



Standards of Proficiency

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FOREWORD

The RCCP standards of proficiency are the threshold standards necessary for safe and effective practice. These standards play a key role in ensuring that registrants practise safely and effectively and are based on the standards of proficiency for Clinical Scientists with any necessary amendments made specific to the clinical physiology professions. These are reproduced with the permission of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). All rights reserved. Clinical physiologists are not regulated by the HCPC.

The RCCP approve education programmes to make sure that they allow students to meet these standards when they satisfactorily complete the programme. We also assess applications from individuals who have trained outside of the UK and some applications via our Standard Entry process against these standards. Any applicant who meets these standards is eligible to apply for registration.

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the standards of proficiency. These are the standards we have produced for the safe and effective practice of the profession. They are the minimum standards we consider necessary to protect members of the public. You must meet these standards when you first become registered.

The standards of proficiency in this document include both generic elements, which apply to all our registrants, and profession-specific elements. The generic standards are written in **bold**, and the profession-specific standards are written in plain text to help you distinguish between them. The generic standards explain the key obligations that we expect of you.

A note about our expectations of you

The standards of proficiency play a central role in how you can gain admission to, and remain on, the Register. It is important that you read and understand this document. If your practice is called into question, we will consider these standards in deciding what action, if any, we need to take. The standards set out in this document complement information and guidance issued by other organisations, such as your professional body or your employer.

Your scope of practice

Your scope of practice is the area or areas of your profession in which you have the knowledge, skills and experience to practise safely and effectively, in a way that meets our standards and does not pose any danger to the public or to yourself.

We recognise that a registrant's scope of practice will change over time and that the practice of experienced registrants often becomes more focused and specialised than that of newly registered colleagues. This might be because of specialisation in a certain clinical area or with a particular client group, or a movement into roles in management, education or research.

Your particular scope of practice may mean that you are unable to continue to demonstrate that you meet all of the standards that apply for the whole of your profession. As long as you make sure that you are practising safely and effectively within your given scope of practice and do not practise in the areas where you are not proficient to do so, this will not be a problem. If you want to move outside of your scope of practice you should be certain that you are capable of working lawfully, safely and effectively. This means that you need to exercise personal judgement by undertaking any necessary training or gaining the necessary experience.

The RCCP register for Audiology includes Audiologists, Hearing Therapists and Educational Audiologists and it should be noted that they perform audiology related clinical physiology procedures in different contexts and with different patient populations.

Meeting the standards

It is important that our registrants meet our standards and are able to practise safely and effectively. However, we do not dictate how you should meet our standards. There is normally more than one way in which each standard can be met and the way in which you meet our standards might change over time because of improvements in technology or changes in your practice. As an autonomous professional you need to make informed, reasoned decisions about your practice to ensure that you meet the standards that apply to you. This includes seeking advice and support from education providers, employers, colleagues and others to ensure that the wellbeing of service users is safeguarded at all times. In particular, we recognise the valuable role played by professional bodies in representing and promoting the interests of their members. This often includes guidance and advice about good practice which can help you meet the standards laid out in this document.

Please note these standards may change in the future and will be disseminated via our website, professional bodies, and contact with registrants.

THE STANDARDS

Expectations of registrant clinical physiologists

Registrant clinical physiologists must:

1 Be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice

- 1.1 Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
- 1.2 Recognise the need to manage their workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly

2 Be able to practice with the legal and ethical boundaries of the profession

- 2.1 Understand the need to act in the best interests of service users at all times
- 2.2 Understand what is required of them by RCCP
- 2.3 Understand the need to respect and uphold the rights, dignity, values and autonomy of service users including their role in the diagnostic and therapeutic process and in maintain health and well-being
- 2.4 Recognise that relationships with service users should be based on mutual respect and trust, and be able to maintain high standards of care even in situations of personal incompatibility
- 2.5 Be aware of current legislation applicable to the work of the profession
- 2.6 Understand the importance of and be able to obtain informed consent
- 2.7 Be able to exercise professional duty of care

3 Be able to maintain fitness to practice

- 3.1 Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal conduct
- 3.2 Understand the importance of maintaining their own health
- 3.3 Understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career long learning

