**Quality Standard for Imaging 2021**

**Contextual Guidance Document**

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# Background

The Quality Standard for Imaging (QSI) is jointly owned by the Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) and the College of Radiographers (CoR).QSI is developed in partnership with imaging professionals, lay and patient representativesand sets out the expectations of both colleges on provision of a quality imaging service.

QSI is a developmental standard and underpins the colleges’ vision that all providers of imaging services be invested in a continuous quality improvement journey. QSI allows services to evaluate their performance and develop where needed to continually improve patient experience and outcomes.

# QSI and Accreditation

QSI 2021 is written to stand alone, and services can use it as part of their own internal improvement assessment. However, it has a stronger impact when used as part of a peer review or formal accreditation process.

The [United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS)](https://www.ukas.com/) is the independent assessor appointed by the colleges to evaluate services against QSI and award accreditation to those meeting the standard.

UKAS accreditation of imaging services is a patient-focused peer to peer assessment that is designed to give stakeholders, service users, patients and their carers, confidence in their diagnosis and all aspects of their care. UKAS assesses imaging services to ensure that the standard’s requirements are maintained through regular monitoring.

# QSI and Regulation

The Care Quality Commission in England (CQC), Healthcare Inspectorate Scotland (HIS), Healthcare inspectorate Wales (HIW), and the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) in Northern Ireland are the respective regulatory bodies throughout the UK and enforce the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2017 (IR(ME)R). Employers have a statutory duty to comply with the relevant legislation as part of their work with ionising radiation in the medical field.

The colleges expect that services are meeting their regulatory requirements. Although QSI references the legislative and regulatory requirements of all four nations in the UK, it is not the role or intention of the QSI to confirm regulatory compliance to meet the relevant quality standard.

Whilst QSI is not designed to assess a service’s compliance with regulatory requirements, meeting the QSI offers assurance that the service is committed to improving regulatory compliance.

# QSI 2021 Structure

QSI is structured such that the standards focus on outcome measures. The colleges are confident that its new focus and user-friendly layout will reduce the burden of inputting evidence requirements for services.

The standards have been categorised into sections as outlined and the modality specific standards have been separated out for easier identification.

QSI 2021 also packages together all the information and guidance relevant to each standard in one place ensuring that it is easier for all members of staff to navigate and increase their understanding and participation in quality improvement.

Each standard is structured as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Reference number (Ref)** | This column contains a unique reference number for each quality statement and is used for all cross-referencing.  |
| **Quality standard (QS)** | **Standard name**This describes how the quality statement will be known.**Quality statement** The quality statement describes the service quality required.**Outcome measure** The outcome measure describes a high-quality achievement of the QS.**Indicative inputs** The indicative inputs describe what a service should do to achieve the QS.**Notes:** The notes give more detail about either the interpretation or the applicability of the quality standard. The notes are prompts designed for the review team, the service and stakeholders. |

Any quality standard can be utilised for CPD activities for staff and trainees.

