

A 'factors for consideration' template for doctors wishing to reassure themselves that they are competent across the whole scope of their work

GENERIC Principles agreed by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

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Reducing or changing your practice? These prompts may help your self-assessment and action planning

This template allows you to work through structured questions to demonstrate with confidence to yourself, your appraiser and responsible officer, that you are safe, up-to-date and competent at what you do, particularly if you:

- Do a low volume of a particular scope of practice, especially clinical practice
- Have an unusual or limited range of practice
- Are planning to return to a particular scope of practice after a longer break.

The tool highlights areas of risk and areas of mitigation for those risks. It can be used at any time but it is particularly useful as a Quality Improvement Activity (QIA) to demonstrate your understanding of the governance around what you do.

You should include a completed template appropriate to your circumstances as a QIA in your appraisal portfolio and discuss your reflections during your appraisal. This will allow you to identify whether there is further action that you need to take to demonstrate or maintain your competence, or if appropriate governance around what you do needs to be put in place. If there is further action you can take, you can develop these actions as PDP goals.

This generic template should be edited to reflect the specific needs of different specialties/role types.

Generic factors affecting the perception of potential risk to patients from a relatively low volume of clinical work, a limited extent of practice, or returning to a role after a longer break from it, should be followed by your reflection on how this applies to you and your scope of work. If using the template as 'prompts for consideration' is useful for you in more than one area of your practice, you may find it helpful to record your reflections using a separate template for each part.

Remember, knowledge erodes less quickly than skills, so it is important to consider both.



Scope of practice

Describe the nature of your scope of practice and why you have chosen to reflect on these factors for consideration. Are you doing a low volume of work of this type? Are you deliberately limiting your scope of practice? Are you returning to this type of work after a prolonged break for some reason?

Volume worked in the last twelve months

How much work of this type have you done over the last twelve months of practice? Explain any breaks for any significant length of time, such as maternity or sick leave. If you have undertaken any skills based clinical procedures, please indicate how many you have done and how this compares with national recommendations.

Spread of work throughout the year

Is your work evenly spread throughout the year or do you regularly have significant breaks (e.g. > 6 weeks)? Please describe your annual arrangements. When was the last time you did any work of this type?



Experience

What prior experience do you bring to this role? How long have you worked as a qualified doctor in this type of work?

And/or

If appropriate, explain how many skills based clinical procedures of this type you have done in the past and how you have kept your skills up to date.

Duration of working in this way and future plans

How long have you been working in your current way, and what are your plans?

- If you do a low volume of work in this role, will you increase, maintain or decrease the volume of your work over the coming year?

And/or

- If you have a limited scope of practice, will you be changing this over the coming year?

And/or

- If you are coming back to work after a prolonged absence, what induction and support will you have / have you already had?

Overlap with other roles

Please describe the overlap between this part of your scope of practice and other roles you may currently have / have recently had. How well does the experience from your other roles help you to maintain your knowledge and skills for this one?



Benchmarking, integration and support

Are you able to compare your scope of practice in this role with that of your peers? For example:

Do you receive organisationally generated data on your activity which compares you to your peers? Do you meet regularly with your peers to discuss your work, e.g. multidisciplinary team meetings? Do you have easy access to support and advice from your peers (either through work or externally)?

Personal approach to risk and governance around your role

How do you limit the impact of your professional working arrangements in doing a scope of work of this type on any risk to your patients?

For example:

If you work with a limited scope of practice, what arrangements do you have in place to stay within the boundaries of your competence? If you move around, what actions do you take to ensure you have access to adequate induction and systems information? How do you ensure you are informed promptly of complaints, Significant Events and any other patient safety incidents? Equally, how do you report these to the organisations you work in?



CPD

Please describe how your approach to CPD helps to ensure you are up to date for your scope of practice. Does your CPD give you an ongoing exposure to the breadth of your potential workload such as to mitigate any reduction in experience? Do you access any other learning through groups or social media discussion forums? Do you rely predominantly on advice from peers on site? Are you able to confidently access up to date, authoritative factual information about issues relevant to your scope of practice most of the time?

Actions

Going forward are there any further actions you feel may be necessary to ensure you retain your competencies across your scope of practice and support your development? You may wish to formulate these as ideas for a Personal Development Plan or as actions to take forward with your employers in relation to the governance around your role