4 Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement

- 4.1 Be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- 4.2 Be able to make reasoned decisions to initiate, continue, modify or cease treatment or the use of techniques or procedures, and record the decisions and reasoning appropriately
- 4.3 Be able to initiate resolution of problems and be able to exercise personal initiative
- 4.4 Recognise that they are personally responsible for and must be able to justify their decisions

- 4.5 Be able to make appropriate referrals
- 4.6 Understand the importance of participation in training, supervision and mentoring

5 Be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice

- 5.1 Understand the requirement to adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups and individuals

6 Be able to practise in a non-discriminatory manner

7 Understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality

- 7.1 Be aware of the limits of confidentiality
- 7.2 Understand the principles of information governance and be aware of the safe and effective use of health and social care information
- 7.3 Be able to recognise and respond appropriately to situations where it is necessary to share information to safeguard service users of the wider public

8 Be able to communicate effectively

- 8.1 Be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills in communicating information, advice, instruction and professional opinion to service users, carers, colleagues and others
- 8.2 Be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5
- 8.3 Understand how communication skills affect the assessment of, and engagement with, service users and how the means of communication should be modified to address and take account of factors such as age, capacity, learning ability and physical ability
- 8.4 Be able to select, move between and use appropriate forms of verbal and non-verbal communication with service users and others
- 8.5 Be aware of the characteristics and consequences of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by age, culture, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status and spiritual or religious beliefs
- 8.6 Understand the need to provide service users or people acting on their behalf with the information necessary to enable them to make informed decisions
- 8.7 Understand the need to assist the communication needs of service users such as through the use of an appropriate interpreter, wherever possible
- 8.8 Enable patients, clients and users to understand sensitive, scientific and technological information, in order to allow them to participate in their care
- 8.9 Be able to adopt a patient-centred approach and establish a rapport in order to motivate and involve the patients, client & users in their care

- 8.10 Understand the value, when working with and for disabled people, of the concept of empowerment, with the aim of enhancing access and opportunities for all
- 8.11 Be able to provide guidance, and to explain the nature, purpose and techniques to patients, clients and carers, understanding the need to establish and sustain a patient-centred relationship
- 8.12 Understand the psychology of illness, anxiety and uncertainty and the likely behaviour of patients, clients, undergoing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, as well as that of their families and carers

9 Be able to work appropriately with others

- 9.1 Be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with other professionals, support staff, service users, and their relatives and carers
- 9.2 Understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships as both an independent practitioner and collaboratively as a member of a team
- 9.3 Understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet their needs and goals
- 9.4 Be able to contribute effectively to work undertaken as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- 9.5 Be able to respond to enquiries regarding the service they provide when dealing with clinical and non-clinical colleagues
- 9.6 Be able to evaluate diagnostics, treatments and interventions to meet clinical needs
- 9.7 Be able to interpret and act upon information from other health care professionals
- 9.8 Be able to summarise and present scientific ideas in an appropriate form to patients, clients, carers, professionals and members of the public

10 Be able to maintain records appropriately

- 10.1 Be able to keep accurate, legible records and recognise the need to handle these records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
- 10.2 Recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines

11 Be able to reflect on and review practice

- 11.1 Understand the value of reflection on clinical practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection
- 11.2 Recognise the value of case conferences and other methods of review

12 Be able to assure the quality of their practice

- 12.1 Be able to engage in evidence-based practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures

- 12.2 Be able to gather information, including qualitative and quantitative data, that helps to evaluate the responses of service users to their care
- 12.3 Be aware of the role of audit and review in quality management, including quality control, quality assurance and the use of appropriate outcome measures
- 12.4 Be able to maintain an effective audit trail and work towards continual improvement
- 12.5 Be aware of, and able to participate in quality assurance programmes, where appropriate
- 12.6 Understand the importance of participating in accreditation systems related to the modality
- 12.7 Be able to evaluate intervention plans using recognised outcome measures and revise the plans as necessary in conjunction with the service user
- 12.8 Recognise the need to monitor and evaluate the quality of practice and the value of contributing to the generation of data for quality assurance and improvement programmes
- 12.9 Be able to use quality control and quality assurance techniques, including restorative action
- 12.10 Recognise the need to be aware of emerging technologies and new developments

