

## Self-Study Report. University of South Australia, 2023

GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY (GENERAL)

MASTER OF MEDICAL SONOGRAPHY (GENERAL)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN BREAST IMAGING

## Student Information

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Number of new enrolments in the program for the year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 2022 – full year<br>ICBR – 20<br>IGSO (Gen) – 84<br>IMSO (Gen) – 29                                          | 2023 – to 1/8<br>ICBR – 39<br>IGSO (Gen) – 161<br>IMSO (Gen) – 37                                          |
| Number of ongoing enrolments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 2022 – full year<br>ICBR – 8<br>IGSO (Gen) – 227<br>IMSO (Gen) – 57                                          | 2023 – to 1/8<br>ICBR – 28<br>IGSO (Gen) – 311<br>IMSO (Gen) – 86                                          |
| Number of completions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 2022 – full year<br>ICBR – 16<br>IGSO (Gen) – 113<br>IMSO (Gen) – 19                                         | 2023 – to July<br>ICBR – 11<br>IGSO (Gen) – 48<br>IMSO (Gen) – 8                                           |
| Number of successful credit transfers (per 0.125 EFTSL equivalent subjects). This data includes internal and external credit transfers (i.e.: students transferring between our courses as well as from other institutions).<br><br>NB: unsuccessful credit transfers are not reportable data. Most commonly, declined credit applications came from private courses which aren't accredited with ASAR or registered with TEQSA, or from other institutions where the subject content did not align with set objectives of any of our subjects. | 2022 – full year<br>ICBR – 7<br>IGSO (Gen) – 12<br>IMSO (Gen) – 9                                            | 2023 – to 1/8<br>ICBR – 15<br>IGSO (Gen) – 34<br>IMSO (Gen) – 14                                           |
| Number of withdrawals<br>Program Withdrawals<br>Number of students that have formally withdrawn from UniSA. This figure does not include administrative withdrawals undertaken as part of regular processes or transfer into other Sonography programs or streams                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 2022 – full year<br>ICBR – 6<br>IGSO (Gen) – 16<br>IMSO (Gen) – 8<br>ICSO (Gen) completions (Exit award) – 7 | 2023 – to 1/8<br>ICBR – 2<br>IGSO (Gen) – 10<br>IMSO (Gen) – 3<br>ICSO (Gen) completions (Exit award) – 10 |

Key: ICBR = Graduate Certificate in Breast Imaging; IGSO (Gen) = Graduate Diploma in Medical Sonography, General Stream; IMSO (Gen) = Master of Medical Sonography, General Stream; ICSO = Exit Graduate Certificate, taken by students who successfully complete the initial four subjects of the IGSO or IMSO program, but are unable to obtain a training position

## Changes in the past 12 months

Describe any changes that have been made in the past 12 months to:

### Staffing

Dr Brooke Osborne has left the sonography program and Dr Jessie Childs has taken over as Program Director.

Ms Emilie Rasheed (accredited Cardiac Sonographer) has been employed by UniSA and is teaching Physics into the general, vascular, and cardiac IMSO, IGSO streams and ICBR. Emilie is teaching further courses into the cardiac stream. Emilie has both teaching and research experience having conducted multiple research studies and taught extensively into the POCUS sector. She has presented at numerous conferences and is a welcome addition to the team.

### Facilities [\(Link to how they will be used for the course\)](#)

All facilities remain unchanged since previous report.

### Equipment [\(Link to how they will be used for the course\)](#)

The University has purchased three new ultrasound machines to support our on-campus general stream workshops. These machines are a GE LOGIQ P9 R4 and 2 x Venue Fit R3's.

The original range of equipment remains available for hands-on use on campus. We continue to enjoy our simulation and teaching space, with students free to book time with the simulators (and machines when being accompanied by a qualified sonographer) both within and outside normal business hours.

SIMTICS modules continue to be used to support the students' learning of practical scanning approaches in our online environment.

### Course Structure

No changes to the entry requirements for IMSO/IGSO have been made since the new entry requirements were noted in the 2022 report.

