

College of Radiographers Approval and Accreditation Board

Annual Education Report

1st September 2024 – 31st August 2025

Foreword

The College of Radiographers (CoR) is pleased to present the Approval and Accreditation Board (AAB) Report for 2024-2025.

This academic year represents another year of growth and development in programmes following political demand to increase the size and capability of the healthcare workforce. There is year on year growth over the last three years of the number of new educational providers requesting programme approval and existing providers requesting approval of additional learning pathways into the profession at pre-registration level.

The AAB continues to use a blended model of approval to deliver strategic oversight. Supporting new educational providers with in-person programme and resource assessment, alongside desktop review activity for re-approval of programmes and new programmes at existing educational providers. Major programme changes may be allocated an in-person assessment or a desk-based assurance process decided by the 'Programme Change Panel' which has governance membership, which includes the chair and vice chair of the AAB and professional officers for education and accreditation.

The Education and Career Framework (4th Edition) which launched in November 2022 continues to be used as a seminal document in an updated programme approval process. Mapping to the appropriate level of practice in the ECF has ensured integration into the approval process and assured professional standards at both pre and post registration capabilities.

The AAB has worked to ensure a high standard of consistency when reviewing programmes that lead to eligibility to apply for professional registration as a radiographer, and when reviewing individual learning modules, CPD courses and short education courses. The involvement of the CoR in the programme approval space ensures consistency of standards across a wide variety of programmes and education providers as well as a benchmark of quality and consistency of radiographic standards.

Part 1: The position of pre-registration CoR Approved radiographic education within the UK

What is College of Radiographers Approval

The CoR works in partnership with education providers, clinical departments, external organisations and individuals to ensure that programmes of education and training related to the clinical imaging and oncology radiographic workforce, maintain, and continue to develop the highest standards of clinical imaging and oncology practice and conduct. Providers are required to map for both pre-registration and post-registration programmes to the level of practice as indicated in the 'College of Radiographers Education and Career Framework (4th Edition) 2022'.

Wherever possible, the College's approval framework works within existing internal approval and quality assurance arrangements of education providers and clinical departments. It also aims to work collaboratively with external bodies to provide a streamlined and integrated process.

Through the approval framework the College:

- Secures consistency of standards of clinical imaging and oncology education.
- Aligns standards of clinical practice with the profession's Education and Career Framework (2022).
- Supports and encourages the development of programmes that are at, and remain at, the forefront of education and developing clinical imaging and oncology practice.
- Promotes and supports flexibility in the design and delivery of education and new roles in practice.
- Disseminates guidance on best practice in clinical imaging and oncology education and practice.

1.1 Number and distribution of Approved Pre-registration Programmes

Currently there are 82 pre-registration programmes which hold CoR approval. Within the 2024-25 period there were four providers in the UK which did not hold any programmes at pre-registration with CoR approval but did hold Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approval. These were Health Sciences University Bournemouth, the University of Huddersfield, the University of Hull, and York St. John University, and although not approved throughout the 2024-25 academic period, the University of Huddersfield was approved in December 2025 following College Board of Trustees meeting. Two providers are not currently engaged in approval requests (University of Hull, and York St John University) whilst Health Sciences University, Bournemouth (formally AECC) request for approval is ongoing. This represents a high compliance with the professional body programme approval scheme, given the rate of programme development, and continues to demonstrate educators' willingness to align programmes to the professional body standards.

A pre-registration programme enables learners successfully completing the programme of study to apply for registration with the HCPC to work as a diagnostic or therapeutic radiographer. The HCPC programme directory includes programmes which may or may not be discontinued and programmes which have regulatory approval but not yet CoR approval (see Table 1.1.1). This accounts for the discrepancy between the regulator data and that held by the CoR.

CoR approved programmes must undergo a 5-year approval cycle and are represented in Table 1.1.2.

Education provision is available in all nations of the United Kingdom as evidenced in Table 1.1.3 with learners having the opportunity to access both Diagnostic and Therapeutic Radiography programmes in each nation. New education providers have developed programmes in England since the previous reporting period; there is no additional provider growth in the other nations of the UK. There is a single international provider holding CoR programme approval with no additional growth in this space and no new applications from international providers in this reporting period.

