The development of an examination and accreditation process in transoesophageal echocardiography represents a major achievement in the perioperative care of the patient with cardiac disease. The process has been developed painstakingly over a number of years and has the full support of both the parent organizations in anaesthesia and in cardiology. The development of a common pathway for assessment represents recognition that there is no substantive difference between cardiologists and anaesthesiologists in the practice of TOE; rather, such differences as exist lie in the emphasis placed on the procedure dictated by the clinical setting.

TOE accreditation is a two part process. The first part relies on the candidate demonstrating sufficient knowledge and interpretative skills to pass the written exam. The second part relies on the candidate being able, under appropriate supervision, to demonstrate sufficient experience to be able to complement the knowledge base acquired through formal study. The goal is to achieve a standard of practice such that the candidate is able to practice independently in the field of TOE.

The examination and accreditation process will be described in greater detail including the process of enrollment, the importance of formal supervision and a series of “frequently asked questions”. 