How to perform a CACTUS® triggered assessment

Introduction

Thank you for being an active part of the CACTUS® community. Your ongoing support and contributions truly make a difference, and we're incredibly grateful for the role you play in helping the programme grow and thrive. CACTUS® simply wouldn't be what it is without you.

Children's Acute Ultrasound (CACTUS®) Accreditation currently comprises two core modules.
CACTUS® Lung, which provides a practical and structured approach to lung ultrasound training specifically designed for Acute Paediatric settings.
CACTUS® Cardiac, a foundational module relevant to all specialties working with children. It offers a basic introduction to bedside Cardiac Point-of-Care Ultrasound (PoCUS), supporting early skill development across disciplines.

A CACTUS® Lung Supervisor is now no longer required to conduct the lung triggered assessment. Approved Trainers can now oversee and sign-off the whole accreditation process for CACTUS® Lung. Supervisors may be required in the future for an advanced lung module

CACTUS ® Cardiac is supported by Trainers who oversee both logbook scans and the triggered assessment. This is different to FUSIC ® Heart, where there is a separate Mentor and Supervisor, due to the advanced skills covered within the mentioned accreditation. The latter approach will be replicated in more advanced CACTUS® Cardiac modules which are to be released in due course

CACTUS® Trainers may be any healthcare professional with relevant experience and/or regular practice in Intensive Care ultrasound.
As a minimum, **Lung Trainers** are expected to have been accredited in either FUSIC® Lung, CACTUS® Lung or FAMUS Thoracic for at least 12 months.
Cardiac Trainers can be from a FUSIC® Heart mentor OR supervisor, a paediatrician with expertise in cardiology, a paediatric cardiologist, an echocardiographer, a paediatric anaesthetist/intensivist with expertise in cardiology/echocardiography.

Trainers with the relevant experience are approved by the CACTUS® Committee. This recognition does mean that if you were already registered as a CACTUS® Trainer you can now perform a Triggered Assessment in that relevant module.

Because this may be the first time you are required to do so, we have created this guidance to explain the process and help you get started

When to perform a Triggered Assessment

All Modules

1. After satisfactory review of completed logbook images and reports
2. After satisfactory demonstration of all module competencies (form available on the candidate's ICS CACTUS® Portal)

CACTUS® Trainers have to ensure these tasks have been completed prior to arranging a triggered assessment.

How to perform a Triggered Assessment

Setting and patient selection

The goal of assessment is to determine the candidate's level of knowledge, skill and attitude with respect to PoCUS. So, it's important to assess these within the clinical environment, ideally on a patient with identifiable pathology. Location does not have to be inside the intensive care unit, but this may provide useful challenges (e.g. patient access and infection control) that can provoke discussion opportunities.

You can decide if you need to scan more than one patient during the assessment. You may already know their competence, so they should be able to readily demonstrate these. If not, further opportunities may help, especially if some or all views were challenging. Directly observed scanning provides the opportunity to question the candidate on relevant aspects, such as how to recognise various pathologies that may not be evident in that particular patient.

The Triggered Assessment form (available on the candidate's ICS CACTUS® Portal) is divided into 3 sections: preparation, the scan, and post scan.

Preparation

This focuses on interaction with:

- the patient
- their clinical background
- the machine
- the immediate environment

The Scan

This focuses on:

- probe handling
- image acquisition
- image interpretation
- clinical integration

Post Scan

This focuses on:

- Image storage
- Cleaning of machine
- Feedback of findings to patient 'or clinical team

How to Recognise a Successful and Unsuccessful Candidate

Successful candidates will be able to demonstrate each and every one of these competencies during the assessment, resulting in a pass. If they fail to do so, they should fail and resit following a period of focussed training.

Assessment is an important stage of the training process because it represents entry into the clinical PoCUS workforce and independent practise, with all its potential pitfalls. Candidates who lack competence should not proceed.

If you are not sure, it is very reasonable to involve another CACTUS® Trainer (if you know of any) for a second opinion. And if you would like advice and support from the CACTUS® committee, please don't hesitate to contact learning@ics.ac.uk .

What Happens After a Successful Triggered Assessment

Completion of CACTUS® Accreditation

Triggered Assessment is the final stage of CACTUS® training and, assuming that they have completed all other components satisfactorily, successful candidates will have the opportunity to apply for accreditation. They will need your name and signature on the Summary Training Record document - available on the candidate's ICS CACTUS® Portal.