

Q&A from ST4 self-assessment webinar 14 August 2025

At the end of the webinar attendees had the opportunity to ask questions. The following is a summary of the questions and answers to some of the questions.

Questions relating to very specific individual evidence were not answered. Please contact your educational supervisor, College Tutor or TPD if you need help in deciding what to upload or how your evidence scores.

You must refer to the self-assessment criteria, the self assessment guidance and portfolio organisation score guidance on the [ANRO website](#) when you upload your evidence. Information regarding submitting your application and the portfolio upload is available on the ANRO website. If you have questions relating to this then you should contact them directly.

All applicants should read the '[ST4 Applicant guidance Round 3 February 2026](#)' document. This gives detailed information on the whole application process including eligibility to apply.

Questions and answers

- 1. Can the single page justifying your score and listing the evidence in the domain be part of the single pdf with the rest of the evidence, or should it be a separate file?**

Yes, it can be part of the single pdf – and that would be our ideal!

- 2. If you are a co-author on a poster that has won a prize by a national organisation - is a letter from that organisation confirming this ok to gain maximal points?**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score.

- 3. Would a trainee of the year count in Domain 2?**

That would count as a prize; please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score.

- 4. Would experience in a pain management post (a dedicated pain management post dealing with chronic, and acute-on-chronic pain) (not part of training) count as a complementary specialty? Could they add multiple specialties? Like pain management and adult ICU as a different specialty? Or can only one specialty be added? Thanks.**

More than one speciality can be included in Domain 3; your assessor will need to examine the evidence to decide on whether the pain management post will count.

- 5. Can you clarify what counts as a bursary award please? If you are awarded a funded place at a conference to travel and present, would that be a bursary award? Thank you.**

Yes – that is a bursary award rather than a prize and would not count in Domain 2.

- 6. Domain 3 - is an evaluation form from supervisors overseas sufficient as evidence for expected outcomes? Workplace based assessments are not done everywhere.**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide whether the evidence supports the requested score.

- 7. Domain 3 - should the 5-12 months be CONTINUOUS experience?**

Not necessarily; however, short-term locums do not count (the guidance states a locum post should be a minimum of three months).

- 8. QI domain - does co-leading an audit score less than leading it? If two people contributed equally?**

You would need to provide evidence to show that it was co-led and the part that you played. In general, co-leading gains less points than the sole leader of a project.

- 9. If a poster presentation is done for the QIP or audit in a national conference, then can the poster also be scored separately?**

Yes – a poster presentation scoring points in Domain 8 can be from a QIP scoring points in Domain 4

- 10. For the teaching evidence is a letter of evidence from a university sufficient or does it need another letter from the CT / ES?**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score. If there is enough detail from your University Assessor, then that should be enough.

- 11. If there is a series of events that have been occurring and you have been involved in one of those events - does this mean that you can get 5 points as the teaching event is 1 day and is recurring even if you are not involved personally in the subsequent event?**

You would only score points for the recurring event if you had taught or organised the recurring sessions.

- 12. Teaching - just to clarify - organising a Pan-London whole day Regional training day for Stage 1 trainees will not score 4 points as only a one off event?**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score. But in general, a one day event scores 2 points.

- 13. Will this session recording be available?**

Yes, it will be.

- 14. Can an article in the RCoA Bulletin be considered peer reviewed in terms of being reviewed by the board?**

Yes – we would consider the Bulletin to be peer reviewed.

- 15. Would a role in research count under the domain for posts/experience related to anaesthetics?**

Domain 3 is for clinical experience; however, you may be able to use the role to support Domain 5.

- 16. Would a national teaching programme with hourly sessions delivered weekly (total time 6 hours) suffice for points or does each session need to be 3 hours?**

No; we would expect the sessions to be at least 3 hours long.

- 17. If previous experience (eg, ICM fellowship) is taken into account and stage 1 training shortened as a result, does a project done during those period count as 'during anaesthetic training'?**

Yes.

- 18. If you have a certificate of attendance at an international 3 day conference - do you need to upload the number of CPD points associated with that conference or is the certificate of attendance for 3 days enough?**

If the certificate of attendance has the dates, this will suffice.

- 19. Would a poster accepted and displayed at a conference as an e-poster count for poster presentation (4 points)?**

Yes – this is acceptable.

- 20. Hello, thank you for organising this. Could you explain how we should evidence name changes across the different domains, so using a different last name for earlier qualifications and publications than the one listed on the application (for example after getting married)?**

This would best be evidenced in Domain 1 ([please see the Guidance document](#))

- 21. There was a technical glitch in the preferences page during my ST4 application for round 3. I was not able to save it and consequently I was not able to submit my application. Now the deadline is over at 1600, I kindly ask you to help me with this and kindly allow my application to pass through.**

You need to contact ANRO urgently; I'm afraid this is out with the remit of the RCoA.

