

HEALTHCARE SCIENCE PRACTITIONER (DEGREE)

Reference Number: ST0413

Details of standard

Occupational Profile

Healthcare Science (HCS) Practitioners (HCSPs) fulfil a common occupational role **(1)**. They work independently and as part of a team providing HCS scientific and technical services within HCS Divisions in Life Science, Physiological Science, or Physical Science, with the specific focus of work determined by the area/department within which they work **(2)**.

They use expertise in applied scientific techniques to deliver patient sensitive and quality assured tests, investigations and procedures (in some cases, including specialist therapeutic interventions) on samples, patients and equipment. HCSPs are responsible for the analysis of a wide range of diagnostic tests that contribute to the clinical assessment of patients for the presence of disease, the monitoring of health and the effectiveness of treatments. While working to departmental protocols, HCSPs are required to use judgement, deal with ambiguity and supervise the training of those in the trainee practitioner and HCS support workforce. HCSPs work in a range of different settings including hospitals, primary care, public health, and private sector hospitals.

Responsibilities and duties of the role

HCSPs will have the knowledge, skills, competences, attitudes, values and behaviours to perform complex clinical technical procedures within the scope of practice of their HCS specialism to a high degree of safety, accuracy and precision, recording and interpreting the clinical technical output as required. They must take responsibility and be accountable for their own practice in respect of the detailed diagnostic, technical and clinical outcomes of tests, procedures and analyses, as well as leading and supporting teams involved in these. They must be organised and prioritise work through good time management and achieve demanding tasks/objectives against deadlines. HCSPs must be able to support the development of and write delegated technical Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and have excellent oral/written and interpersonal communication skills.

Professional Recognition

All HCSPs are eligible for registration on the Academy for HCS accredited register (which is the HCS register recognised and supported by Health Education England [HEE]). Completion of the apprenticeship in the Life Sciences Division also confers eligibility to apply for statutory regulation with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Biomedical Scientist. In addition, those in the Physical Sciences Division are also eligible to join the accredited Register of Clinical Technologists (RCT) held by the Institute of Physics and Engineering Medicine (IPEM).

Qualifications

Individual employers will set the selection criteria for appointing apprentices. Apprentices will achieve an accredited/approved BSc (Honours) degree in healthcare science.

Level

6

Duration

Typically, a minimum of 36 months but may be longer depending on the learner

Review date

After 3 years

BEHAVIOURS and VALUES

You will be compassionate; honest; conscientious and adhere to the HCPC *Standards of Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics* and *Good Scientific Practice (GSP)* that are the standards of behaviour/practice/personal conduct that underpin the delivery of those in HCSP roles.

SKILLS: Working to the standards of GSP/HCPC in your area of practice you will:

Person-centred Care and Professional Practice

- prevent discriminatory practice against patients/carers/colleagues
- ensure that the highest standards of person-centred care are practiced

In your scientific, technical and clinical practice you will understand and apply knowledge of:

- how the NHS Constitution/*GSP/HCPC Standards* are used to support person-centred care
- equality and diversity legislation, policies and local ways of working

so that each person is treated with dignity and respect

- develop effective partnerships with patients, treating patients/carers/families with kindness and compassion

- identify ways of promoting good mental health/well being

- use appropriate language to share complex technical information with the public/patients/colleagues, including giving/receiving feedback

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

- critically reflect on your technical/non-technical practice, keeping knowledge and skills updated & responding to appraisal/feedback

- work within your scope of practice as an autonomous practitioner

- promote the professional development/training of junior colleagues

- the importance of probity, honesty and integrity in all aspects of your professional practice

- the work of your department & its impact on patient care through problem solving in the team

- how to involve patients and the public in HCS and in making choices about their care

- factors impacting on mental health and how to promote mental health and well being

- how to use and teach others to use appropriate language/feedback to share information to patients/families with complex needs, including giving oral/written explanations

- models of critical reflection and self-reflection to enhance the quality of patient care you provide personally and as a team leader

- the underpinning theories and benefits to staff of excellent appraisal processes

- how to lead an appraisal/performance review and support the development of an action plan

Health, Safety And Security

- manage delegated junior staff training in security/health/safety practices that underpin their work, especially in infection control
- undertake delegated risk assessments & implement changes
- legislation/policies/regulations relating to health and safety at work and your responsibilities
- risk assessment methodologies, including strategies for dissemination of the findings, and approaches to implementing the changes required

Quality

- strategically plan clinical and quality management processes
- undertake delegated clinical technical audits in your area of work
- quality management/improvement processes within the regulatory environment
- analysis, interpretation and communication of audit findings to promote quality

Technical Scientific Services

- independently analyse/interpret accurately clinical technical data
- be responsible for the safety and functioning of equipment
- present/explain technical results to other professionals & patients
- coordinate drafting of SOPs & updating techniques/procedures
- the underpinning scientific principles of investigations offered by HCS services
- the principles and practice of equipment management, maintenance, repair and safety
- how to draft and update SOPs
- technical skills teaching frameworks; assessment methods & assessment of technical skills
- critical evaluation of the evidence base that underpins your clinical technical practice

- evaluate and implement solutions to clinical technical problems

Clinical Care

- ensure that responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting patient confidentiality, including record keeping, are met
 - conduct sensitive discussions with patients as required, including obtaining meaningful consent
 - supervise the delivery of high quality clinical technical procedures
- ‘duty of care’ and safeguarding
 - the appropriate support available in difficult situations or when a complaint is made
 - the rights of patients with regard to giving informed & meaningful consent when required
 - the role and importance of the key factors influencing dignity/rights/privacy/confidentiality of patients/colleagues

Audit/Service Improvement

- manage audit and/or service improvement programmes
 - act on the outcomes of audit/service improvement programmes
- the governance/ethical frameworks applied to clinical audit
 - continuous improvement principles for the delivery of high quality outcomes

Research & Innovation

- use research, reasoning and problem solving skills to support quality care improvements/innovation in your area of work
- the opportunities for research/innovation/implementation of change
 - how to contribute to research and grant proposal writing as appropriate

Leadership

- coordinate leadership activities across a HCS technical team
- advanced concepts of leadership and their application to practice

1 For purposes of this Standard, the term HCSP also includes those in the Biomedical Scientist (BMS) workforce.

2 The list of HCS specialisms can be found at: <http://www.ahcs.ac.uk/about-us/about-healthcare-science/>

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Version log

VERSION	DATE UPDATED	CHANGE	PREVIOUS VERSION
1	22/09/2017	Initial Creation	N/A