To further streamline staffing, delivery of abdominal sonography and superficial parts sonography were reduced to a once a year offering rather than twice. Following feedback from the program advisory group, industry correspondence and staff reported student scaffolding issues, abdominal sonography, from 2024 will once again be offered twice a year. This will ensure that all students regardless of their beginning of year or mid-year entry will be able to complete physics and professional issues as their first two courses followed by Abdominal and Superficial parts or Abdominal and Vascular. It was felt that due to baseline understanding of ultrasound and the soft skills (referencing, study expectations, logging scanning hours) that students learn within Physics and Prof Issues, that all students should complete these two courses prior to enrolment in further courses.

Recommended study plans are now as follows:

#### 2-year completion plan

|                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| SP2 intake                          | SP5 intake                          |
| SP2 Physics and Professional Issues | SP5 Physics and Professional Issues |
| SP5 Abdominal and Superficial Parts | SP2 Abdominal and Vascular          |
| SP2 Vascular and Obstetrics         | SP5 Superficial Parts and MSK       |
| SP5 MSK and CSP                     | SP2 Obstetrics and CSP              |

Subsequently this has changed the pre-requisites of courses within the program to ensure students follow the study plan above.

#### Changes to entry requirements ICBR

Changes to the entry requirements for the Graduate Certificate in Breast imaging now requires students to have confirmation of a training position.

#### Option for applicants without training positions

For those without a training position, we continue to offer a Professional Certificate, which allows students to enrol in the first two subjects of the IGSO/IMSO and ICRB programs: Ultrasound Physics and Instrumentation, and Professional Issues for Sonographers. These credits will transfer across with students once they obtain a training position and can enter the IGSO/IMSO and ICBR programs. Worksites support this approach as this allows potential trainees to complete introductory subjects prior to starting a clinical training position.

### Accreditation History

List other accreditations related to the course.

In addition to external accreditation with ASAR, all Medical Sonography Programs undergo evaluation and internal accreditation within the University. This was last completed in 2022, with reaccreditation approved until 2028.

Provide an overview of any changes made in those accreditations in the past 12 months (EG. Renewal).

As an education provider of the Mammography Courses, BreastScreen SA (BSSA), is required to undertake accreditation with the Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy (ASMIRT) every three years. ASMIRT have replaced the wording of accreditation to credentialled. ASMIRT's Breast Imaging Reference Group has been granted re-credentialing of the BSSA course for a 3 year period, until the 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2025.

If there is a condition on the course's registration, provide details of any actions taken to address the requirements of the condition

Not applicable

## Satisfaction Data

Student satisfaction data. – are you meeting the needs / expectations of the students.

Course Evaluation Data for Courses across all the three Programs shows that student satisfaction and good teaching has been rated as high. All data for IGSO and IMSO includes general, cardiac, and vascular streams, as the student and graduate surveying process does not differentiate between the three specialisations:

**Student satisfaction with the program teaching**, as measured by agreement rates for the six Good Teaching items, is usually rated against the national top quartile, however that benchmarking result was not reported for 2022 and 2023.

ICBR: 83%  
IGSO: 78%  
IMSO: 96%

**Overall Graduate satisfaction** surveys show that Course (Program) satisfaction scores benchmarked against the National top quartile of 87.5%:

ICBR: 100%  
IGSO: 93.8%  
IMSO: 100%

Employer satisfaction data – are you meeting the needs / expectations of the employers.

Employers were invited to respond to a graduate satisfaction survey. Despite repeated reminders, there were no employers of our Graduate Certificate in Breast Imaging graduates who responded to their invitation to provide feedback. Please General Employer satisfaction survey results attached with this submission.

Lecturer / trainer / assessor / supervisor feedback

Employer satisfaction survey results will incorporate feedback and comments from supervisors.

Ongoing conversations via phone and email, as well as submissions through student clinical progress reports, indicate that students are performing well overall, and that supervisors are satisfied overall with student performance. Where issues have been noted, supervisors have appreciated the support from academic staff in setting goals for future improvement.

An interview between the student/supervisor and course coordinator has been introduced at the beginning of the capstone Clinical Sonography portfolio course. This enables all parties to be on the same page regarding expectations of the student and feedback regarding the students progress and readiness to graduate from both a university and a supervisor level.

Other stakeholder feedback.

The Program advisory committee has been useful in providing feedback from external stakeholders. Feedback obtained has been useful in making some changes and implementing steps to maintain ongoing communication with external stakeholders.