Table 1 – QSI 2021 sections

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reference  | Service Area  | Quality Standards  |
| XR-1  | Information and Support for Patients and Carers  | 01. Imaging Service Information |
| 02. Procedure-specific Information |
| 03. Contact for Queries, Advice and Aftercare |
| 04. Respect |
| 05. Privacy, Dignity and Security |
| 06. Communication Aids |
| 07. Environment |
| 08. General Support for Patients and Carers |
| 09. Patient, Carer and Service Partnerships |
| XR-2  | Imaging Workforce  | 01. Service Leadership |
| 02. Local Modality-specific Service Leadership |
| 03. Staffing Levels and Skill Mix |
| 04. Service Competences and Training Plan |
| 05. Agency, Bank and Locum Staff |
| 06. On-call and Out-of-hours’ (Non-core) Working  |
| 07. Administrative and Clerical Support |
| 08. Supporting Staff and Staff Wellbeing |
| 09 Supporting Staff in Training |
| XR-3 | Scientific, Technical and Support for Equipment  | 01. Clinical Scientific and Technical Support  |
| 02. Equipment Management |
| 03. Equipment Quality Control and Quality Assurance |
| 04. Support Services |
| XR-4  | Facilities and Equipment | 01. Facilities and Equipment |
| 02. Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) and Radiology IT Systems |
| 03. Moving and Handling Aids |
| 04. Equipment for Patients with Obesity |
| XR-5  | Guidelines, Protocols and Clinical Safety | 01. Referral Management Guidelines |
| 02. Consent |
| 03. Image Optimisation |
| 04. Imaging in Pregnancy |
| 05. Imaging of Children and Young People |
| 06. Imaging of Patients with Additional Requirements |
| 07. Infection Prevention and Control |
| 08. Imaging Reporting Policy |
| 09. Quantification |
| 10. Unexpected Diagnoses and Potential Medical Emergencies |
| 11. Pathway and Condition-specific Protocols |
| 12. Forensic Imaging |
| 13. Management of Medicines and Contrast Media |
| 14. Ionising Radiation Safety |
| 15. Hazardous Substances |
| 16. Health and Safety |
| 17. Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning |
| XR-6 | Service Organisation and Liaison with Other Services  | 01. Operational Policy |
| 02. Imaging Timescales |
| 03. Risk Management |
| 04. Service Improvement |
| 05 Service Development Plan |
| XR-7 | Governance | 01. Quality Management System |
| 02. Data Collection |
| 03. Audit |
| 04. Radiology Events and Learning Meetings  |
| 05. Monitoring of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) |
| 06. Research |
| 07. Review and Learning |
| 8 | Modality-Specific standards |
| CT 8  | Computerised Tomography  | 01. CT Specific Training |
| 02. Contrast Media and Renal Function Protocol |
| 03. Trauma Management |
| 04. Clinical CT Pathways and Protocols |
| 05 Paediatric CT Protocols |
| IR 8 |  Interventional Radiology  | 01. Interventional Radiology Safety Systems |
| 02. Access to Interventional Radio  |
| logy Procedures |
| 03. Admissions |
| 04. Facilities  |
| 05. Contrast Media and Renal Function Protocol |
| 06. Clinical IR Pathways and Protocols |
| 07 Paediatric IR Procedures |
| MR 8 | Magnetic Resonance Imaging  | 01. Staffing |
| 02. MR Specific Training  |
| 03. MR Governance |
| 04. Quality Assurance |
| 05. Environment and Equipment |
| 06. Safety Screening |
| 07. Contrast Media and Renal Function Protocol |
| 08. Clinical MR Pathways and Protocols |
| 09 Paediatric MR Protocols |
| NM 8 | Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging  | 01. Service Delivery  |
| 02. Facilities  |
| 03. Use of Radiopharmaceuticals and Radioactive Materials |
| 04. Receipt, Storage and Transport of Radioactive Materials |
| 05. Clinical Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Pathways and Protocols |
| 06.Paediatric Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Protocols |
| US 8  | Ultrasound | 01 Ultrasound Environment and Safety |
| 02 Ultrasound Specific Training  |
| 03 Clinical Ultrasound Pathways and Protocols |
| 04 Paediatric Ultrasound Protocols |

# Navigating QSI 2021

QSI 2021 is accessible on both the [RCR website](https://www.rcr.ac.uk/clinical-radiology/service-delivery/quality-standard-imaging-qsi) and the [CoR website](https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/about-the-college/the-quality-standard-for-imaging).

The user-friendly layout allows services to easily locate any quality standard and see all supporting information relevant to that standard. Professional guidance publications, standards, and legislation relating to the standard have ben hyperlinked throughout.

Where standards interlink these will be cross-referenced in the notes, allowing services to reduce the burden of evidence.

## Indicative Inputs

Indicative inputs are listed for each QS. They are not exhaustive but are intended to be a helpful guide for services. We suggest that for each QS the services selects the appropriate indicative inputs relevant to the nature of their service delivery. Service may also wish to include additional indicative inputs. The QS will indicate when an input is a legislative requirement

## Applicability of the QSI to Services

QSI 2021 is applicable to any radiology service provider including tele-radiology services, single modality provider services, NHS services and independent sector providers.