- 22. Could you please clarify wording of 'pieces of information' versus 'subunits' and how these play into the QI category? Just wondering whether a PowerPoint, cover letter and poster of QI would definitely be counted as one 'piece of information', as the only exception to submitting more documents in the guidance is in Domain 3**

Please refer to the [Portfolio Organisation Guidance document](#) and the example on page 11 of the [ST4 Self Assessment Guidance document](#). You can have up to 3 subunits for each piece of evidence.

- 23. Could you please explain whether being "shortlisted" for a prize (e.g. at a conference) counts as a prize? Many thanks!**

No, shortlisting would not count as a prize.

- 24. When it comes to the maximum number of pieces of evidence that can be submitted, is a piece of evidence defined as a given project/role? I.e. if multiple teaching projects or roles have been undertaken, could multiple pieces of sub-evidence be submitted for up to four projects/roles?**

We would advise that you would supply evidence for the teaching project(s) which gains the most points, rather than submitting evidence for 4 projects. Please also see the [Portfolio Organisation Score Guidance document](#) for details of the maximum allowable evidence.

- 25. Am I allowed to submit 2 pieces of evidence (one evidence each for different scores) for a domain if I'm unsure how many points I can score**

Can I submit two different pieces of evidence from two different projects in one domain, or should I only include the evidence that will give me the highest score?

Yes – as long as you do not exceed the maximum pieces of evidence.

- 26. Could you confirm that letters to the editor do not count as publications? I had not read this in the guidance, but it was mentioned just now.**

As stated in the criteria – letters to the editor do score points.

- 27. If the evidence provided for a domain doesn't fully meet the standard for, say, 4 points, would points instead be awarded for a lower score (e.g., 3 points) if additional evidence has been submitted supporting that?**

Yes.

- 28. for regional and national teaching organisation - do you still need to have taught on it to gain max point or is organisation alone enough?**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score.

- 29. How do you define lead for the purposes of QI and research? (i.e. what is it to lead a TRN, committee or being the chair only?)**

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score.

- 30. Under prizes, if you have been awarded a best presentation prize at a national conference does that count?**

Yes.

- 31. Can a national conference that you presented a poster at also count as a national event in domain 9?**

Yes, provided that you have evidence that you attended the conference as well as presented.

- 32. Is the RCoA update conference a national conference? As an example, it's not quite obvious how to get that information for courses organised by the College.**

All educational events organised directly by the RCoA are national conferences.

33. How many points does being a local lead for a national research project count towards the research domain?

See [guidance document](#) - this is clearly described on pages 11-12.

34. In the brief for each domain, should we list everything we have done or only this apply for QI domain?

Please submit the evidence, and your assessor will decide on the score but in general only submit evidence for the highest score.

35. How would you recommend doing it when we are not sure where we fall on the domain, for example unsure between two points on a domain? Should we upload both pieces of evidence and explain why we are unsure, and then the assessor could decide? Worried my higher point may not count but then there will not be evidence for the point below.

You can upload both pieces of evidence provided you don't exceed the maximum uploads per domain and then write a brief explanation.

36. Can the proof for doing a research in the research domain be shown as the research already been published in a journal?

No, you will need more detail in the research domain, eg description of your involvement in research, certificates showing your participation in recruiting patients, letter from your supervisor detailing your involvement.

37. Thanks- are you able to submit multiple pieces of evidence for different projects in the same domain? (eg more than one teaching programme if you are not sure that your evidence for one project fulfils the criteria for points?)

Yes, provided you don't exceed the maximum uploads

38. Do you just upload evidence for maximal points? And then include other things that could contribute to that domain on the single page

Unless stated, you only need to upload evidence that will score the maximum points.

39. Regarding domain 3, will more than 36months in ICU score 3 points?

Points for ICM are counted if they are in addition to the normal training time spent in ICM in stage 1 training. Up to 12 months adult ICM can be counted.

This would give a maximum of 2 points. More than 12 months adult ICM does not gain any additional points.

40. Just to clarify in domain 3, if you had a 12-month post and a 6-month post, demonstrating achieving outcomes, would that count for 4 points as 2 points + 2 points = 4 points or 3 points as 6+12 = 18months therefore 3 points?

The time component in this example would be 12 months and 6 months giving a total of 18 months experience and would fall into the category '13-24 months' and therefore score 3 points.

41. When the criteria states experience gained 'within stage 1 training' does this include fellow years following stage 1 training?

Postgraduate clinical experience in other specialities (excluding anaesthesia, research and teaching) can count either before or after stage 1 training.

42. For a regional teaching course, if you help in organising two sessions over 2 days would that count as taking part in organising and give you 4 points?

You would need to write a paragraph stating your exact involvement in organising with the time component. A letter from a supervisor would be helpful.

[See guidance document for more details.](#)

43. For domain about teaching, if you were a trainer for a national conference overseas, would that certificate count as evidence?

