



Accreditation Status Review – Standard Operating Procedure

Introduction

All BSE Members must comply with the BSE's Rules and Code of Professional Conduct, which can be found in the Governance section of bsecho.org, and all accredited Members are expected to be able to perform and report echocardiographic studies unsupervised.

In instances where poor echocardiography practice has been identified via departmental quality assurance processes, local in-house policies should be employed to allow a Member a reasonable period of time to learn, consolidate and improve their echocardiography practice. This should be achieved by implementing training plans and providing training opportunities to enable Members to reach the required BSE-accredited standard. This is to be followed by all institutions/departments regardless of the employment setting. If, following this, a Member's echocardiography practice does not improve, the Member can be referred to the Accreditation Chair for review of the member's Accreditation status

Definitions

Accredited Member	any Member of the BSE whose name appears on the Accredited Register
Complainant	any person, employing authority or professional body alleging professional misconduct by a Member
Respondent	the Member against whom a complaint has been made
Echocardiographer	a person who employs ultrasound-based techniques to study the structure and function of the heart
Panel	the Panel as constituted by senior members of the Accreditation Committee (or Trustees if required) and acting within its terms of reference and delegated powers
Disciplinary Committee	the Disciplinary Committee as constituted by the Trustees and acting within its terms of reference and delegated powers
Days	days, including Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays
Society	"BSE" the British Society of Echocardiography, a Company Limited by Guarantee and Registered Charity

1. Process

1.0 Preliminary enquiry:

1.1 Upon receipt of a report of failure to meet minimum standards, it is the duty of the Accreditation Chair to:

1.1.1 Decide if this is a vexatious allegation and requires no response. In such cases, the complaint will be filed within the accreditation manager's correspondence, and no file will be opened.

1.1.2 In all other cases, send a written acknowledgement to the Complainant, indicating that a preliminary assessment will be conducted to establish whether there is a case to answer.



- 1.1.3 Notify the Respondent that a complaint regarding poor performance has been received and that the Accreditation Committee will undertake a preliminary assessment of the complaint.
- 1.2 The Accreditation Chair and members of the Accreditation Status Review Panel will decide whether; (a) there is no case to answer; (b) to initiate an investigation of the allegation, without prejudice, by a panel of at least two senior members of the Accreditation Committee; (c) to refer the allegation, without prejudice, to the Hon. Secretary and request a full investigation by a Disciplinary Committee. In such cases, the Respondent's Accreditation may be suspended on the basis that the nature of the complaint is such that patients' care might be affected in the interim.
- 1.3 The preliminary assessment will be undertaken based on the statement and documentary evidence submitted by the Complainant.
- 1.4 If the Accreditation Chair decides that there is no case to answer, they shall notify the Trustees, Respondent and Complainant in writing of the decision within 21 days.
- 1.5 If the Accreditation Chair decides to recommend an investigation, they shall immediately notify the Trustees, Respondent and Complainant in writing of the recommendation.
- 1.6 Where the Respondent is a member of a BSE Committee, the Accreditation Chair shall notify the Committee Chair, who may, at their discretion, suspend the Respondent from Societal duties pending the outcome of the investigation.
- 1.7 If, in the Accreditation Chair's opinion, the nature of the allegation is such that patients' health or well-being might suffer in the interim, the Respondent's accreditation may be suspended until an investigation has been carried out. The Accreditation Chair shall immediately notify the Trustees in writing of the decision.
- 1.8 A record of the fact that a preliminary assessment was held and of the decisions taken shall be kept in every case.
- 1.9 If the Accreditation Chair has a conflict of interest in relation to the complaint, the Hon. Secretary or Immediate Past President shall select another Trustee or member of the Panel or the Advisory Council to fulfil the role.

2. Investigation process

- 2.1 The Accreditation Chair shall appoint an ad hoc panel comprising at least two members of the Accreditation Committee, one of which is to be nominated as a panel Chair.
- 2.2. Due to the small number of members forming the Accreditation Committee, the Accreditation Chair may form part of the panel if deemed appropriate.
- 2.3. None of the panel members shall ever have worked in the same NHS Trust at the same time as the Respondent or the Complainant.
- 2.4 Panel members will act professionally and not breach the code of conduct of confidentiality and privacy prior to, during, or after being involved with an investigation.
- 2.5 The panel shall be empowered to:



2.5.1 Conduct a review of the evidence submitted by the Complainant.

2.5.2 Invite the Respondent to a virtual meeting with the Panel to respond to the complaint and submit evidence.

2.5.3 If a satisfactory response is given, no further action will be taken. The Respondent will be reminded of the Society's Code of Conduct and their responsibility to uphold this consistently.

