

Frequently asked questions

V1.2 21/06/23

This document is intended to be a summary / quick reference guide. All prospective and current candidates and supervisors should be aware that this is not a substitute for the HTS regulations and guidance in the HTS handbook. Both of these documents are available on the HTS web pages of the BAA website (within the members section).

Who is the HTS aimed at?

Qualified Audiologists who wish to develop their skills and knowledge so they could work in a specialist clinical area, i.e., those with a BSc or equivalent. It can be done by those working in the NHS or private sector. You need to have an Accredited Supervisor to oversee your training. It can also be used by those who already work in a specialist area who wish to gain a qualification to demonstrate their competence.

The Therapeutic Skills module is also accessible to those holding a Post-Graduate Certificate in Hearing Therapy.

How do I apply?

There is an online form you need to complete, accessed from the HTS pages of the BAA website.

Why would I do the HTS, rather than just get trained in-house?

In-house training can vary in scope and quality, and doesn't result in a recognised qualification. The HTS content has been reviewed and agreed by subject experts as the range of skills and knowledge required when working in a particular specialist area, and is a highly regarded training scheme. It includes external verification of your skills, and a qualification you can add to your CV to demonstrate your achievement.

What qualification do I get?

On successful completion of a module, you will be awarded the 'BAA Higher Training Scheme Certificate' in the particular specialist area. This is a recognised and highly regarded qualification within the profession.

Is the HTS a CPD scheme?

Yes. It can be used for personal development and / or to fill a service need.

Does the hospital I work in need to be registered or accredited in any way?

No, it is only the supervisor who needs to be accredited. Prior to 2019 departments did need to be accredited, but this is no longer the case. You can be supervised by an Accredited Supervisor in another department if one isn't available locally, but would recommend finding a supervisor who has previous experience of supervising people through the scheme if providing remote supervision.

What are M-level credits?

M-level credits are awarded by Higher Education Institutes on successful completion of an M-level module or course. Each module or course will have a certain number of credits associated with it, and this will be included in course information. Modules usually have 10 – 60 credits each, and in order to be awarded a full Master's degree, usually 240 credits are needed.

What is M-level?

M-level is short for Master's level, and refers to Master's level postgraduate level education and qualifications. For a more detailed description please see section 4.17 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education; Setting and

Maintaining Academic Standards: PART A The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies, (<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>).

Qualification levels are explained at: <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

How many M-level credits do I need?

For each module you need to have a minimum of 10 credits covering the main subject area. It may be that one university module covers more than one HTS module, e.g. both Balance Assessment and Balance Rehabilitation. In such cases you could use this module just to do one of the HTS modules, or both.

Is there a time limit between completing M-level modules and completing a HTS module?

No, although it is important to ensure your knowledge remains up to date, covers the theoretical knowledge requirements of the module, and is at M-level for the examination. If you completed an M-level module some time ago, it is your responsibility to make sure you meet the requirements prior to examination.

What role would a senior member of staff have to play?

Each person completing a HTS module needs an Accredited Supervisor. This may be your line manager, the Head of Department or another senior member of staff. They need to be aware of what the training involves and commit to enabling the time to complete it.

Can I do more than one module at a time?

Yes. However, we would encourage careful consideration prior to enrolling on more than one module at a time. Some modules are small and complement other modules e.g., some candidates may choose to complete the 2 paediatric assessment or 2 balance modules together and these can be examined at the same time.

Is funding available?

Funding needs to be found locally for both the HTS scheme fees and M-level course fees. This may be possible from a departmental budget, or other training fund. Some people choose to self-fund the costs involved, recognising that they are investing in a qualification which could assist in career progression.

How much does it cost?

There is a fee to register on a module, and a separate fee to pay once you have completed your training prior to the final examination. There is also a fee for any re-sits. Current fees are given on the BAA website. Fees are usually reviewed annually.

How is the HTS assessed?

You are assessed by your Accredited Supervisor and clinic supervisors throughout training, and progress is documented in the online portfolio. Once you are consistently demonstrating you can work at the required level you can submit your completed portfolio and once checked it and found satisfactory, external examiners will be arranged to assess you seeing patients in your department.

When can I start?

You can start a module at any time. You need to complete the application form and will receive confirmation of registration. You need to have an Accredited Supervisor in order to register, so if your proposed supervisor is not yet accredited, they will need to apply for this in advance.

How long does it take to complete a module?

This varies on the size of the module, whether you have previous experience in the area or not, and how often you are able to train. One of the main requirements is to complete a minimum number of clinical sessions (at 3.5 hours each). Small modules require a minimum of 15 supervised clinical training sessions whereas large modules require a minimum of 40 sessions. However, most people complete modules alongside carrying out other work, so may have, for example, two training sessions a week so it would take several months to complete the minimum number. However, it is not uncommon to require more training than this to reach the required standard, particularly if you

are new to the area. In addition, you need to complete a number of additional activities such as your M-level credits, tutorials, case studies and self-study.

How do you become an accredited supervisor?

