



Guidance Document: Registration Options in Audiology

October 2023

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Disclaimer:

Please note this document applies to the current context in Audiology and is subject to change. It is intended as guidance and will need regular revision to accommodate changes in education, accreditation and registration guidelines.

Sources:

This guidance document is based on the following article and conference presentations:

- STEENKAMP, L., 2014. Registration Options in Audiology. *BAA Magazine*. Winter 2014, issue 29.
- STEENKAMP, L., 2014. Registration and Audiology. *Bournemouth: British Academy of Audiology (BAA) Conference. 21 November 2014*
- STEENKAMP, L., 2015. Registration and Audiology. *DMU: British Academy of Audiology (BAA) Student Conference. 3 July 2015*

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1. Introduction

Audiology in the United Kingdom is a profession with many titles. Over the years, we have had Registered Hearing Aid Dispensers, Clinical Scientists, Audiological Scientists, Hearing Therapists, Audiologists, Medical Technical Officers and Assistant or Associate Audiologists to name a few. As a profession, Audiology falls within Healthcare Science. The various titles and qualifications complicate professional registration because there are different routes to qualification, as well as different registration bodies to consider. At present, there are two registration bodies in the United Kingdom:

- Academy for Health Care Science (AHCS incorporating Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) (Voluntary)
- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (Statutory)

2. Link between Accreditation and Registration

The purpose of accreditation is to ensure that a programme of study meets essential criteria in the training and education of its graduates in particular fields. To be able to register to work as an audiologist in the UK, an individual graduate must successfully complete an accredited course and receive a recognised award, as well as demonstrate relevant competencies. Alternatively, should an individual have the relevant knowledge and experience but no accredited qualification they can apply for equivalence through the AHCS. Please follow [this link](#) for more information on Equivalence.

2.1 Accreditation and Registration Bodies in Audiology

There are 3 accreditation bodies and 2 registration bodies in the United Kingdom.

Accreditation Bodies	Registration Bodies
Academy for Health Care Science (incorporating RCCP)	Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS)
National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS)	
Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (HCPC approves courses)	Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)

3. Why Register?

Registration provides evidence of qualification and the individual's ability to practice. It also indicates the boundaries of the profession (Scope of Practice). Registration provides a mechanism to monitor standards of care to ensure patient safety through:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Fitness to Practise procedures

4. Which registration body should I register with?

This is not an easy question to answer. It is an individual choice that depends on the type of qualification, as well as the level of clinical experience and preferred work environment. Below is a flowchart which can be followed when determining a route to registration.