2.5.4 If an unsatisfactory or no response is received, the Respondent will be requested to attend the Society's practical assessment to demonstrate their competency. This may include undertaking any part of the practical assessment, including a logbook submission, practical scanning assessment and/or video-case viva assessment. This will be directed per the outcomes of the Panel review and discussed with the Respondent before the practical assessment attendance.

2.5.5 If the Respondent attends the practical assessment and passes each part of the practical assessment they have been asked to undertake, the Respondent will be deemed to have met the standards outlined for an accredited Member of the Society. They will be reminded of the Society's Code of Conduct and their responsibility to uphold this at all times.

2.5.6 If the Respondent fails to achieve a pass in any area of the practical assessment, the Respondent will not be deemed to meet the standards as outlined for an accredited Member of the Society, and their Accreditation status will be revoked.

2.5.7 If the Respondent fails to attend the practical assessment as requested, the Respondent will not be deemed to meet the standards outlined for an accredited Member of the Society, and their Accreditation status will be revoked.

2.5.8 On completion of the Panel review, the Respondent and Complainant will receive in writing the outcomes of the Panel review and actions undertaken. If the Respondent's accreditation status is revoked, the Respondent can work towards accreditation as per the usual process.

2.5.9 If the Respondent's accreditation status is revoked, the Respondent must inform their employer of the revocation.

3. Appeal

3.1 The Complainant or the Respondent may appeal to the Honorary Secretary within four weeks of receiving notice of the decision. Appeals should be in writing, stating the grounds of appeal and emailed to Secretary@bsecho.org.

3.2 The only permissible grounds of appeal are as follows:

- The Panel was unable to take into account evidence which has come to light since the review;
- The Panel decision was against the weight of the evidence;
- The Panel's decision was affected by bias, breach of the rules of natural justice or breach of the Society's procedural rules;
- The Panel's decision was such that no reasonable Panel would have reached that decision.

3.3 The decisions available to the Honorary Secretary are:

- upholding the original decision;



- asking the Panel to review their original decision;
- asking the Accreditation Chair to convene a different Panel to conduct a new review;
- referring the case to the Trustee board for final input if required.

3.4 The decision of the Honorary Secretary on an appeal is final. The Honorary Secretary shall as soon as practicable notify the Complainant and the Respondent in writing of the decision and the reasons for it and inform them of costs payable under the rules about appeals and costs.

3.5 The Honorary Secretary may be assisted by a legally qualified person recommended by the Society's solicitors to ensure due and fair process, to advise on procedure and all aspects of the appeal, but not to adjudicate the appeal.

3.6 A record of the fact of the appeal, the decision and the reasons for the decision shall be kept in every case.

3.7 No further appeals are allowed.



This form is for a Member who wishes to notify the BSE regarding another Member's poor echocardiography practice.

Preliminary questions:

Have the following taken place:	Yes	No
1. Has poor practice been identified via a quality assurance process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Has this been discussed with the member?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Has the member been offered a period of learning/training to enable improvements in performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does this notification of poor echocardiography practice relate to a locum / temporary staff member?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a. If so, was a local induction and competency assessment undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N.B. You must have answered "YES" to ALL the above questions before continuing with this form and notifying the BSE.		

About you

Name	
Role	
Organisation Name	
Correspondence address	
Your telephone number	
Your email address	



British Society of Echocardiography

About the Member

Please provide as much information as possible about the Member you are referring.

Name				
Role				
Work address				
Home address (if known)				
Is the Member a locum?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide details of the locum agency which supplied them:				
How long has your organisation employed this person?				
Please detail the local induction and competency assessment undertaken with this Member when they joined your organisation.				



During the Member's employment with your organisation, have there been any concerns or complaints of a similar nature?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please provide a summary below.
Do not write 'see attached' – please provide a brief summary and continue on an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

Your concern

On which date(s) or over what period did the event(s) occur?

Please provide a brief summary of your concern:
Do not write 'see attached' – please provide a brief summary and continue on an additional sheet of paper if necessary.

Your actions

Please briefly summarise your actions in uncovering evidence of poor echocardiography practice, how this has been dealt with using local training policies and the outcomes of this.



Have you suspended, downgraded the status, or placed practice restrictions on the member?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide details:				

Additional information

Please use the space below to provide additional information that may help us. If you need further space, please continue on an additional sheet of paper.

Any further information?

Declaration

To the best of my knowledge, the information I have provided is accurate.

I understand that the BSE will need to share my referral and any information I provide related to this matter to investigate it.

Signed:	Date:
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Next steps

Thank you for completing this form; please send this completed form to the Accreditation Chair via accreditation@bsecho.org. We will then keep you informed as the investigation progresses.