# Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR)
# Policy & Procedure 9 - Annual Reporting Requirements for Accredited Sonography Courses

## 1. Preamble

ASAR's objective is to promote high standards of medical sonography in Australia which includes setting uniform, minimum standards of sonographer education by assessing and accrediting courses in all disciplines of sonography.

This policy and procedure details our practices for the annual reporting requirements for accredited sonography courses.

## 2. Policy Principles

ASAR is committed to ensuring that all accredited Sonographer courses meet the eight Standards for the Accreditation of Sonographer Courses (SASC). In order to achieve this, the application procedures must be conducted in accordance with the accreditation principles identified below. It is the responsibility of the members of the ASAR Course Assessor Pool when participating in accreditation activities to ensure these principles are adhered to.

## 3. Accreditation Principles

The accreditation principles underpinning the approach to accreditation are:

**Legitimacy**
The accreditation procedure must be legitimate and acceptable to stakeholders. Such legitimacy includes impartiality in relation to particular stakeholder groups; and appropriate respect for the academic autonomy of course providers. The accreditation procedure must also be consistent with current legislation and guidelines.

**Validity**
The accreditation procedure must be valid in that the procedures are appropriate for assessing the determination of criteria. These criteria must be evidence-based and explicitly related to the necessary graduate competency outcomes and other specified purposes of the accreditation procedure. The period and status of accreditation must be appropriate to the nature of the programs and developments in the professional field.

**Efficiency**
The accreditation procedure must cover what is necessary and sufficient and not be unnecessarily burdensome for course providers, Course Assessment Committee members or other participants.

**Accountability & Transparency**
The accreditation procedure and its outcomes should also be transparent to stakeholders and the public as long as appropriate confidentiality and protection of privacy is maintained.

**Procedural fairness**
The accreditation Procedure must meet the principles of procedural fairness.

**Quality and improvement**
The accreditation procedures and criteria should facilitate the development of programs of the highest academic and professional quality and facilitate the continuous improvement of programs over the period for which they are accredited.

**Ongoing cycle of review**
The accreditation procedures must undergo an ongoing cycle of review to maintain consistency with these principles and for ongoing improvement.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to:
1. ASAR Secretariat
2. Course Providers delivering accredited Sonography courses

## 5. Definitions

**Accreditation**
For the purpose of this policy accreditation means that an ultrasound course has been assessed by ASAR as complying with all the ASAR Standards for the Accreditation of Sonographer Courses (SASC).

**Accreditation Framework**
The Accreditation Framework establishes the policies, procedures and standards within which sonography courses are granted accreditation for a specified time, having met transparent and defined requirements. The accreditation framework includes:
a. the Course Accreditation Application Pack,
b. supporting policies, procedures, and
c. Standards for the Accreditation of Sonography courses.

**Australian Sonographers Association**
The Australian Sonographers Association (ASA) is the peak body and leading voice for sonographers in Australia. The ASA guides the advancement of the sonography profession to ensure the community has access to quality sonographic services.

**Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry**
Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR) accredits ultrasound courses offered by various providers and establishes the criteria against which all courses are to be assessed. ASAR also maintains a register of accredited medical and student sonographers, with the continuing professional development (CPD) activities of accredited medical sonographers recorded and monitored.

**ASAR Accredited Programs**
Sonography training or education programs that have meet the eight Standards for the Accreditation of Sonography courses

**ASAR Accredited Qualifications**
Sonography Qualifications that are awarded following successful completion of training or education courses that have meet the eight Standards for the Accreditation of Sonography courses

**ASAR Board of Directors**
The ASAR Board is the body appointed by the members of the company to take responsibility for achieving ASAR's objects

**ASAR Constitution**
The ASAR Constitution sets out the rules governing the conduct of the organisation.

**ASAR Secretariat**
The Secretariat is the ASAR office management.

**Conditional Accreditation**
The ASAR Board of Directors may place a condition on the accreditation of a course, such as the requirement for further monitoring of the course.

**Course**
A course is the full program of study and experiences required to be undertaken before a qualification recognised under the AQF, and approved by a regulatory

authority can be conferred. Some organisations will also use the term 'program' to refer to a course.

**Course Owner**
The course owner is the legal entity that is the proponent or applicant for the course for the purpose of establishing a nationally recognised course in the Higher Education Sector.

**Course Provider**
The course provider is the organisation that issues the testamur for a nationally recognised course and is responsible for learning and assessment including those situations where the course provider enters into contracting or auspicing agreements for the course delivery and assessment.

The course owner and provider may be one organisation.

**Higher Education Provider**
A higher education provider is a body that is established or recognised by or under the law of the Australian Government, a State, the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory to issue qualifications in the higher education sector.

**Reaccreditation**
For the purpose of this policy, reaccreditation is the procedure of renewing accreditation of a course in light of any changes that may have taken place within the industry sector or in available Training Packages. For this reason, an application for reaccreditation requires the same rigor as an application for accreditation.

Continuing Accreditation is granted to a course when it is re-evaluated at specified intervals.

**Registered Training Organisation**
A Registered Training Organisation (RTO) is a provider that is established or recognised by or under the law of the Australian
Government or a State or Territory, to issue qualifications in the vocational education and training sector.

**Sonographer**
A Sonographer is a highly skilled medical imaging professional who utilises ultrasound imaging systems to undertake diagnostic medical sonographic examinations across a range of contexts.

**Training Organisation**
In the context of this policy and procedure a training organisation is either an RTO or higher education provider delivering or wishing to deliver accredited Sonography courses.

## 6. Reporting Requirements

The course provider must submit an Annual Self Study Report informing ASAR of any significant changes made to the course or the organisation during the reporting period.