If this was a single teaching event, then it is likely that the maximum points would be 2 but please put in the details so that the assessor can review.

44. Can we reuse Aug 2025 (round 1 score) by uploading the previous marksheet?

No, you need to upload all of the evidence on to the self-assessment portfolio again. There will be no record of your previous application.

45. For the quality improvement domain, when it says the project must be completed during stage 1 training, are you allowed to have started it before training, but finished it during stage 1?

Add a description of your project including accurate dates so the assessor can review.

46. For non-training posts is appraisal AND letter from consultant required to evidence satisfactory progress or is it just one of these?

Evidence of a satisfactory appraisal with achievement of outcomes would be enough.

47. Also, if you have more than one prize in a national conference, do we upload both for scoring max points

You can only gain the maximum points available for each domain.

In Domain 2 there is a maximum of 4 points, so if you have 2 prizes awarded by a National or International Medical Organic Organization you would still get 4 points (provided appropriate evidence is uploaded)

48. Domain 4 - If a QIP was presented nationally at a conference and not locally, does that still count as presentation of QIP if poster included?

Yes, poster presentations of a QIP can gain points in domain 8.

49. For the teaching part where it says "I have made a major contribution to a regional or national teaching programme including developing/organising a programme as a postgraduate" means that I can use a teaching project I led prior to commencing Stage 1 anaesthetics training?

Yes, provided it was done in the postgraduate period and NOT during undergraduate training.

50. Is there a minimum CPD points or time length requirement for post grad certificate in education?

There is no minimum time length, but a PG certificate should be a recognised University course. It is normally done over 6 months - 1 year part time.

51. For the Activities Demonstrating Leadership and/or Management Outside of Work domain, may I just check that this can include roles undertaken prior to starting Core Anaesthetics training?

[Refer to the Self Assessment Criteria and Guidance document.](#) There are points given at different stages.

52. What is your advice for those applicants who have completed stage 1 clinical training but are now "out of a training programme" working towards passing the primary FRCA exam before applying for ST4? How best to evidence outcomes from Trust grade type posts / complementary specialties during this time? Can you add SLE's into LLP still?

Refer to domain 3 in the [guidance document](#). You can upload PDFs of SLEs done following stage 1 training.

53. What evidence is required to prove that a journal is peer reviewed.

If it is PubMed listed then it should be peer reviewed. If not there should be information in the journal, eg under 'About this journal' or 'Notes for Authors', indicating if it is peer reviewed, or you can ask the Journal itself to provide that information to you.

54. Are you able to predict how portfolio self-assessment may change for the next round (i.e. August 2026)? It would be helpful to be able to anticipate any changes.

We have already published information on the ANRO website to inform applicants that from Aug 26 undergraduate degrees will not score points in domain 1. There will be a few other changes. The full self-assessment criteria for Aug 26 will be published following the completion of this current round (Round 3 Aug 25/Feb 26)

55. If you are a collaborator on a publication does this count?

It would depend on what your involvement has been. You would need to give details so that the assessor can review.

56. Are research publications (original articles, peer reviewed) and teaching experience from overseas counted?

Yes, they count provided appropriate evidence is uploaded.

57. Should you blank out other colleagues' names - e.g. programme of teaching?

If the programme is already in the public domain eg on a programme published by a National Organisation then that would not be necessary but for local programmes that would be advisable unless you have the person's permission.

58. Do leadership roles have to be 6 months to score points despite having evidence of significant contribution in the time the role has been held?

Yes, normally a minimum of 6 months but if less than this add in the details so the assessor can review.

59. Sorry just to clarify, if you don't have your Oriel pin on the supervisor letters, it is still ok as long as you have clearly written name, GMC number?

If your name and GMC number are clearly visible then this should suffice.

60. Does paediatric surgery 13 months in a previous country count for domain 3 please?

Yes, this would count provided it was done following foundation training (or equivalent).

61. If someone has MD anaesthesia abroad (with thesis and 3 yr duration), is it acceptable in domain 1

Please refer to domain 1 of the [guidance document](#). This gives details of this.

62. In domain 10 guidance it talks about leading an expedition but doesn't expand on an expedition. Is there a set accepted definition? - Would a multi-day/multi-national charity long-distance sporting event count? Thanks

Please refer to the [guidance document](#): '2 points are given for leading expeditions except where there is exceptional commitment'.

63. Does getting a medal in post graduation MSc count as prize for domain 2

No this would not count as a prize.

64. Do all projects/QIPs/exams etc have to have been obtained only during stage 1 or can it have been before

The guidance document gives details for each domain but normally projects etc are counted during AND after stage 1 training (or equivalent). Refer to the assessment criteria and guidance document for each domain. Some done in the postgraduate period but before stage 1 training count.

65. If a reviewer marks your score down, are there any other penalisations?

No there are no penalties if your score is reduced.