Learning pathway or mode of pre-registration learning continues to expand with more applications from education providers seeking programme approval in 'non-traditional' learning modes such as Degree Apprenticeships and Pre-Registration accelerated Masters programmes (see table 1.1.4)

1.1.1 Number of HCPC Pre-registration Programmes of Radiography in the UK (as of 06/03/2026)*

Pre-registration programmes	Number of available programmes (From HCPC data including PT programmes) The HCPC figures include programmes which may or may not be discontinued.
Diagnostic Radiography	70
Therapeutic Radiography	27
Total	97

**This number is live figures from March 2026 and therefore will appear higher than the number of CoR approved programmes from the 24/25 academic year*

1.1.2 Number of CoR Pre-registration Programmes of Radiography in the UK as of academic year 24-25

Pre-registration programmes	Number of Educational Providers*	Number of Programmes holding CoR approval
Diagnostic Radiography	34	60
Therapeutic Radiography	13	22
Total	34	82

*Higher Education Institutions, Further Education Providers, other educational providers. UK and *International

1.1.3 Number of Approved Pre-registration Programmes of Radiography education in each nation of the UK and Internationally

Pre-registration programmes	England	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Wales	International
Diagnostic Radiography	52	5	1	2	1
Therapeutic Radiography	17	3	1	1	0

1.1.4 Number of CoR Approved Programmes (leading to registration by study mode of Radiography in the UK) that hold current approval as of 21st August 2025

Programme modes*	Diagnostic Radiography	Therapeutic Radiography
Pre-registration Bachelor's Degree	33	12
Degree Apprenticeship	13	4
Pre-registration Integrated Master's Degree	13	6 (4 Master's, 2 PgDs)
Total	59	22

*all programmes are full-time study or work-based

1.2 Return of annual monitoring survey

All but 1 educational provider with CoR approved provision returned the annual monitoring survey to the College of Radiographers. The following provider/s did not return a response:

- Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

It should also be noted that some providers returned incomplete and/or inaccurate data. Changes have been made to simplify the survey. As part of an ongoing revision of the approval processes and operations further changes will be made to further refine the questions and clarity of the survey. Some providers did not return data for all programmes listed as approved. This may be due to programmes not being delivered during this reporting period and/or that data has not been returned on these programmes.

1.3 Admissions and Recruitment

1.3.1 UCAS Tariff

From the responses returned via the annual monitoring survey, UCAS entry tariff points for entry onto CoR approved programmes are distributed (range) from a minimum of 102 points to a maximum of 136 points with a mean of 119 points. These figures represent a fall in mean admission UCAS tariff of 6.5 points (from 125.5 to 119) from the previous annual report of 23/24.

1.3.2. Applications to Pre-Registration programmes

Overall, there was a significant increase to the total number of applications to Radiography programmes in this reporting period as understood in Table 1.3.2a comparatively to the last reporting period – an increase of 30%. Further scrutiny identifies the largest increase was in Diagnostic Radiography applications of 33% (see Table 1.3.2b) and a considerable increase in Therapeutic applications of 13.7% (see Table 1.3.2c) although this is less than the previous year where the increase was 21%.

The response to questions about the number of applications to programmes was incomplete for previous years and should be treated with caution as table key (*). It is worth noting that a large provider of Therapeutic Radiography education did not return data for the 2022/23, and two Diagnostic programmes have not returned data in the last two reporting periods; this may in part explain the general upwards trend over the last six years of data return.

1.3.2a Total number of applications: 17,040 applicants to Radiography (30% increase)

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23**	2023-24**	2024-25**
Applications	10400	10375	13653	13794	13108	17040

**note apprenticeship applications were generally returned as Unknown as they were employer advertised and this should be understood when considering the 2022 -23, 2023 -24, and 2024-25 data.

1.3.2b Diagnostic Radiography Applications: 14843 (33 % increase)

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Applications	8728	8703	11145	12194	11176	14843

1.3.2.c Therapeutic Radiography Applications: 2197 (13.7% increase)

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	*2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Applications	1672	1931	2507	1600	1932	2197

*noted as incomplete data - figures likely to be higher due to non-submission of approved providers

1.3.3. Learner intake

Applications to Radiography programmes have been variable but the data reflects a considerable increase (30%) during the 24-25 academic year.

Four education providers reported insufficient applications for Diagnostic Radiography programmes, but eight reported increased applications. This somewhat balances the applications in the UK overall for Diagnostic Radiography and demonstrates a variable trend across the UK.

Only one educational provider reported insufficient applications for a Therapeutic Radiography programme, whilst there were three providers who reported increased applications.

Reason provided for insufficient applications in Diagnostic programmes included:

- Fewer applicants achieved necessary grades than expected.

No reason was provided by the only Therapeutic programme that reported insufficient applications.

Many educational providers reported an over-recruitment to their programmes, when new learner numbers were added to those repeating the year or re-joining for other reasons. However, some reported under-recruitment compared to target numbers, there was an overall 3% reduction identified in Therapeutic programmes and less than 1% reduction identified in Diagnostic programmes. For those with over-recruitment, the main reason was that more applicants achieved necessary grades than expected. These providers have been made aware of the programme change panel for approval of new/modifications to practice placement provision via the Heads of Radiography forum and the AAB. This will be scrutinised in the next annual report to review for a trend and any required further action.