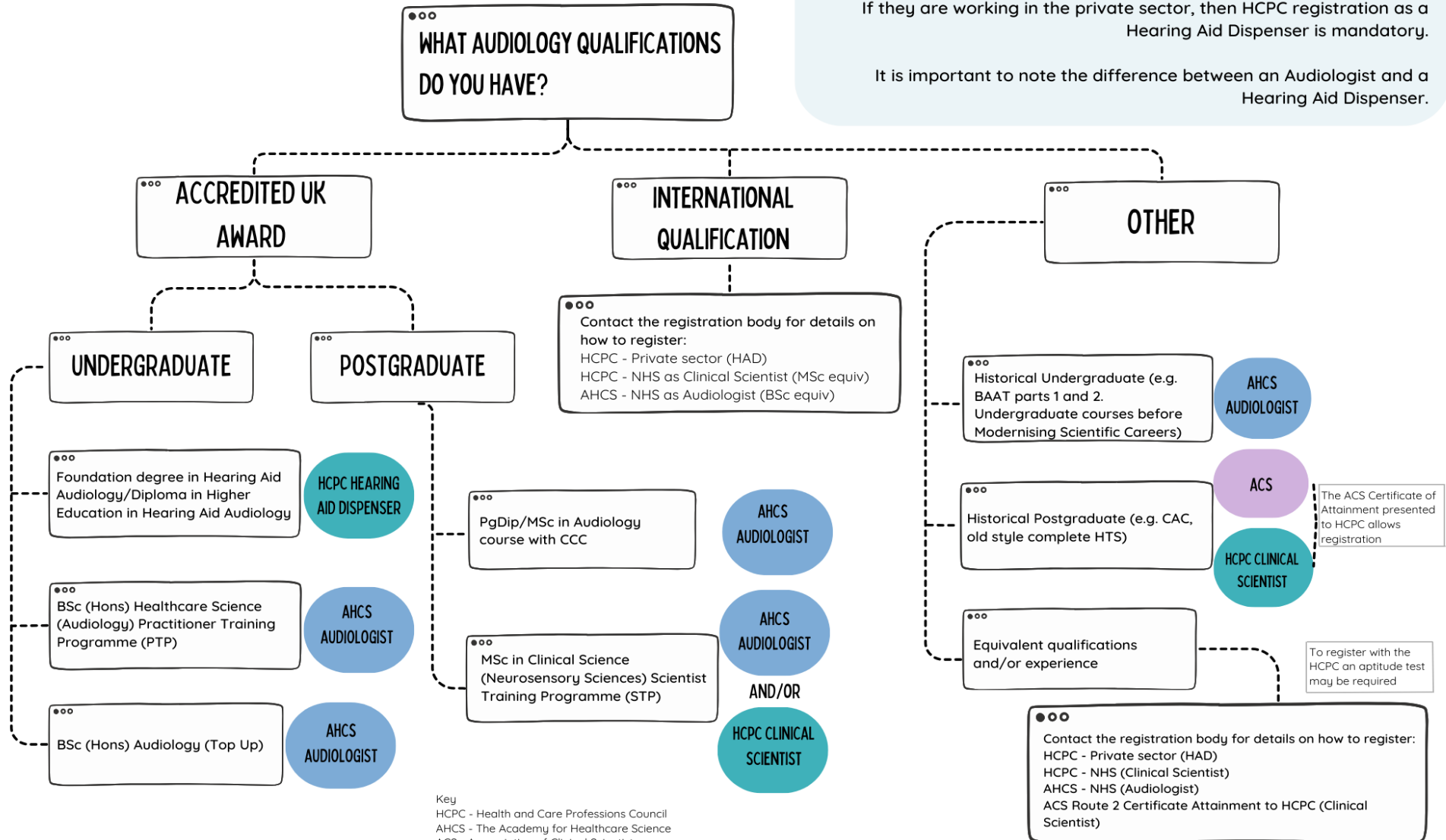
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WHO SHOULD I REGISTER WITH?

If a graduate is employed as an Audiologist in the NHS, it is recommended they pursue registration as an Audiologist with the appropriate register, and not the HCPC as a Hearing Aid Dispenser.

If they are working in the private sector, then HCPC registration as a Hearing Aid Dispenser is mandatory.

It is important to note the difference between an Audiologist and a Hearing Aid Dispenser.



5. Advice for Employers and prospective applicants

It is clear from the sections above that registration is not only an issue for graduates and clinicians, but also for employers. Although registration for Audiologists is voluntary, the BAA and Department of Health recommends that all practitioners in Audiology be registered. **Employers should therefore include this requirement in the job information packs for prospective applicants.**

It should be noted that there is only one voluntary register available to Audiologists in the United Kingdom, the Academy for Health Care Science (AHCS incorporating Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP)). It is not mandatory to have both AHCS and RCCP status as it is now one register.

The decision of which registration body to join can only be made by the applicant. It is a decision that should be based on the nature of their work environment and scope of practice. Clinical Scientists and Hearing Aid Dispensers **must** register with the HCPC as these are protected titles, with a recognised scope of practice.

6. Useful Abbreviations and webpages

RHAD – Registered Hearing Aid Dispenser

BAA – British Academy of Audiology (www.baaudiology.org)

HAA – Hearing Aid Audiology

CCC – Certificate of Clinical Competency

RCCP – Registration Council of Clinical Physiologists (<https://www.rccp.co.uk/>)

BAAT – British Association of Audiology Technicians

HCPC - Health and Care Professions Council (<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/>)

AHCS – Academy for Health Care Science (<https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/>)

ACS – Association for Clinical Scientists (<https://assclinsci.org/>)

HSST – Higher Specialist Scientist Training Programme

STP – Scientist Training Programme

PTP – Practitioner Training Programme

MSC – Modernising Scientific Careers

NSHCS – National School of Healthcare Science (<https://nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/>)

HEIW – Health Education Improvement Wales (<https://heiw.nhs.wales/>)