BJCA GUIDE TO ECHO ACCREDITATION FOR REGISTRARS

The BSE accreditation is a formal process to certify competence in basic echocardiography. It is a highly desirable qualification that each core cardiology trainee should aspire to achieve. Accreditation is recognised throughout the United Kingdom and in Europe. In addition, BSE accreditation in adult transthoracic echocardiography can be used in place of DOPS assessments (i.e. no further DOPS in echo are required once accreditation has been achieved).

Accreditation involves a written and practical (video case) exam, the collection of specimen examples of full echo studies and a logbook of cases. Full details of the processes required for BSE accreditation are available at www.bsecho.org

A diagrammatic representation of the accreditation process/pathway with helpful pointers for trainees (Timeline from ST3) is shown below:

Start of ST3

- Learn to perform, interpret and report echocardiograms
- Ensure you have a dedicated echo training list
- Purchase (and read) an echo book – see section 5D
- Consider attending an echo course – see BSE website for list of courses: www.bsecho.org
- Perform bedside echocardiograms at every opportunity (in and out of hours) to further develop echo skills

Consider registration with the British Society of Echocardiography now – there are many educational benefits (see BSE website) and you will need to be a registered member to undertake the accreditation process
Start compiling your logbook of 250 cases of a **specific case mix** (see guidance on BSE website). Look out for and collect cases of rare and interesting pathology (myxoma, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy). Aim to collect 100 cases in your first year of training.

Start of ST4

Register and start preparing for the written assessment part of the accreditation process

- The BSE written assessment is held on two occasions each year: a spring examination (usually in April - held in multiple locations) and an autumn examination (usually Oct/Nov held as part of the BSE annual meeting).
- The written assessment comprises of two parts: the Theory section and Reporting section. It is necessary to pass both sections in the same sitting. Refer to the BSE TTE accreditation information pack (BSE website) for more details.
- 2-3 months of preparation time in addition to experience gained in your ST3 year should be sufficient.
- Consider attending a BSE exam preparation course.

Sit for (and hopefully pass) the BSE written assessment

- If you are concerned that you do not have sufficient knowledge and experience to pass the written exam or may struggle to complete your logbook within 1 year of sitting the exam, consider deferring to the next sitting.
- You must pass the written assessment before submitting the practical assessment (logbook and cases).

Focus on the practical assessment immediately after passing the written exam

- Cases should be collected from a time period starting 12 months before to 12 months after passing the written section (i.e. exam passed in Oct 2014 can include practical cases from 1st Oct 2013 – 31st Oct 2015).
- Compile your logbook of 250 reports of a specific case mix. Ensure you keep a tally of the primary diagnosis for each case and actively seek to obtain the specified number of cases for each section. (no more than 25 studies should be completely normal).
Intensify efforts to complete logbook. Do not leave it till the last minute – you only have 3-4 months left.

Be very mindful of last date to collect practical assessment cases (last day of the month 1 year from passing the written assessment). Start preparing for submission process immediately after this date.

The deadline for submitting the logbook is 2 months after the last date of collection of cases.

- The BSE have very strict criteria on how to submit your 5 full video cases (as digital loops within a PowerPoint presentation) and your logbook of 250 cases (all reports must be anonymised and contain your full name and signature).
- You must also submit the full mentor/supervisors sheets from the accreditation pack and supervisor mark sheets if you have a BSE accredited supervisor
- Guidance on submission can be found in the accreditation pack
- Failure to submit by this deadline will necessitate repeating the entire process from the beginning. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Hopefully you would have achieved BSE accreditation in transthoracic echocardiography!

BSE App

EchoCalc is the official App of the British Society of Echocardiography (BSE) made freely available to download. It contains all of the BSE normal reference values for transthoracic echocardiography and other widely used reference values, including those for prosthetic aortic and mitral valves.

Currently free to download, it is available for iPhone/iPod Touch/iPad users, Andriod users and Blackberry Playbook users.

Please visit the BSE website for further information

www.bsecho.org/bse-app/
Further tips, tricks and pointers for achieving BSE TTE accreditation

### Preparation and learning echocardiography

Achieving BSE accreditation in transthoracic echocardiography by the end of core training (ST5) is possible but requires a lot of organisation and effort over a 2.5 year period. Start preparing early as suggested by the timeline above and refer to the BSE website and Information Pack on Accreditation in Adult Echocardiography.

Maximise your opportunity to perform, interpret and report echocardiograms by performing bedside echo’s out of hours/on call, review images with sonographers/consultants, consider attending/participating in echo waiting lists clinics and attend departmental, regional or national echo meetings.

### Preparing for the BSE written exam

Consider attending a basic echo course about 6-12 months into your training and a BSE exam preparation course prior to the written exam. In addition to consolidating your knowledge you will see and learn about more unusual pathology, which you might not encounter in your hospital.

### Collecting cases for your logbook

Seek out sonographers in the department who have BSE accreditation. There is much to learn from them about the accreditation process and they can help you with identifying suitable cases for your logbook. Keep a copy of all initial reports (your first 100 cases can be double reported).

Start looking for patients with good echo windows and appropriate images early for your video cases. Allow 1 hour to scan these patients taking all necessary views and data (do not forget the use of the standalone CW Doppler probe for severe AS). You might wish to check these views with a BSE accredited sonographer and bring the patient back for a second scan if required.

### Submission

Identify a supervisor/mentor to sign off your competency assessment and statement. Ideally find a supervisor who is BSE trained and has attended a supervisors training session as they can guide you with exactly what is required from the video cases and complete the supervisors mark sheets (your video cases will then only need to be marked 1 more time externally).

Find an efficient way to anonymise your 250 echo reports. One option is to export reports from TOMCAT to MS Word and remove the patient’s details electronically. A second option is to photocopy each report with the patients’ details covered by a ‘cut out’. A third option is to ‘blackout’ details with a marker (ensure details are definitely no longer visible). In addition to echo findings, each report must have an indication, a conclusion, your full name and signature.

The 5 video cases must be submitted as digital loops and stills within a PowerPoint presentation. You must have all the original files in the same folder as your presentation OR use the ‘Pack and Go’ feature in windows if you are pulling video files from different folders. Note that some versions of PowerPoint for Mac may not be able to ‘Pack and Go’. Most candidates submit a USB stick. Remember that all 5 video cases must be accompanied by a fully anonymised report with your name and signature.