Reasons for under-recruitment in Therapeutic programmes included:

- Applications not converting to enrolment
- Some applicants not suitable
- Withdrawal prior to commencement
- Lack of funding and financial pressures

Reasons for over-recruitment in Diagnostic programmes included:

- Employers reluctant to take on apprenticeships
- Lack of funding and financial pressures
- Visa requirements for international learners

The total numbers of learners starting a pre-registration programme increased for both Therapeutic and Diagnostic Radiography programmes. The number of learners re-taking the initial year of Diagnostic programmes has reduced significantly, whilst Therapeutic programmes have seen a small increase from the previous academic year. Future surveys will identify if this is the start of a downward trend or if it will be necessary to review with educational leaders to ensure current Office for Students retention and attrition standards are met.

1.3.3a Total number of learners starting a pre-registration programme in 2024-2025

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of starters into Year 1/Stage 1	1525	1666	2522(**46)	2384(**132)	2432(**131)	2667(**75)

*noted as incomplete data - figures likely to be higher due to non-submission by approved providers

**Students undertaking a repeat of the Year 1/stage 1

1.3.3b Diagnostic Radiography learners starting a pre-registration programme in 2024-2025

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of starters into Year 1/Stage 1	1179	1299	1959(**35)	1980(**106)	1994(**108)	2196(**49)

*noted as incomplete data - figures likely to be higher due to non-submission by approved providers

**Students undertaking a repeat of the Year 1/stage 1

1.3.3c Therapeutic Radiography learners starting a pre-registration programme in 2024-2025

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Number of starters into Year 1/Stage 1	355	422	483(**11)	404(**26)	438(**23)	471(**26)

*noted as incomplete data - figures likely to be higher due to non-submission by approved providers

**Learners undertaking a repeat of the Year 1/stage 1

1.3.4 International recruitment

International recruitment to pre-registration programmes has increased this academic year but remains lower than the number in the 2021-2022 academic year. Table 1.3.4 demonstrates the year-on-year growth of international learners, but then a substantial decrease and a return to growth again. International recruitment remains a small proportion of the overall intake of learners totaling 7% (116/17040) of the total pre-registration intake.

1.3.4 Number of international learners starting a pre-registration programme in 2024-2025

Academic Year	2019-20*	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total number	31	44	137	77	105	116
Diagnostic Radiography	23	34	93	58	79	89
Therapeutic Radiography	8	10	44	19	26	27

*noted as incomplete data - figures likely to be higher due to non-submission by approved providers

1.4 Learner Attrition and Retention within Pre-registration programmes

1.4.1 Attrition

Attrition is understood in this report as; unsuccessful completion of the programme where an exit award/credits have been provided but a learner is not eligible to apply to be professionally registered to work as a Radiographer.

Nine education providers reported no attrition from their programmes for the academic year 2024-2025. The vast majority reported attrition from the programme. The overall attrition rate for Diagnostic programmes is 17%, and for Therapeutic programmes is 21%.

Common factors noted for attrition are listed as below, ordered from most common to least common:

- Learners did not meet the required academic standards (41% of programmes: Diagnostic 36.6%; Therapeutic 54.5%)
- Personal circumstances (38% of programmes: Diagnostic 36.6%; Therapeutic 40.9%)
- Wrong career choice (32% of programmes: Diagnostic 30%; Therapeutic 36%)

- Health related reasons (24% of programmes: Diagnostic 23%; Therapeutic 27%)
- Learners did not meet the required clinical standards (23% of programmes: Diagnostic 23%; Therapeutic 22%)
- Financial reasons (11% of programmes: Diagnostic 12%; Therapeutic 9%)
- Fitness to practice/disciplinary/professional conduct issues (10% of programmes: Diagnostic 13%; Therapeutic 0%)
- Other (10% of programmes: Diagnostic 21%; Therapeutic 9%)
- Placement experiences (2% of programmes: Diagnostic 0%; Therapeutic 9%)
- Campus experiences (1% of programmes: Diagnostic 1%; Therapeutic 0%)
- Student transfer (2% of programmes: Diagnostic 1%; Therapeutic 4%)

As detailed in the last reporting period, 'Learners failing to meet the required academic standard' has remained the primary cause of attrition. Learners leaving programmes due to personal circumstances has increased by 2% in this reporting period compared to the last reporting period. The three common factors correspond to the main causes for the last four years of data collection, remaining consistent as a trend.

