



Position Statement on Breast Imaging Clinical Rotations
Adopted by the JRCERT Board of Directors (April 2016)

The Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) **Standards for an Accredited Educational Program** are designed to promote academic excellence, patient safety, and quality healthcare. The JRCERT accreditation process offers a means of providing assurance to the public that a program meets specific quality standards. The process helps to maintain program quality and stimulates program improvement through program assessment.

Standard Four - Objective 4.4 of the JRCERT Standards requires a program to document that it “provides equitable learning opportunities for all students.”

The JRCERT does not provide legal advice to program officials. Nevertheless, the JRCERT has received numerous inquiries regarding the placement of students in clinical rotations/procedures involving breast imaging. The JRCERT understands that there have been significant concerns regarding the interpretation of the JRCERT Standards regarding equitable learning opportunities for all students. As a point of clarification, the JRCERT notes that equitable means dealing fairly with all concerned. It does not necessarily mean equal.

The JRCERT has analyzed statistical data that indicates current imaging practices in mammography have resulted in minimal employment opportunities for males. Certification demographic data indicates that less than 1% of the approximately 50,000 technologists registered in mammography by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) are males. Overwhelmingly, clinical site policies prohibit male students from participation in breast imaging procedures. Such participation is limited due to liability concerns, as well as consideration for the interests of the patient. These policies are established not only for mammography exams, but also for other gender-specific examinations performed by professionals who are the opposite gender of the patient.

With regard to breast imaging, the JRCERT has determined programs must make every effort to place a male student in a breast imaging clinical rotation/procedure if requested; however, programs will not be expected to attempt to override clinical site policies that restrict breast imaging rotations/procedures to female students. Male students should be advised that placement in a breast imaging rotation is not guaranteed and, in fact, would be very unlikely. To deny breast imaging educational experience to female students, however, would place those students at a disadvantage in the workforce where there is a demand for appropriately educated professionals to address the needs of patients. It is noted that the same clinical site policies that are in place during the breast imaging educational rotations are most likely applicable upon employment, thus limiting access for males to pursue careers in breast imaging.

The JRCERT reiterates that it is the responsibility of each clinical site to address any legal challenges related to a program’s inability to place male students in a breast imaging rotation. All students should be informed and educated about the various employment opportunities and potential barriers that may affect their ability to work in a particular clinical staff position.