Identification of patterns/trends in the data.

Our students and recent graduates continue to do well overall in terms of meeting graduate competency outcomes.

## Planning for the future

### What are the strengths of the course?

All courses are delivered externally, allowing for students to study with flexible learning arrangements. This is attractive to the majority of students, who often also have full-time work commitments. Interactive activities between students and course coordinators are conducted on a weekly basis including drop-in sessions and evening online lectures and/or tutorials.

Our staff work strongly together as a collaborative team. We have a wide range of academic and professional backgrounds, which are all drawn on to produce relevant, authentic, and appropriately scaffolded teaching and learning approaches as students' progress through their program.

### What are the challenges for the course?

The challenges posed by COVID-19 continue into 2023. We have had to continue with the changes to the program we made to address these challenges. The ongoing changes are outlined below as an addendum.

We continue to acknowledge the ongoing challenges our students have had in obtaining suitable training positions. The introduction of the requirement of a training position prior to entry has reduced the impact of this on enrolled students, enabling them to be better positioned to graduate. These same entry requirements have been introduced to ICBR.

### What is the action plan for the coming 12 months?

#### **Equipment updates**

A significant update of our ultrasound equipment has been made. The use of this equipment will be logged.

#### **Research activities**

All staff continue to build their involvement in larger projects and consultancy activities across other areas of the University (Nursing, Exercise Science, Allied Health, Education, Nutrition), larger Government research groups (if: South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute), and through industry groups (ASAR, ASUM, ASA).

#### **Professional development activities for staff**

Teaching as a skill remains a focus for all staff in the Medical Sonography Programs. Staff are encouraged to be active in local teaching and learning and curriculum development committees, as well as to consider peer partnering, to examine and reflect upon their own teaching practice. Due to the online nature of our course delivery, the academic unit is supporting and has prioritised all staff in the Medical Sonography Program to undertake a workshop/specialised training for making media for teaching and learning.

## ADDENDUM: COVID-19

Given the restrictions that were put in place due to COVID-19, the following actions were taken in 2020, and persist into 2023:

Our course delivery (teaching and learning activities) has remained unchanged, given that all our students are external. Students continued to attend virtual lectures or have access to the recordings if they were unable to log on at the time.

Several of our subjects offer optional scanning workshops for those students who wish to attend some face-to-face teaching. Many of these have returned to campus however the transition back to campus has seen many course coordinators offer a hybrid version for those who cannot travel.

Rather than being held in external examination venues, all written exams continue to be online, non-invigilated, open book exam activities. Given the change in format, these exams have been altered such that, rather than examining a wide amount of knowledge which relied on student recall, the ability for students to apply their learned knowledge to particular scenarios is examined. Students are required to demonstrate a higher order of thinking to be successful in these exams. The results from these exams show a similar spread to what is normally seen, with the usual number of 'fail' results – seemingly from those students who believed that they could rely on the open book nature of the exam to get them through. The university has made the decision to continue online, exam activities. The program is currently assessing and in consultation as to whether RP now software will be used moving forward.

In 2020, we reported the largest adjustment which needed to be made to the assessment of students in the programs: that of the changes to the OSCE examination in our capstone subject, Clinical Sonography Portfolio. The changes made in 2020 continue to be in effect through 2023. To ensure legitimacy of student submissions, an interview is held between the supervisor, student and course coordinator/other staff member. This is to discuss student readiness to graduate as well as expectations. In addition to the video submissions of the students scanning across examination regions, students are required to sit a 20-minute online viva session. This is a one-on-one recorded zoom session where the student responds to a series of pre-formatted questions, allowing for an extra layer of student clinical competency training which was arguably lost when we ceased the on-campus OSCE format.

We continue to see COVID-19 related issues related to flight accessibility, rapidly fluctuating and unpredictability of flight timetables and the increased expense of travel. Due to this we have hesitated in bringing our final clinical assessment back on campus, however we will be transitioning towards this from SP5 2023. Feedback from students and supervisors have highlighted issues in some sites around videoing patients. As a result of this feedback an on campus OSCE option has been re-introduced for SP5 2023. We will continue to monitor and adapt to this fluctuating situation.