This year to note, as representative of past data 'wrong career choice' features as an attrition issue in over a third of programmes. Diagnostic programmes reported 30% and Therapeutic programmes reported 36% attrition attributed to 'wrong career choice'. Of particular note is the reduction reported in Therapeutic programmes from the previous academic year 2023-24 reported as 67%. As attrition remains high overall, there remains an ongoing need for career guidance and information prior to enrolling and at open days and information events.

There were free text responses detailing other reasons for attrition on programmes. Some examples of these included: transfer to other routes/programmes, voluntary suspension of studies, involuntary suspension, and unsuccessful occupational health assessment.

1.4.2 Retention

Programme leaders were asked to share their most effective strategies to support learner retention. For the purposes of analysis this is broadly delineated into;

- Successful retention strategies on campus
- Successful retention strategies on practice placement
- Impact of retention activity within the programme

For each category a content frequency analysis was conducted to provide some thematic analysis of the data responses. The frequency limit was extended to include a minimum of four occurrences be included. Word cloud presentation was used to display the findings (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

1.4.2a Successful retention strategies on-campus

Reviewing the themes for successful retention of learners, support remains a high priority in many areas (see figure 1). Timetabling to allow more choice and flexibility for learners to interact with online or recorded learning at their own pace, on-campus sessions timetabled for single days to allow more free study time, and open-door policies allowing learner access to staff when requiring support, were commonplace. Following the pandemic, the use of technology to support flexible pedagogies has remained valued by both educators and learners with a priority of maintaining high quality personal support systems within teaching teams. This was reported for the majority of programmes returning data. It was clear that teaching teams are working with the wider support services in the University to ensure wrap around support for learners. This included embedded sessions in study skills, personal tutor services, wellbeing support teams, financial advice, and continuity of support in practice environments.

Wellbeing initiatives are common-place as effective retention resources with teaching staff developing close and professional relationships with learners and citing small classroom sizes as a driver for belonging and inclusion within learning communities. The wider university support services are frequently highlighted in this reporting period. This may be a reflection of the continued closer working relationships within services following the pandemic period.

Part 2 An overview of the CoR Accreditation Schemes

The CoR previously supported five accreditation schemes; however, as of July 2024 the Advanced and Consultant Practitioner Accreditation Schemes closed in favour of alternative resources. This decision was made following consultation with external and internal stakeholders. A link to the consultation and outcomes can be accessed here: https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/getmedia/10900920-83e3-430f-b48b-ad6dc082c5e0/170724_Update-on-Advanced-and-Consultant-Practitioner-Accreditation-and-Planned-Resources_D1-1.pdf

The CoR continues to support individual accreditation through the following schemes:

- Assistant Practitioner accreditation
- Mammography Associate accreditation
- Practice Educator accreditation

2.1 Support workforce accreditation

2.1.1 Assistant Practitioner

The Assistant Practitioner accreditation scheme continues to attract applications from members for both initial accreditation and reaccreditation.

A total of 24 Assistant Practitioners were accredited/re-accredited in the 2024-25 year. Accreditations at each level and route are delineated below:

- 2 new level 4 approved programme accreditations
- 1 new level 4 non-approved programme accreditation
- 2 new level 5 approved programme accreditations
- 3 new level 5 non-approved programme accreditations

New Accreditations Total = 8

- 7 level 4 re-accreditations
- 9 level 5 re-accreditations

Re-accreditation Total = 16

2.1.2 Mammography Associate

The Mammography Associates accreditation scheme was introduced in the 2023-24 period. Uptake for this accreditation scheme was not heavily utilised in the 2024-25 year. Mammography associates are accredited at level 4.

- 1 new level 4 accreditation

New Accreditations Total = 1

- 1 new level 4 re-accreditations

Re-accreditation Total = 1

Marketing and an enhanced communication scheme may be helpful to ensure the visibility and success of this still relatively new accreditation scheme.

2.2 Practice Educator accreditation scheme (PEAS)

The Practice Educator Accreditation Scheme (PEAS) continues to attract applications from members for both initial accreditation and reaccreditation. A total of 27 Practice Educators were accredited/re-accredited in the 2024-25 year. Accreditations at each level and route are delineated below:

A total of 24 new Practice Educators were accredited by PEAS (13 via the CoR approved programme route and 11 via the CPD/Non-approved programme route).

A total of 3 practice educators were re-accredited via the CoR PEAS.

Accreditation Total = 27

Marketing and support activities are planned for the next reporting period in the form of PEAS writing retreats to support practice educators develop their individual applications.

Part 3 Acknowledgements

The College Board of Trustees wish to thank the members of the Approval and Accreditation Board and to all the Assessors who have worked on programme approvals on behalf of the College.