

Guidance agreed between the Department of Health and the Registration Council for Clinical Physiology (RCCP) to address approved qualification issues around regulation for individuals training in the disciplines of audiology, cardiology, gastrointestinal physiology, hearing therapy, neurophysiology and respiratory physiology.

1. You will be aware that Registration Council for Clinical Physiology (RCCP) made an application to the Health Professions Council (HPC) in 2003 for regulation of the above groups under the auspices of RCCP.
2. HPC Council has recommended the profession for regulation to the Secretary of State for Health on the basis that this aspirant group meets the key criteria.
3. Following receipt of the recommendation by the Secretary of State the Department of Health is responsible for developing public consultation documentation which includes outlining all of the arrangements for ensuring that individuals currently in training can apply for registration under the new arrangements, provided they comply with the HPC standards of proficiency for the profession.
4. Once a statutory register is opened with HPC, transitional arrangements usually exist for a 2 year period from the date of opening to enable individuals to complete their training or to gain an approved qualification in the interim period.
5. This is separate to grandparenting which allows practitioners without an approved qualification, once a statutory register has opened with the HPC, who can demonstrate safe, effective and lawful practice for three out of five years prior to the opening of the statutory register to achieve registration. Alternatively, grandparenting allows practitioners without either an approved qualification or 3 out of 5 years practice to achieve registration by undergoing further training to bring them up to HPC standards of proficiency.
6. It is expected that the group of practitioners represented by RCCP will move towards statutory regulation in late 2005 or early 2006 and it is therefore necessary that clarity be provided around the education and training requirements for practitioners currently in training.
7. The following is therefore intended as guidance for education providers, commissioners and employers, to support the future regulation of this group and has been agreed by the devolved administrations.
8. On the inclusion of healthcare scientists into the Health Professions Council previous arrangements undertaken by RCCP, for example, registration, grandparenting and fitness to practise, will no longer apply

and only those set out in the Health Professions Order and operated by the HPC will be applicable.

9. Guidance to support the regulation of current trainees acceptable approved qualifications which we expect will lead to registration in 2005 is attached.
10. Consequently, it is anticipated that the Department of Health will be suggesting a three year transitional period to accommodate the change in the education and training route for this profession.
11. The outcome is that from 2005 the only entry qualification will be a BSc in audiology or clinical physiology or equivalent with specialities in the following disciplines:
 - audiology
 - cardiology,
 - gastrointestinal physiology,
 - neurophysiology and
 - respiratory physiology.
12. The result will be that following the end of the three year transitional period, expected to be in 2008/09, access to the statutory register will be via this BSc. International applicants who wish to practise clinical physiology in the UK will have their training experience assessed against the same HPC standards as the BSc will be designed to meet.
13. On the opening of the statutory register, it is anticipated that those on the voluntary register held by RCCP will transfer across to the statutory register held by HPC. Employers are therefore requested to encourage practitioners in the above disciplines to apply for registration with the voluntary register held by RCCP.

Audiology, Cardiology, Neurophysiology, Respiratory Physiology and GI Physiology

- Those who entered training in 2001 and due to complete in 2005, and before the opening of the statutory register, with a minimum of ONC/D plus professional body examinations, some of which may only be available through modules in the degree programme.
- For those entering training between 2002-4 and completing training no later than 2006, 2007, and 2008 respectively, a minimum requirement of HNC/D plus professional body examinations, some of which may only be available through modules in the degree programme, together with a total of 4 years supervised training.
- For those entering training from 2005 onwards the only approved qualification it will be the BSc in audiology or clinical physiology or equivalent.

Hearing Therapists

Cohort 1

* Students on cohort 1 were given a 24 month traineeship contract with the employing Trust, some starting as early as November 01, others in early 02 who finish the course no later than 5th March 2004 and with the equivalent 2 years post qualification clinical practice, completing no later than three years from the date of the opening of the relevant part of the register.

Cohort 2

* Students on cohort 2 were given a 27 month contract with the employing Trust, generally commencing April 02, although some contracts were not confirmed until May / June 02, completing their course no later than 25th June 2004 and with 2 years post qualification clinical practice completing no later than three years from the date of the opening of the relevant part of the register.

Cohort 3

* Students on cohort 3 also have a 27 month contract with the employing Trust, start dates varying from November 02 to January 03 completing their course no later than 28th January 05 and with 2 years post qualification clinical practice completing no later than three years from the date of the opening of the relevant part of the register.