

AMERICAN BOARD OF HEALTH PHYSICS

Guidelines for the Submittal of Radiation Protection Reports

The *Prospectus* of the American Board of Health Physics states:

“Each applicant for Part II of the examination shall submit with the Application for Certification a document written by the applicant that reflects a professional health physics effort. This effort may be a substantive facility evaluation, a protection guidance document, a major monitoring program, or some other complex or comprehensive effort. The criteria for ABHP acceptance of this report is that it (1) be on a topic for which the ABHP tests and certifies expertise, (2) contains elements of professional judgment or application of non-regulatory guidance, and (3) be written solely or principally by the candidate.”

Because of the diverse nature of professional activities among candidates for Certification, a number of questions have arisen concerning the type and form of acceptable reports. The following subject areas are considered acceptable:

- Facility/Process Evaluation
- Protective Guidance Document
- Dose Assessment
- Retrospective/Prospective Radiation Protection Evaluations
- Other areas in which the ABHP tests and certifies expertise

The latter category may include a wide variety of efforts including, but not limited to, the development of monitoring programs, the technical basis for regulations and standards, non-ionizing radiation protection, and the application of health physics requirements in situations involving broader occupational and environmental health protection considerations.

In each case, the applicant is expected to demonstrate professional judgment (i.e. the integration of academic education, professional training, and practical experience). For example, a basic radiation worker training program that simply states definitions and basic safety requirements does not in itself constitute a professional effort. In contrast, the development of training materials on the biological effects of ionizing radiation, which require an understanding and application of recently published scientific information contained in BEIR and UNSCEAR reports, would likely demonstrate a professional effort. The development of an ALARA design review procedure based solely on a NRC Regulatory Guide is not likely to be acceptable; however, the development of such a procedure and its subsequent application to a design review or other practical problem would likely demonstrate professional judgment and meet the intent of the Board’s Radiation Protection Report requirement.

Recent submittals have included computer software and other electronic media. Computer software may be used to fulfill the Radiation Protection Report requirement under limited circumstances. The development of an interactive training program might demonstrate a mastery of computer programming; however, such an effort would not be acceptable unless the technical content of the program reflected an appropriate level of professional health physics judgment. While the development of an atmospheric dispersion code might demonstrate a professional understanding of meteorology, it does not necessarily demonstrate a professional level health physics effort.

In each case, the candidate’s effort should, as a minimum, reflect a level of judgment that would be expected of a minimally qualified candidate (i.e., acceptable bachelors degree with six years professional experience, or the combination of an advanced degree and professional experience adequate for admission to Part II of the examination).

Graduate research is generally not acceptable as a Radiation Protection Report unless the candidate can clearly demonstrate how the research relates to the professional practice of health physics. Candidates for Certification are expected to have completed some professional effort outside of an academic degree program that meets the requirements for the Radiation Protection Report.

This guidance is not exhaustive. The Board reserves the right to accept or reject any material submitted in fulfillment of the Radiation Protection Report requirements.