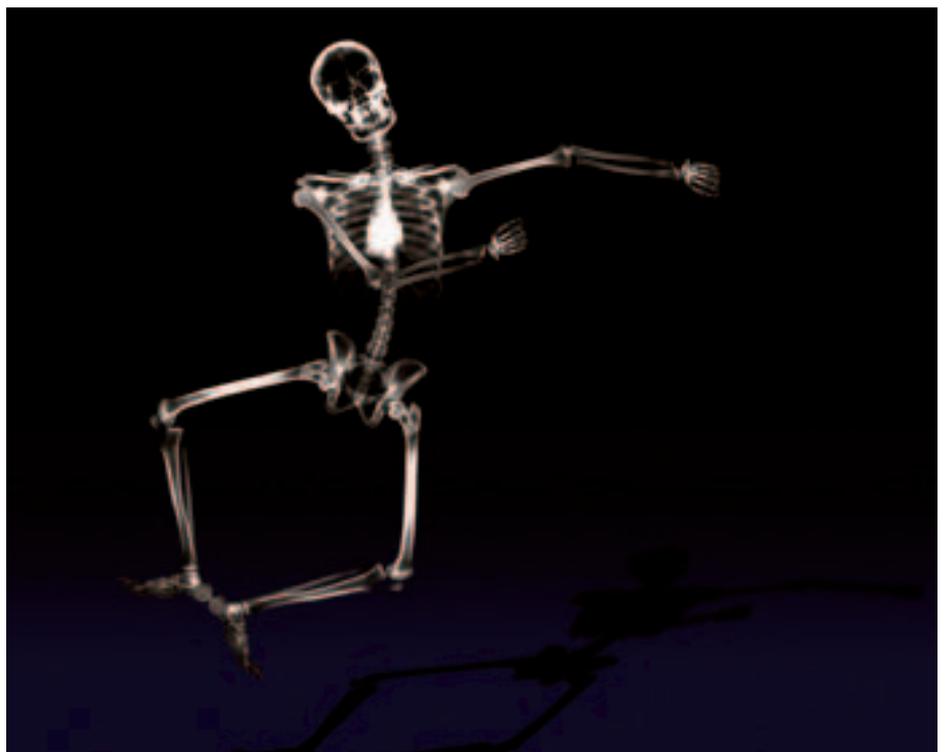
responsibility. Overall, the preceptorship period will demonstrate that the necessary career development is taking place and facilitate accelerated progression of the individual to the substantive Band 6 post.

What happens if a radiographer does not satisfy the criteria by 24 months?

Annex T does not give any guidance on time extensions or appeals, so this should be

agreed in partnership locally with the Society of Radiographers' accredited representative. It is good practice that the development should take place within that time limit, which is similar to that in most linked grade agreements. Experience from the linked grade showed that the exceptions to that progress were rare.

Consideration should be given to the effect of any extended periods of absence which



Go on! Make their day!

may have affected the individual's progress, such as sickness or maternity leave. Other reasons for failing to gain the required competence should be dealt with through the appropriate procedures.

What happens if a radiographer is employed on a linked grade?

Please see 'Linked Grade – The Future', on the following page.

What happens if a radiographer is approaching 24 months and is not employed on a linked grade?

Such staff must seek an urgent review with the objective of putting in place sufficient training to enable them to meet the criteria

for Annex T to apply.

What about radiographers who have been qualified for over 24 months and are not on a linked grade?

Such radiographers should have been matched on Band 6. If this is not the case then they must appeal using the appropriate machinery. Go to www.sor-afc.org for advice.

So what do I need to do?

A similar briefing has been sent to accredited representatives. You and the local Society of Radiographers' representative should discuss and agree how the department intends to recruit and support

newly qualified staff. It is vital that the application of Annex T is planned in advance of staff being appointed. There may also need to be discussions with the AFC lead in your Trust.

The Society of Radiographers has sent a briefing to all service chief executives and AFC leads which explains the Society of Radiographers' policy and explains the advantages of applying Annex T to radiographers. As the lead professional in your organisation, the Society of Radiographers is depending on you to promote the implementation of this policy at the highest level. A business case may need to be made to demonstrate the necessity and benefit of utilising Annex T.

What have we said to employers?

