

Changes to the 2021 Anaesthetic Curriculum in Version 1.5

The August 2026 update to the 2021 curriculum has removed the practical procedures grid and incorporated this into key capabilities in the curriculum. Thoracic epidural has been removed as a required procedure and additional airway procedures/skills have been added.

The affected HALOs in **Stage 1** are the General Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Resuscitation & Transfer domains.
The affected HALOs in **Stage 2** are the General Anaesthesia, Regional Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Resuscitation & Transfer domains.
The affected HALOs in **Stage 3** are the General Anaesthesia domain and SIAs in regional anaesthesia and complex airway.

The changes to specific key capabilities are summarised below.

Transition Guidance

Any HALO already signed will be accepted at ARCP in either version until at least August 2028.

For HALOs in progress that are yet to be submitted:

- **EITHER** complete the requirements as per v1.5 of the curriculum
- **OR** attach a Personal Activity to the new key capabilities (marked with an asterisk *) with a short title and explanation confirming that you are remaining on v1.4. This will provide the necessary context for those reviewing and signing off your HALO.

The transition period extends until:

- 17 August 2028 for anaesthetists in training who start Stage 2 or Stage 3 in August 2026.
- 17 August 2029 for anaesthetists in training who have already started Stage 1 domains of learning and require additional flexibility.

Changes to Stage One HALOs

Stage One General Anaesthesia Domain	
Key Capability Cluster K, L and T – Supervision Level 2a	
<i>The wording of these key capabilities has changed and new Key Capability T has been added to the cluster.</i>	
K	Identifies patients with known and difficult airways and seeks help appropriately
L	Formulates a safe airway strategy for patients with known or potential difficult airways
T	Recognises the challenges associated with shared airway surgery
New Key Capability Cluster U to Z – Supervision Level 3	
U	Demonstrates management of the 'cannot intubate cannot oxygenate' scenario (including emergency front of neck airway) in simulation, and describes current difficult airway guidelines
V	Describes and implements measures to prevent unrecognised oesophageal intubation
W	Uses supraglottic airway devices safely and appropriately
X	Intubates using direct laryngoscopy safely and appropriately
Y	Intubates using video laryngoscopy safely and appropriately
Z	Manages low-risk extubation safely
Key Capability Cluster AA to AD – Supervision Level 1	
AA	Uses high flow nasal oxygenation for pre-oxygenation safely and appropriately
AB	Describes intubation with flexible bronchoscopy
AC	Describes intubation through a supraglottic device
AD	Manages at-risk extubation safely
Stage One Resuscitation and Transfer Domain	
Key Capability J – Supervision Level 1	
<i>This was previously Key Capability D of the Intensive Care Domain which has moved domain</i>	
J	Recognises the acutely ill child and initiates management of paediatric emergencies
Stage One Intensive Care Domain	
Key Capability B – Supervision Level 2a (FICM 2)	
<i>This has not changed in its wording, but now includes examples of procedures required to fulfil the key capability</i>	
B	Performs safely and effectively the clinical invasive procedures required to maintain respiratory, cardiovascular and renal support <u>Examples of evidence (Procedures can be completed in theatre or ICU settings during the stage of training)</u> SLEs assessing skills in: ▪ Central venous line insertion ▪ Insertion of venous access line for renal replacement therapy ▪ Insertion of arterial lines ▪ Ultrasound-guided intravenous cannula insertion ▪ Needle thoracocentesis (simulation) ▪ Chest drain insertion (simulation)
Removed Key Capability D	
<i>This key capability has been moved to the Resuscitation and Transfer Domain (see above)</i>	

Changes to Stage Two HALOs

Stage Two General Anaesthesia Domain	
Key Capability Cluster I to J – Supervision Level 3	
<i>The wording of these key capabilities has changed – currently linked evidence is likely to still meet the requirements.</i>	
I	Formulates and delivers a safe airway strategy for patients with known or potential difficult airways
J	Manages non-complex shared airway surgery
New Key Capability Cluster Y to AD – Supervision Level 4	
Y	Demonstrates management of the 'cannot intubate cannot oxygenate' scenario (including emergency front of neck airway) in simulation, and describes current difficult airway guidelines
Z	Describes and implements measures to prevent unrecognised oesophageal intubation
AA	Uses supraglottic airway devices safely and appropriately
AB	Intubates using direct laryngoscopy safely and appropriately
AC	Intubates using video laryngoscopy safely and appropriately
AD	Manages low-risk extubation safely
Key Capability Cluster AE to AH – Supervision Level 2b	
AE	Uses high flow nasal oxygenation for per-oxygenation safely and appropriately
AF	Intubates using flexible bronchoscopy
AG	Manages at-risk extubation safely
AH	Intubates through a supraglottic airway device either in a patient or in simulation
New Key Capability AI – Supervision Level 2a	
AI	Describes intubation in the awake patient

Stage Two Regional Anaesthesia Domain	
New Key Capability J – Supervision Level 3	
J	Performs ultrasound-guided limb blocks for lower limb surgery

Stage Two Resuscitation and Transfer Domain	
Key Capability H – Supervision Level 3	
<i>This was previously Key Capability D of the Intensive Care Domain which has moved domain</i>	
H	Recognises the acutely ill child and initiates management of paediatric emergencies

Stage Two Intensive Care Domain	
Key Capability B – Supervision Level 3	
<i>This has not changed in its wording, but now includes examples of procedures required to fulfil the key capability</i>	
B	Performs safely and effectively the clinical invasive procedures required to maintain respiratory, cardiovascular and renal support <u>Examples of evidence (Procedures can be completed in theatre or ICU settings during the stage of training)</u> SLEs assessing skills in: - Central venous line insertion - Insertion of venous access line for renal replacement therapy - Insertion of arterial lines - Ultrasound-guided intravenous cannula insertion - Needle thoracocentesis (simulation) - Chest drain insertion (simulation)
Removed Key Capability D	
<i>This key capability has been moved to the Resuscitation and Transfer Domain (see above)</i>	

Changes to Stage Three HALOs

Stage Three General Anaesthesia Domain	
Key Capability Cluster F, G and P – Supervision Level 3	
<i>The wording of these key capabilities has changed, and a new key capability has been added to the cluster</i>	
F	Manages patients with anticipated difficult airways safely, recognising when additional assistance is necessary
G	Manages the anaesthetic challenges of patients needing shared airway surgery
P	Manages patients requiring awake tracheal intubation, recognising when additional assistance is necessary
New Key Capability Cluster Q to U – Supervision Level 4	
Q	Demonstrates management of the 'cannot intubate cannot oxygenate' scenario (including emergency front of neck airway) in simulation, and describes current difficult airway guidelines
R	Uses high flow nasal oxygenation for per-oxygenation in spontaneously breathing patients safely and appropriately
S	Intubates using flexible bronchoscopy
T	Manages at-risk extubation safely
U	Intubates through a supraglottic airway device either in a patient or in simulation

Stage Three Regional Anaesthesia Domain

Evidence for lumbar epidural, spinal +/- CSE added to key capability B – Supervision Level 4

There are some changes in the SIAs as well, so please look at the evidence required for your chosen SIA.
The changes to the SIAs better reflect current practice and make the SIA more achievable rather than add further complexity.

Further Reading

1. College guidance about these changes: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/training-careers/training-hub/2021-anaesthetics-curriculum/2021-curriculum-v1.5-guidance-resources>
2. Updated v1.5 curriculum document in full: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/media/22396>
3. Detailed review of changes: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/media/53486>
4. College guidance on transition between v1.4 and v1.5: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/media/54966>