

Higher Training Scheme - member testimonial

Lauren Summers, Audiologist at Royal South Hants, has completed the Paediatric Assessment module and is studying the Balance Assessment and Rehabilitation specialism of the HTS.



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Why did you decide to participate in the Higher Training Scheme?

The department I work in does not have an adult hearing aid service meaning the work is automatically more complex as it is all paediatric and vestibular. I was keen to complete further training to become competent in these areas to not have solely an assist role. As I already have a Masters in Audiology I did not feel it was appropriate for me to apply for the STP (I also wasn't overly interested in this route for multiple reasons) and we agreed in my department that formal training through HTS modules was the best approach. I also feel that participating in the HTS allows me to further my career giving me more options for the future.

What this has involved for you?

I completed the Paediatric Assessment module in 2019 and I am currently awaiting examination for the Vestibular Assessment and Rehabilitation module. I would have liked to work on both modules at the same time but unfortunately that was not possible due to application constrictions.

I had already been working towards furthering my skills in both of these areas prior to applying for the modules so luckily there was not much adjustment in terms of clinic scheduling. I was leading appointments for both specialties with supervision from a clinical scientist at the time so this continued through both modules with more emphasis on knowledge and reflection. I spent some time in other departments as required and with other professionals involved in the care pathway.

How long does it take to complete the modules?

I applied for the Paediatric Assessment module in June 2018 and completed my exam in June 2019. I was then able to start the Balance Assessment and Rehabilitation module in July 2019 and did have my exam scheduled for May 2020 however this was postponed due to the covid-19 pandemic. It has been rescheduled a couple of times since and the date is currently set for May 2021. Overall for both modules it has taken me around a year even with fairly significant prior experience before applying and relatively easy access to clinics.

How have you benefited (or expect to benefit) from this form of training?

I have absolutely benefitted from this training already and I expect to continue to in the future. I feel much more confident and competent in my job role and it has allowed an expansion of my responsibilities which has in turn made my job more enjoyable. It has also allowed me to move up from a Band 5 to Band 6 and I hope further career progression will come in the future.

Would you recommend the Higher Training Scheme to others?

I would recommend completing HTS modules to others however maybe not during both a pandemic and a period of HTS overhaul!



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