

Implementing updated Professional capabilities

November 2025

Supporting graduate practitioners

Executive Summary

The third iteration of the [Professional capabilities for medical radiation practice](#) (2026) establishes minimum expectations for graduates of accredited and approved programs of study, and all registered medical radiation practitioners.

This document emphasises the role of medical radiation practitioners as key supporters of graduate practitioners and the importance of realistic expectations, good supportive structures, and workplace culture as mediators for success.

This information is provided to assist registered medical radiation practitioners, other health practitioners, employers, health organisations, professional associations and others to support graduate medical radiation practitioners.

A shared responsibility for safe, confident, and capable practice

A newly graduated and registered medical radiation practitioner is expected to demonstrate foundational clinical knowledge, apply essential technical skills, demonstrate professional behaviours and attitudes and deliver patient-centred care in line with the [Professional capabilities for medical radiation practice](#) and the *Code of Conduct*.

Graduates complete significant work-integrated learning (WIL) during an approved program of study, often across a variety of health services and practices. These placements expose graduates to different approaches, protocols, and models of care. However, WIL cannot fully prepare graduates for the specific requirements, systems, and workflows of their first workplace. When they start practice graduates must learn to navigate local protocols, adapt to workplace cultures, and manage the practical workflow differences of everyday service delivery.

The Role of Workplaces, Educators, and Colleagues

The workplace, clinical educators and experienced practitioners play a crucial role in leading and supporting the transition of graduate practitioners. Clinical educators and experienced health practitioners serve as mentors and role models, offering guidance, advice and feedback. They provide hands-on training to help graduates refine their skills, build confidence, and integrate seamlessly into the healthcare team. Through collaboration and continued learning, new graduates gain experience honing their capability and competency as independent practitioners.

The Importance of Organisational Culture

The culture of an organisation into which graduate practitioners enter has a significant impact on their transition¹. A supportive environment enables confidence in graduate practitioners to ask questions and seek advice, reducing hesitancy and accelerating their integration into the multiprofessional team.

Why Structured Support Matters

Research² demonstrates that well-structured induction and transition programs is a cornerstone for graduate success. These programs:

- 1 Naylor S, Ferris C, Burton M. Exploring the transition from student to practitioner in diagnostic radiography. *Radiography* 2016;22(2):131e6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radi.2015.09.006>.
- 2 Bombelli L., Roletto A., Bonfitto G.R., Scaramelli E., Fasulo S.V., Catania D. Evaluation of the induction programme for newly qualified radiographers: A survey study (2024) *Radiography*, 30, pp. 143 – 148, DOI: [10.1016/j.radi.2024.11.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.radi.2024.11.016)

- enhance patient safety and ensure high-quality care
- support the development of positive professional attitudes and work ethic
- reduce stress and risk of burnout
- improve staff retention and morale, benefiting both the graduate and the broader team

Graduate Competence and Miller's Pyramid

Miller's Pyramid of Clinical Competence offers a useful way to understand graduate capabilities at the point of registration.

Graduates complete their program of study and enter the workforce at the "Does" level. This means they are capable of providing care in real clinical environments, carrying professional accountability for their actions, and contributing directly to patient outcomes. However, reaching the "Does" tier represents the starting point of independent practice, not its peak. At this stage, graduates are competent, but they are still consolidating their practice, refining their decision-making, and learning to adapt their skills to the complexities of daily healthcare delivery.

The transition from "Does" to 'Expert' requires time, support, and ongoing professional development. It is through continual practice, reflective learning, and meaningful mentorship that graduates deepen their clinical insight, establish peer trust, strengthen their professional judgement, and develop expertise.

Building Confidence, Earning Trust

Graduate practitioners are ready to contribute meaningfully to patient care, but the journey from competence to expertise is gradual. With the right combination of structured support, mentorship, and organisational culture, new practitioners grow in confidence, refine their judgement, and steadily build expertise. Ultimately, supporting early career practitioners is not just about easing transition—it is about investing in the safety, resilience, and sustainability of the profession and the health system.

Miller's 5 tier pyramid of competence

