

Mapping ECF and ACCEND reveals the strengths of both frameworks

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Challenge

There are two education and career frameworks suitable for the radiotherapy workforce, the College of Radiographer’s Education and Career Framework (ECF)¹ and NHSE’s Aspirant Cancer Career Education Development framework (ACCEND)². Both frameworks offer resources that are valuable and relevant. Mapping hoped to clarify their distinct strengths and uses, then show how they can support the radiotherapy workforce.

Aim

Map ECF and ACCEND to identify the distinct and shared benefits of each framework and create a practical guide for combined use.

Approach



OUTPUT - A mapping guide that explains the distinct, shared and complementary benefits of ECF and ACCEND frameworks

DISTINCT STRENGTHS - ECF: radiation specifics, legal and regulatory standards, career foundation. **ACCEND:** cancer-specific skills and knowledge

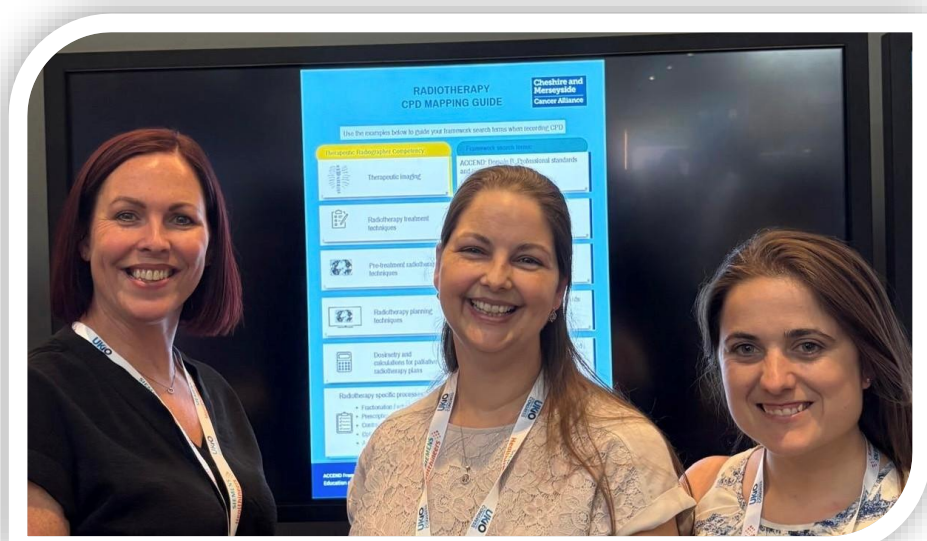
Project timeline



Outcomes

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Outcomes



UK Imaging and Oncology Congress, Liverpool (2026)

1. Distinct and complementary benefits identified.
2. 12 education sessions offered with 32 attendees and a further 23 responded to the initial survey.
3. UKIO congress presentation and ePoster contribution.
4. Next steps adopted by The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre as part of their ACCEND implementation plan workstreams.
5. Manuscript about mapping project submitted to a journal, blog published on social media and cancer alliance website.



Results and Findings

- Mapping clarified application and relevance for both frameworks.
- Cancer care is an ever-evolving climate.
- Individuals should interpret and navigate the frameworks at different points in their career to pursue their professional aspirations.

Key learning and Next steps

Key learning:

Neither framework replaces the other. ECF provides a solid foundation in radiation safety, technological mindset and regulatory aspects of the career. ACCEND adds cancer-specific details and relevant capabilities. Mapping made their complementary value clear.

Next steps:

To support ACCEND implementation plans by:

1. Offering local education sessions, including information on the ECF and ACCEND.
2. Share our methodology and approach with colleagues across the UK.

References:

1. College of Radiographers. (2022). *Education and Career Framework*, (4th ed.)
 2. NHS Health Education England. (2023). *ACCEND Career Pathway, Core Cancer Capabilities and Education Framework*.
- Photo credit: Lucy Irwin, UKIO (2026).

“ACCEND, along with the ECF, can support the development of a skilled and sustainable radiotherapy workforce, helping staff grow, progress, and deliver high-quality care for patients.”
Danny Hutton, Network Manager, Northwest Radiotherapy Network



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