

# Education and Training in Audiology

There are two different entry levels into Audiology at the moment. This section should be read in conjunction with the The BAA website for more information on the individual universities offering courses in Audiology.



## 1) Training to become a Hearing Aid Dispenser

The 'act of dispensing hearing aids' in the independent sector is a protected function by law and regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). There are broadly two routes to HCPC registration as a Hearing Aid Dispenser (HAD):

- a) **Approved course:** HCPC approved courses that could potentially lead to eligibility to register as a HAD upon completion. In England, these include Foundation degrees in Hearing Aid Audiology (Fd in HAA) and in Scotland, it is the Diploma in Higher Education in Hearing Aid Audiology (DipHE in HAA). This course requires employment in the right healthcare context with access to patients/clients as well as supervision from a registered Audiologist or Hearing Aid Dispenser. HAD courses are typically offered through flexible modes, with some online and on campus teaching, enabling learners to 'earn and learn' and accommodate the learning needs of their employer.
- b) **Aptitude Test:** Existing Audiologists, particularly from the NHS or abroad, who qualified as an Audiologist from a non HCPC approved course, may be able to register with the HCPC after completing the Aptitude Test. The Aptitude Test is a HCPC approved mechanism for Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) registered Audiologists and HCPC registered Clinical Scientists to be eligible to dispense hearing aids in the private sector.

This statutory regulation of hearing aid dispensers means that it is a criminal offence to assess hearing or prescribe a hearing aid with a view to selling a hearing aid, unless you are registered with the HCPC as a Hearing Aid Dispenser (HAD).

### Hearing Care Assistant Programmes

Hearing Care Assistants are trained by Universities in the U.K. The scope of practice is more limited than that of a Hearing Aid Dispenser. More information on the role and training of HCAs is available at [www.bshaa.com](http://www.bshaa.com)

## 2) Training to become an Audiologist

The 3 routes listed below form part of the Modernising Scientific Careers Framework

### a) BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Audiology) (Practitioner Training Programme (PTP))

This is a 3 year BSc Honours degree in Healthcare Science (Audiology) and each of the 3 years contains a mixture of theory and work based placement. The first year of this degree provides students with an introduction to neurosensory sciences and it includes a rotational placement in all 3 areas (Audiology, Vision and Neurophysiology). The second and third year of the degree provides specialisation in 1 of the 3 areas. All 3 years include some time in a clinical placement in an Audiology clinic and students are expected to complete a national training scheme and logbook that includes a competency assessment. Successful completion of the 3 year course and clinical assessments qualifies you to register and practise as an Audiologist in the United Kingdom.

### b) MSc in Clinical Science (Scientist Training Programme (STP))

The MSc in Clinical Science forms part of the Scientist Training Programme (STP) which is a 3 year clinical training programme, combining work based training with an MSc degree. The work based element of the STP, is provided through funded scientific training posts in the NHS. Students are recruited to the Scientific Training Programme through a centralised, competitive process. The first 12 months of this programme contain rotational placements, within each area of the neurosensory sub strand, followed by an 18 month placement in the designated specialist area. Students are expected to complete a national training scheme and logbook over the 3 years that includes a competency assessment. Successful completion of the 3 year course and clinical assessments allows eligibility to register as a Clinical Scientist with the HCPC Statutory Register in the U.K.

### c) Healthcare Science Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in Healthcare Science are a new route into Audiology and further information including apprenticeship standards can be seen on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships>.

An apprenticeship involves learning while you are employed. You undertake learning at a college or university on a day-release basis from your employer and are assessed normally in your workplace, seeing you carry out day to day tasks you learn in your job.

Apprenticeships can range from level 1 (entry directly from leaving school), up to level 6 (apprenticeships that will be equivalent to a BSc degree qualification). Some are still in development.

Apprenticeships are advertised through NHS jobs. See NHS employers for more information <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk>

### d) PgDip / MSc in Audiology

This is a 2 year MSc level degree in Audiology and it contains a mixture of theory and work based placement. This placement can take the form of 1 long placement or 3 smaller ones in an Audiology clinic and students are expected to complete a national training scheme and logbook that includes a competency assessment. Successful completion of the 2 year structure and clinical assessments qualifies you to register and practise as an Audiologist in the United Kingdom.

Some universities offer the option to just complete the theoretical elements of the course in 1 year but it does not lead to eligibility to work as an Audiologist.

### MSc level courses for registered Audiologists

- **Rehabilitation Studies**

Courses in Rehabilitation Studies have been developed to reflect the unique expertise required in rehabilitative practice and research, and the emerging demand for professional qualifications and expertise that fulfil the new requirements for professional progression. Some of the modules on these courses form part of the BAA Higher Training Scheme.

- **Educational Audiology**

The MA degree in Educational Audiology is designed for qualified teachers of the deaf and other professionals involved in the education of hearing impaired children. It aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge required to practise as Educational Audiologists.

- **Hearing Therapy**

A Hearing Therapist works with adults who have hearing loss and associated disorders, such as balance problems, tinnitus and hyperacusis as well as other forms of hypersensitivity. They offer counselling to help with the psychological and emotional effects of Audiological problems, as well as providing help and advice on practical solutions. The role calls for skills in enabling adults to adjust to a chronic communication or auditory difficulty, knowledge of current options for managing hearing loss, tinnitus and vestibular difficulties (which frequently co-exist). Clinicians interested in Hearing Therapy can enroll on a Doctorate of Hearing Therapy programme. This programme also provides exit points at MSc level.

### Other courses in Audiology

- **Industrial Audiology**

The British Society of Audiology (BSA) has approved a number of courses for individuals who wish to become involved with health surveillance testing, and details may be found on the BSA website ([www.thebsa.org.uk](http://www.thebsa.org.uk)). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 also provide more details, including the classification of hearing loss and hearing health questionnaires; see the HSE website ([www.hse.gov.uk/noise](http://www.hse.gov.uk/noise)).



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