

North East and north Cumbria

Specialty Training

School of Radiology ARCP Outcomes and FRCR Exam Progression Standard Operating Procedure

Background

The RCR has published **guidance** on ARCP outcomes. The RCR is, however, clear that this is guidance and open to local School and Scheme interpretation. The School's practices have, rightly, developed and evolved over the years, but this may lead to inconsistency of approach across years. In some instances there are good grounds for a change in approach; in others it may be perceived as arbitrary. It is to avoid the latter, and apply a standard approach, that this SOP is written.

Principle

That an ARCP decision is taken in the best interests of the Registrar. This overrides every other consideration, including School consistency of approach. However, each and every decision must be evidence based, transparent and defensible if challenged.

Policy

1. Whilst a Registrar is within Core Training, an ARCP 3 outcome will be automatically awarded for failure to pass the Part 1 FRCR. The Registrar will remain ST1 until the exam is passed. The ARCP 3 outcome will remain in force either until the exam is passed or an ARCP 4 outcome is awarded. This is dealt with in an already extant School policy and remains unchanged. The policy is on the School website.
2. Whilst a Registrar is within Core Training, an ARCP 2 or 3 outcome will **not** be awarded for the **sole** reason of 2A exam failure. If a Registrar is not making the expected progress elsewhere in their training then failure to pass exams in a timely fashion (refer to RCR ARCP grid) may be used as a contributory factor in reaching a decision that is demonstrably in the Registrar's best interest. Historically, the School has tended not to award ARCP 2 or 3 outcomes within Core Training for the sole reason of not passing exams as per the RCR schedule, as it is the School's experience that registrars progress with exam at widely variant rates. There is also no local evidence that solely failing to pass the 2A exams as per the RCR grid is associated with failure to progress in training in other areas. Of course, not passing exams may be a surrogate marker of failure to progress in training in its totality, or of other issues outwith the workplace, and these should be explored in the usual way (as is currently the case).
3. The School takes the view that Core Training is not complete until all modules of the 2A

ARCP Outcomes and FRCR Exam Progression

exam are passed. A Registrar may not enter higher training (ie, remain ST3) until the 2A exam is passed. A Registrar who has completed three years of Core Training, but has not passed the 2A exam in its entirety will automatically trigger an ARCP 3 outcome, which will remain in force until either the 2A exam is passed, or an outcome 4 is triggered and the Registrar is released from training. This de facto brings FRCR 2A policy into alignment with the School's extant FRCR Part 1 policy.

4. With respect to higher training and the FRCR 2B exam, the School takes a relaxed view as to whether this is passed during ST4 or ST5. However, if the exam remains not passed by ST5 ARCP, an automatic ARCP 3 outcome will be triggered, which will remain in force until either the exam is passed or an ARCP 4 outcome is awarded and the Registrar is released from training with defined competencies. Clearly no registrar can be awarded CCT without passing the 2B exam, and generally CCT is awarded at the end of ST5. This brings the School's 2B policy into alignment with the Part 1 and 2A policies.
5. None of the above replaces or contradicts HEE NE's ARCP policies, nor the current edition of the Gold Guide, which remain over and above these local School refinements and policy and principle clarifications.

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ARCP Outcomes and FRCR Exam Progression