A briefing has been sent to chief executives and Agenda for Change Leads to ensure they are aware of the Society's Accelerated Career Progression campaign – and to help them understand why the Society thinks it is so important.

We have made a number of points to them, including the following:

- **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.

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.



Linked grade agreements – The future

The SoR is aware that some members are currently employed under a 'linked grade agreement', most commonly between radiographer and senior II grades but also on senior II/I and above.

Such agreements, reached under the auspices of Advance Letter PAM (PTA) 3/96 have served radiographers and the service well. However, as from 1 October 2004, Whitley Council terms and conditions were replaced by Agenda for Change terms and conditions. As a result linked grade agreements cannot continue to apply in their current form. Therefore the Society of Radiographers issues the following advice:

- (i) Where departments are still involved in negotiating a linked grade agreement they should transfer the focus of their discussions to the link between Band 5 and Band 6 as set down in Annex T of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook.

The arguments in favour of implementing linked grade agreements under Whitley and applying Annex T are virtually identical and therefore the work that departments have already done will not be wasted and should be readily transferable.

- (ii) Where departments have a linked grade agreement in place, reps and service managers should work in partnership to agree to replace the Whitley linked grade agreement with an agreement based on Annex T. Such agreements should be in line with SoR policy.

- (iii) Where radiographers are employed under linked grade agreements these agreements form part of the individual radiographer's contract and must be honoured.

If the radiographers concerned have met the competencies required under linked grade agreements post 1 October 2004, but prior to assimilation, they must move on to the appropriate grade (eg Senior II) as per the agreement from the date they meet the competencies. A new job description must be issued. Matching and assimilation may have to be done in two parts; (i) From 1 October 2004 to the date the competencies are reached, and (ii) From the latter date to the date of assimilation. Back pay must be calculated accordingly.

It is the SoR's expectation that Senior II radiographers, whether appointed directly or through a linked grade agreement, will be matched at Band 6.

Where radiographers have not yet met the required competencies, the accelerated development embodied in Annex T must apply. In other words, these radiographers should be transferred from a Whitley linked grade agreement to an Agenda for Change accelerated progression agreement, based on Annex T and SoR Policy.

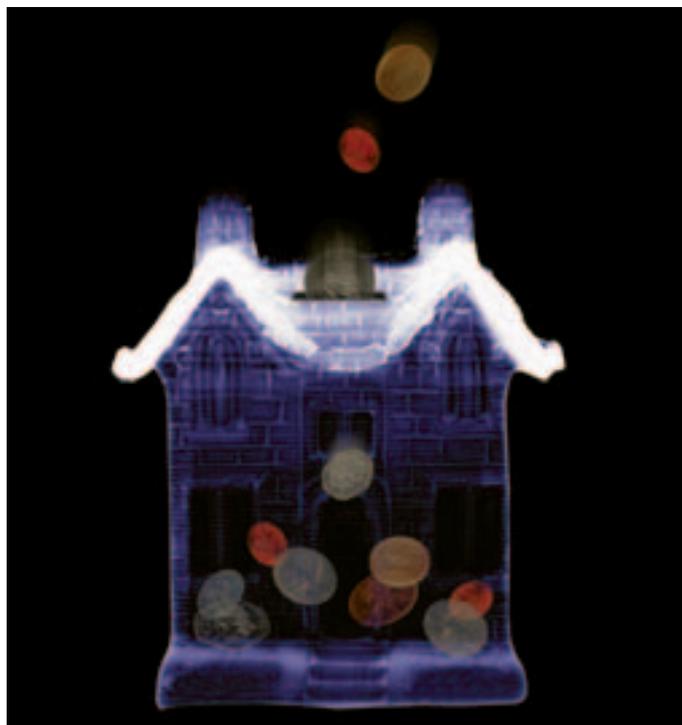
In this instance, experience and development gained under the linked grade agreement must be taken into account.

It is important to note that for Annex T to apply, radiographers must meet the required criteria within 24 months.



To not implement Annex T would be to score an own-goal against newly qualified radiographers.

“The arguments for implementing agreements under Whitley and applying Annex T are virtually identical”



Whitley or AFC, newly qualifieds are not well paid and accelerated career progression will help give them a much needed pay boost.

“Such agreements have served radiographers and the service well”