13 Understand the key concepts of the bodies of the knowledge base, which are relevant to their profession

- 13.1 Understand the structure and function of the human body, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction, relevant to their profession
- 13.2 Be aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
- 13.3 Recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
- 13.4 Understand the structure and function of health and social care services in the UK
- 13.5 Understand the concept of leadership and its application in practice
- 13.6 Understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
- 13.7 Have detailed understanding of the structure and physiological function of the human body generally, and to a more advanced level in the specialist area e.g. central and peripheral nervous, auditory, respiratory, cardiac and gastrointestinal and endocrine systems
- 13.8 Have detailed knowledge and understanding of the concepts related to physics and instrumentation within the area of practice
- 13.9 Know the diagnostic procedures, investigations and physiological symptoms which result in patients being referred for investigations
- 13.10 Understand and interpret scientific data produced by physiological procedures within their specialist area
- 13.11 Understand the pathophysiology of disease processes and have a detailed knowledge within the area of practice

- 13.12 Understand concepts of therapeutic intervention, including pharmacology, in particular related to the area of practice

Registrant Audiologists, Hearing Therapists and Educational Audiologists

- 13.13 Be able to select relevant assessment tools to identify communication needs in the areas of family, social and leisure activity, and employment
- 13.14 Understand the need to consider the assessment of both health and social care needs of clients and carers
- 13.15 Understand the need to make provision for identification and assessment of educational, occupational, physical, psychological, cultural and environmental needs/problems

Registrant Audiologists, Hearing Therapists and Educational Audiologists

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- 13.18 Understand the need to make provision for identification and assessment of educational, occupational, physical, psychological, cultural and environmental needs/problems

Registrant Audiologists and Hearing Therapists

- 13.19 Be able to use standardised and non-standardised assessments to gather information in relation to communication, tinnitus and balance dysfunction as well as barriers to social inclusion

Educational Audiologists

- 13.20 Be able to use standardised and non-standardised assessments to gather information in relation to communication and tinnitus as well as barriers to social inclusion

14 Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills in order to make professional judgements

- 14.1 Be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts
- 14.2 Be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, treatment, therapy or other actions safely and effectively
- 14.3 Know, appropriate to the modality, how to position or immobilise service users for safe and effective interventions
- 14.4 Be able to perform a range of techniques employed in the modality
- 14.5 Understand the need to conform to standard operating procedures and conditions
- 14.6 Understand the need to work with accuracy and precision
- 14.7 Be able to solve problems that may arise during the routine application of techniques
- 14.8 Be able to formulate specific and appropriate management plans including the setting of timescales

- 14.9 Be able to develop an investigation strategy which takes account of all the relevant clinical and other information available
- 14.10 Be able to gather appropriate information
- 14.11 Be able to identify the clinical decision which the test or intervention will inform
- 14.12 Be able to select and use appropriate assessment techniques
- 14.13 Be able to undertake and record a thorough, sensitive and detailed assessment, using appropriate techniques and equipment
- 14.14 Be able to undertake or arrange investigations as appropriate
- 14.15 Be able to analyse and critically evaluate the information collected
- 14.16 Be able to demonstrate a logical and systematic approach to problem solving
- 14.17 Understand and take personal responsibility for clinical decisions taken on the basis of results reported
- 14.18 Be able to authorise the withdrawal of medication, prior to investigation, within the limits of their practice
- 14.19 Give medication in line with local protocols, within the limits of their practice
- 14.20 Be able to provide expert advice on selection and reporting of the investigation for optimum diagnostic outcome
- 14.21 Be able to use research, reasoning and problem-solving skills to determine appropriate actions
- 14.22 Recognise the value of research to the critical evaluation of practice

15 Understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- 15.1 Understand the need to maintain the safety of both service users and those involved in their care
- 15.2 Be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
- 15.3 Be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner in accordance with health and safety legislation
- 15.4 Be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly
- 15.5 Be able to establish safe environments for practice, which minimise risks to service users, those treating them, and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control
- 15.6 Be aware of immunisation requirements and the role of occupational health

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