If the course provider fails to submit a Self-Study Report a request will be made to the provider to submit the report within 21 days.

If the course provider does not submit the Self Study Report within the 21 days, they will be provided with a final warning. The warning will advise the provider that their accreditation will be withdrawn should they fail to submit the Self Study report within a further 21 days.

If the course provider fails to submit the Self Study Report within 21 days, they will be advised in writing that the course accreditation has been withdrawn.

## 7. Reporting Summary

| Report | Reporting Period | Report Due | Format | Submit to |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Annual Self Study Report | Previous 12 months | Annually on the anniversary of the accreditation date | Electronic Using Template | ASAR Secretariat |

## 8. Annual Self Study Report

The course provider must submit an Annual Self Study Report informing ASAR of any significant changes made to the course or the organisation during the reporting period.

This report should include:

**8.1. Student Information**
A summary of the student enrolments and successful and unsuccessful student outcomes over the past year.

**8.2. Changes in the past 12 months**
Descriptions of any changes that have been made in the past 12 months to:

- **Staffing**
  Details of new staff on the Staff Qualifications Matrix

- **Facilities**
  Details of changes to the facilities linked to how they will be used for the course.

- **Equipment**
  Details of changes to the equipment linked to how any additional items will be used for the course

- **Course Structure, content, or delivery**
  ASAR appreciates that changes to courses may need to occur during the accreditation period. The Annual Self Study Report allows course owners to provide details of any significant changes made to the course structure, content, or delivery during the reporting period.

  A review of course material resulting from these changes may be requested.

  When determining what represents a "significant change", course providers should reflect on how the change relates to elements detailed in the Standards for the Accreditation of Sonography courses, the ASA Competency Standards for the Entry Level Sonographer, and any ASAR recommendations specific to that course's accreditation.

  For changes to Course Content a new Subject Outline is to be provided that covers changes that have been made.

**8.3. Accreditation History**
List other accreditations, such as renewal, related to the course, and provide an overview of any changes made in those accreditations in the past 12 months.

If there is a condition on the course's registration, provide details of any actions taken to address the requirements of the condition.

**8.4. Satisfaction Data**

The course provider is to provide a summary of the analysis of the following satisfaction data collected:

- Student satisfaction data. – are you meeting the needs / expectations of the students.
- Employer satisfaction data – are you meeting the needs / expectations of the employers.
- Lecturer / trainer / assessor / supervisor feedback.
- Other stakeholder feedback.

The course provider is to summarise any patterns or trends identified in the data and details of subsequent feed back into the continuous improvement procedures for the course.

**8.5. Planning for the future**

The course provider is to submit evidence that they have been continually monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the course implementation in order to identify:

- the strengths of the course;
- the challenges for the course; and
- the action plan for the coming 12 months.

## 9. What ASAR Does with the Report

The Annual Self Study Report will be reviewed at the next ASAR Board of Directors meeting.

## 10. Roles & Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of those involved in the monitoring of ASAR accredited courses are:

**10.1. ASAR Secretariat**

ASAR Secretariat is to:

a. Identify and update the ASAR policy to ensure the accreditation / reaccreditation procedures addresses the needs of clinical competency and professional development.

b. Provide regularly updated documentation which clearly outlines the requirements of ASAR for successful accreditation to be achieved.
c. Receive an Annual Self Study Report from each course provider delivering accredited courses and formally approve continuing accreditation.
d. Retain the right to investigate any ASAR accredited course which does not appear to be delivering the extent or quality of content for which it was accredited.
e. Remove accreditation from such a course within the accredited period if an accredited course is found to be wanting in the extent, quality, provision or assessment of the educational programme for which it was accredited, or annual reporting requirements are not met.

**11. Procedures Summary**

| Trigger | | Course Provider | ASAR Action |
|---|---|---|---|
| End of Reporting Period approaching | One month to Anniversary of the accreditation date | Collate data for the Annual Self Study Report | |
| | The anniversary of the accreditation date | Submit Annual Self Study Report | ASAR Secretariat Acknowledge receipt of Annual Self Study Report |
| No Annual Self Study Report received | | | Letter is sent to the provider requesting the self-study report be provided within 21 days |
| No Annual Self Study Report received | | | Letter is sent to the provider advising that accreditation will be removed if the self-study report is not provided within 21 days |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No Annual Self Study Report received | | | Letter is sent to the provider advising that accreditation has been removed |

## 12. Tools & Templates

The following reporting tools and ASAR Templates are to be used by Providers delivering accredited sonography training:

### 12.1. Tools

Appendix 2 to the ASAR Course Accreditation Application Pack – Self Study Report

## 13. Supporting Documentation

Organisations seeking accreditation or re-accreditation are advised that the application pack must be read in conjunction with:

- The Standards for the Accreditation of Sonography courses available from the ASAR website; and
- The ASA Competency Standards for the Entry Level Sonographer available from the ASA website.

## 14. Related Policies and Procedures

The other ASAR Policies and Procedures which relate to this document are:

- ASAR P&P 3 - Applying for Accreditation of Sonography Courses

## 15. Complaints and Questions

Any complaints regarding this policy should go through the ASAR complaints procedures.

# Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR)
# Policy & Procedure 9 - Annual Reporting Requirements for Accredited Sonography Courses

| Version | Authorisation | Approval Date | Effective Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| V2-01 | Michelle Pedretti, Chair, ASAR Board | 03/12/2012 | 03/12/2012 |
| V2-02 | Michelle Pedretti, Chair, ASAR Board | 01/05/2015 | 05/01/2015 |
| V2-02 | Christopher Edwards, Chair, ASAR Board | 01/05/2019 | 01/05/2019 |