Supervisors need to apply for accreditation by completing the supervisor's training module (which is available on the HTS pages of the BAA website) and then completing the application form. If you meet all the criteria, you will become an Accredited Supervisor.

What are the criteria for becoming an Accredited Supervisor?

The main criteria are that you need to be working at Healthcare Scientist Career Framework level 7, ideally have been involved in supervising at this level before and have completed HTS Supervisor's training. The HTS Committee recognise that not all potential supervisors have had experience of supervising at this level, so other experience can be taken into consideration. For more information see the HTS Regulations, section 5.

Do Accredited Supervisors need to be members of the BAA?

No, supervisors do not need to be members. However, if not a BAA member they will not have independent access to the candidates log book and will have to rely on the candidate logging in to their log book and allowing them access. Non-member supervisors will also have to sign to confirm they will abide by the BAA code of conduct whilst in this role. They will also have to ensure the candidate passes on any relevant information or updates communicated to members or in the members area of the BAA website.

Is there a list of accredited supervisors available?

No. There are a number of reasons for this: Currently as the need for supervisor accreditation is quite new, there are few people accredited as supervisors are tending to apply for accreditation when they are about to start supervising someone. Therefore, if such a list existed it would not represent those able to be an accredited supervisor and may suggest there is just a limited pool of people able to do this. In addition, when applying for accreditation we do not currently ask supervisors to share their contact details in this way.

How do I find an Accredited Supervisor?

Firstly, we would recommend you widen your search to look for someone who could apply for accreditation to become an Accredited Supervisor, rather than limiting your search to someone who is already accredited, as this process is quite new. You need to speak to your line manager initially, to find out if there is someone who has the potential to become an Accredited Supervisor within your own department. This is the ideal situation as it will be easy to have frequent contact with them. If this is not possible you should first look to neighbouring departments, as the closer your Accredited Supervisor is, the easier it will be as you need to do clinics with them on a regular basis. If you can't find anyone suitable you may then need to look further field. Please don't assume that someone who could become an Accredited Supervisor is willing and able to do this. Supervising someone takes time and effort and will depend on the individual's workload and priorities within their own department.

How long do you have to complete a HTS module?

You have three years from registration to complete your portfolio and request your examination. If you don't complete your portfolio within three years you will have to re-register on the scheme if you wish to continue.

Are there any pre-requisites?

If you have a BSc in Audiology, or MSc plus CCC, or equivalent, you can access any module, with the exception of the Paediatric Habilitation module, which requires you to complete the HTS Paediatric Assessment (6 months +) or equivalent first. Those who do not hold a BSc in Audiology but do have a Post-Graduate Certificate in Hearing Therapy, can access the Therapeutic Skills module.

What modules are available?

There are currently ten modules:

Paediatric assessment (6 months +)	Paediatric assessment (newborn)	Paediatric habilitation	Therapeutic skills	Tinnitus and hyperacusis
Advanced adult assessment & rehabilitation	Assessment and rehabilitation of adults with additional needs	Balance assessment	Balance rehabilitation	Cochlear Implants

What does training involve?

Training involved a number of elements to include:

- Supervised clinical sessions
- M-level credits
- Tutorials
- Secondments & placements
- Self-study
- Case studies

How to I complete my portfolio?

Everyone who registered after 1st April 2021 will complete an online portfolio. Those who registered before this have the option of transferring across to the updated scheme and would then complete their portfolio online.

Who can supervise me in clinic?

The clinic supervisors also need to meet certain criteria, which are given in section 6 of the regulations. This includes being a minimum of a Healthcare Scientist Career framework level 6 and either holds the HTS module themselves, or is considered equivalent to this. This may include your accredited supervisor or other staff.

I would like to complete a module, what should I do?

The first step would be to speak to your line manager and discuss options. It is the responsibility of prospective candidates to find an Accredited Supervisor, funding, and a suitable M-level course.

How do I find out more?

We would encourage all prospective candidates and supervisors to read the HTS Handbook, and HTS regulations, prior to applying to join the scheme.

As a service manager, what can the HTS offer?

The HTS can be used to up-skill a member of staff to fill a gap in service needs, or for succession planning if you know a member of staff may be leaving. Rather than having to plan training in house, to include working out what needs to be learnt / covered, you will have the confidence that the scheme will cover what is expected of someone working in a specialist area. You also don't need to worry about how to document any in house training to meet quality assurance standards, as the HTS scheme includes a comprehensive online portfolio to record all training.

Most staff enjoy expanding their knowledge and skills, working in a specialist area, so being a department, which does the HTS can aid recruitment and retention. Having staff holding HTS modules positively reflects on the quality of the clinical service offered.

Can the HTS be used for registration?

HTS modules can be used to demonstrate competencies required for registration as a Clinical Scientist via the Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS). For more information, please see the ACS website. The HTS Therapeutic skills module is also being considered as a pre-requisite to registration as a new Hearing Therapist, and these FAQs will be updated as soon as there is any news on this.