



British Heart Rhythm Society

**GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT  
BRITISH HEART RHYTHM SOCIETY (BHRS) RE-CERTIFICATION**

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on behalf of the BHRS Certification Committee

**INTRODUCTION**

The following document advises on the process for BHRS re-certification. This will involve a combination of collecting evidence of participation in appropriate continuous professional development in cardiac rhythm management (CRM) and successful re-sitting of the written examination. There will not be a requirement to repeat the logbook.

**WHAT IS BRITISH HEART RHYTHM SOCIETY CERTIFICATION?**

BHRS certification is recognition of knowledge and practical experience in the field of CRM. It consists of two components: the examination and a logbook or written casework. The certificate is only awarded on successful completion of both the examination and the appropriate logbook (details via the BHRS website <http://www.bhrs.com/certification>).

**THE EXAMINATION**

The examination was introduced in 1999 as part of the British Pacing and Electrophysiology Group (BPEG) Certificate of Competency. In 2006 the examination became the Heart Rhythm UK Certificate of Accreditation and structure of the examination was revised with the introduction of core and specialist sections.

In 2011, the examination paper was marked electronically for the first time. Since then, the questions and candidates' responses have been evaluated in detail so that we can continue to improve the quality, relevance and validity of the questions.

In 2013, the number of questions was increased to 120 (60 core and 60 specialty), in part, to bring the examination into line with the EHRA examination. As a consequence, the duration of the examination was increased to 4 hours. Also in 2013, we introduced a third "clinical" specialist section. This section is aimed at nurses with a special interest in CRM and is complimented by a new "logbook equivalent" of casework. It was not felt appropriate that nurses with a special interest in CRM complete a logbook, instead there is a requirement to complete a number of case studies.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR RE-CERTIFICATION**

In January 2014, the Certification Committee agreed to a process of re-certification to bring BHRS in line with European and US examinations. This has subsequently been ratified by Council.

BHRS Certification will now be valid for 10-years. Candidates will need to successfully re-sit the examination after 10 years in order to maintain certification. However, there will not be a requirement to repeat the logbook.

**IMPORTANT:** Candidates who sat the examination in 2006 and subsequent years will also be required to re-certify. However, it was agreed that these candidates would also have a 10-year period from 2014 in which to re-certify i.e. candidates who successfully gained Heart Rhythm UK Accreditation from 2006 – 2013, inclusive, will be required to re-certify by 2024.

Candidates who successfully passed the examination and logbook prior to 2006 in the old format will not be required to re-certify.

For all candidates to remain certified continuous membership of BHRS is required. If membership has lapsed at any time since 2014 you will be required to pay all outstanding fees before your application can be processed.

## **EXPIRY OF EXISTING CERTIFICATION**

At present the certification examination is held annually. From 2014 onwards, the date of registration for the examination will count as the date of commencement of the logbook and candidates have 2 years from that date to complete the logbook. Certification is therefore held from the year of successful completion of both the examination and logbook. As the written exam is held annually in March each year the expiry date will be extended to the 31<sup>st</sup> March in all cases.

The responsibility for re-certification rests with the member when this becomes due.

Requests for extensions must always be submitted via e-mail (and not by telephone) to [admin@bhers.com](mailto:admin@bhers.com), giving full reasons why an extension is being sought. Requests will then be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Certification Committee. Please note that extension requests require clear mitigating circumstances (e.g. ill-health, pregnancy).

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)**

Evidence must be provided of CPD through attendance at appropriate scientific meetings and familiarity with CRM literature. The basic requirement for re-certification is to accumulate 80 BHRS points/credits over a 10-year period. This must be evenly spread and as such an individual needs a minimum of 40 points/credits in each 5-year cycle. This total can be achieved through a combination of attending meetings, courses (industry and non-industry sponsored) and distance learning, subject to the following conditions:

- At least 20 BHRS points/credits must be obtained by attendance at specialised meetings devoted to CRM. These include, but are not limited to: Cardiostim, EuroPace, Heart Rhythm Society, Heart Rhythm Congress (and other national/international BHRS approved meetings)

- It is strongly recommended that an individual attend Heart Rhythm Congress once every 5 calendar years (at least) hence a minimum of twice in the 10-year cycle
- No more than 50% of the BHRS points/credits can be obtained through personal/distance learning or in house training
- There is no mandatory requirement to attend international meetings

### **Meetings & Courses**

It is recognised that education at national and international meetings is not readily available to all and the importance of local/regional meetings is not underestimated. Guidance for point/credit allocation is outlined below. 1 BHRS point/credit per hour of educational content will be allocated for:

- Specialist meetings primarily devoted to CRM e.g. Heart Rhythm Congress
- Local meetings with a minimum of 2 hours of educational content. At least 1 educational speaker must be an actively certified member of BHRS, IBHRE or EHRA (departmental review meetings do not qualify for BHRS points)

For other courses/meetings, a completed BHRS points/credit request form and a copy of the programme must have been submitted by the course organiser to be assessed for BHRS points/credit purposes prior to the meeting. Requests for BHRS approval must always be submitted via e-mail (and not by telephone) to [admin@bhrs.com](mailto:admin@bhrs.com).

Proof of attendance at meetings and courses will be required. This should be in the form of an attendance certificate (BHRS will issue these for its own meetings).

As with other national society guidance on CPD, BHRS points/credits are a vital component of the re-certification process. The certification committee hopes this requirement will help empower physiologists and we believe that, once employers realise that failure to facilitate staff attendance at educational meetings may result in them losing certification, this requirement may be beneficial. We accept that this will involve a culture change in some departments.

Individuals may be audited to ensure submitted CPD claims are accurate.

### **Distance Learning**

Recertification points can also be obtained through appropriate distance learning modules with evidence of participation and successful completion. Such distance learning modules include Medscape webcasts/ESC EBAC webcasts/HRS webcasts. A number of packages will be developed for this purpose and will be available on the BHRS website.

## **FEES**

BHRS has to cover its costs, including administration time, postage, production of certificates, creating distance-learning modules etc. The initial charges will be as follows:

- Non-commercial / charitable organisations with no educational grant and no fee to attendees – no charge
- Non-commercial / charitable organisations charging a fee to attendees £25 (per day)
- Commercial / for profit organisations £250 (per day)

All funds from a commercial source should be in the form of an unrestricted educational grant, that is, a grant that allows the (non commercial) provider freedom to choose the topic, speakers and mode of presentation. The grant should be paid directly to the institution or organisation that is organising the CPD event/activity.

The BHRS website will advertise approved courses with agendas and BHRS points allocation.

These fees will be reviewed annually in the light of experience as the scheme develops.

## **APPLICATION FOR BHRS POINTS/CREDIT REQUEST**

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Guidance for point/credit allocation is outlined below:

1 BHRS point/credit per hour of educational content will be allocated for:

- Specialist meetings primarily devoted to CRM e.g. Heart Rhythm Congress
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For other courses/meetings, a completed BHRS points/credit request form and a copy of the programme must have been submitted by the course organiser to be assessed for BHRS points/credit purposes.

Requests for BHRS approval must always be submitted via e-mail (and not by telephone) to [admin@bhers.com](mailto:admin@bhers.com).

Name:

Address (for correspondence):

Email:

Telephone No:

Title of course (a copy of the programme must be attached):

Number of points applied for:

Fees (tick which applies)

- NHS meetings (in house) – no charge
- Non-commercial / charitable organisations with no educational grant and no fee to attendees – no charge
- Non-commercial / charitable organisations charging a fee to attendees £25 (per day)
- Commercial / for profit organisations £250 (per day)