The new layout allows services to easily identify which of the quality standards are applicable to their service.

Examples of Applicability of QSI:

* Quality standards in the following sections will be applicable to all service providers:
	+ XR2 – Imaging workforce
	+ XR3 - Scientific, Technical and Support for Equipment
	+ XR6 - Service Organisation and Liaison with Other Services
	+ XR7 - Governance

The table below gives an example of a large NHS organisation with services across multiple sites.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Areas** | **Imaging Service**  | **CT**  | **MR** | **IR**  | **US**  | **NM** |
|  | **QSI sections**  | **Only applicable if provided on site**  |
| **Organisation** **Main service site**  | XR | CT | MR | IR | US | NM |
| **Site 1****Linked community site**  | XR as applicable | CT |  |  | US |  |
| **Site 2** **Other Provider’s**  | XR as applicable |  | MR |  | US |  |

QSI 2021 enables service to further determine the applicability of quality standards within these sections. Services will only be assessed against those quality standards relevant to the service they provide.

# Services currently engaged in QSI 2019 but not yet an applicant with UKAS

QSI 2021 looks very different to QSI 2019 the Domains have been removed and separated out into the sections as depicted in Table 1.

Any work undertaken and evidence collected on your QI journey relating to QSI 2019 will undoubtedly be useful in assessing against QSI 2021. To guide services the colleges have produced a development and support tool.

# Services in applicant stage with UKAS and services accredited against QSI 2019

The process and timeline for accreditation or transition to accreditation against QSI 2021 will be agreed between your service and your UKAS assessment manager.

# Services new to QSI

Services are advised to contact the QI partners who will introduce them to the support and tools offered by the colleges.

# QI Partner Support

The QI partners are able to offer the following support to all services involved in the QSI process:

* Monthly QSI Network meetings
* Starting the journey presentation
* FutureNHS QSI Network
* Support Meetings to assist with the transition QSI 2021
* CPD accredited presentations to staff
* Senior Leadership engagement meetings
* Departmental visits
* QSI email updates
* Virtual, email and telephone support
* Resources/templates

For services new to QSI, we also offer an initial meeting to discuss and help you start the process.

Please contact the QI Partners at QSI@rcr.ac.uk

## QSI 2021 Development and Support tool

The Development and Support tool is available to download from the [RCR](https://www.rcr.ac.uk/clinical-radiology/service-delivery/quality-standard-imaging-qsi/support-quality-standard-imaging) and [CoR](https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/about-the-college/qsi) websites. The tool will RAG rate your current standing and provide evidence examples of evidence for reference. It can be used by services to assess progress against the standard and gauge your readiness for accreditation, along with referencing to the QSI 2019 standard Key Lines of Enquiry and how each aspect of the standard will be assessed.

# Resources

Further resources available on the [RCR](https://www.rcr.ac.uk/clinical-radiology/service-delivery/quality-standard-imaging-qsi) and [CoR](https://www.collegeofradiographers.ac.uk/about-the-college/the-quality-standard-for-imaging) websites include:

* Job descriptions (QI Lead - Band 7/ QI Facilitator – Band 4)
* Business case template
* FAQ’s
* Project plan example
* Policy/SOP templates
* FutureNHS QSI Network

# Quality Standards Imaging Networks (QSIN)

The Quality Standard for Imaging networks [(QSIN)](https://www.rcr.ac.uk/sites/default/files/quality_standard_for_imaging_networks.pdf) have been published separately from QSI 2021, it is envisaged that as imaging networks develop, the QSIN will become an integral part of QSI. The QSIN are made up of a number of quality statements which are aimed to compliment QSI 2021.

* IN 1 – Involving patients and carers
* IN2 – Workforce
* IN5 – Guidelines
* IN6 – Network Governance
* IN7 – Network Assurance