

# June 2017 Proposal to develop a new apprenticeship standard

## Page 1: Proposal to develop a new apprenticeship standard

Q1. Please confirm that you have read the "How to" guide for Trailblazers on gov.uk (see link here), that you are content that this proposal meets all the criteria for final approval set out within it and that you have discussed the proposal with a relevant Route Relationship Manager within the Institute (Please specify who).

**I have read the 'how to' guide for Trailblazers on gov.uk?** Confirmed by David Rist

**Name of my Relationship Manager**

Bhavena Patel

Q2. Name of proposed trailblazer group

Independent Hearing Sector

Q3. Are you an existing Trailblazer Group already with approval to develop other standard(s)? If yes or partly, please provide full details.

No

Q4. Name of proposed apprenticeship standard(s).

Hearing Aid Dispenser (HAD) at Level 5

Is this a proposed core and options standard? If yes, please give the titles for each of the options.

No

How many standards are you proposing to develop? Please be aware that commitment from at least 10 employer members for each proposed standard is required.

One

Will there be a requirement for additional new standards to be developed in the future? If so, please provide brief details of what these will be.

Possibility of one additional new standard in the future for Hearing Care Assistants - the decision to apply to develop a new standard will be made after further consultation regarding the existing healthcare assistant apprenticeship standard and its fit for purpose within the independent hearing sector. Our current belief is that the existing standard may be suitable for the Hearing Care Assistant role, however application for a new standard remains a possibility.

Have you submitted a proposal for an apprenticeship standard in this role(s) before? If yes, please give details below including comments from the (pre April 2017) DfE approvals panel or the Institute.

No

Q5. Please insert details about each proposed standard below.

	Name of occupation	Proposed level of the standard	Proposed as a degree apprenticeship?	Intended to replace/partly replace an existing apprenticeship Framework? [if so please give details]	Do you expect any age restrictions to apply to this standard?	Estimated annual take-up across entire relevant sector(s) (This is separate to the number of apprentices that each individual employer group member will take on)	When do you estimate this apprenticeship would be ready to deliver starts?
1	Hearing Aid Dispenser	Level 5	No	No	Yes	250 - 300	September 2018
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Q6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-in-development> Please provide any relevant information below regarding potential overlap with other Trailblazer standards published or in development. It is important that you review your proposal against all other apprenticeships published and in development to confirm there is no significant overlap, in overall occupation or in the content of potential skills/knowledge/behaviours. Where there is potential of any overlap, we ask that you contact the existing Trailblazer(s) before submitting a new proposal to discuss whether the existing standards would cover your needs (or email [apprenticeship.trailblazers@education.gov.uk](mailto:apprenticeship.trailblazers@education.gov.uk)). Please then provide below full details of any possible overlap identified, interaction with relevant Trailblazers, and any relevant further detail explaining why this occupational role is sufficiently unique to still justify separate apprenticeship standard. The existing list of standards in development, is here [The list of existing published standards and Trailblazer contact details, is here](#)

We have reviewed the standards that have already been developed and those in development and are satisfied that there is no duplication with our bid. We have consulted with Professor Shelly Heard at the Academy of Health Scientists, through 'Skills for Health, to determine that our proposed standard for a Hearing Aid Dispenser is significantly different in the knowledge, skill and competence to the existing standard for a Healthcare Science Practitioner (HCSP – level 6).

We have made a comparison between the proposed Hearing Aid Dispenser Standard at level 5 and the Healthcare Science Practitioner Standard (HCSP - level 6) and conclude the core differences to be as follows:

Healthcare Science practitioner

Level 6

Duration - 36 months

Work in a hospital setting

Investigate any related medical, physical and emotional symptoms

Produce impressions of the ear for ear moulds

Involved with Research and development

Assists Increase hearing ability by lip-reading, or other communication skills

Managing audiology service – Leadership and Management including clinical audit

Hearing Aid Dispenser

Level 5

Duration 14-18 months

Works in Commercial clinical locations (often high street retail), and Domiciliary service in a patients home

Conducts thorough examination of a patients hearing and diagnosis in a commercial setting with a view to supply hearing aids and healthcare services in a retail sales environment

Performs a variety of advanced audiological procedures including traditional and scientific tests, including otoscopy, audiometry, impression taking and which may include; tympanometry, Probe mic measurement, wax removal and other extended scope activities.

Construction and management of personalised rehabilitation programmes

Does not conduct paediatric hearing assessments

Does not routinely conduct assessments or provide solutions for balance or vestibular concerns

Promotes 'wellness' hearing healthcare and raises awareness of the links between hearing impairment and other health conditions, e.g. cognitive decline.

Through this consultation, we believe that the role of Hearing Aid Dispenser warrants a separate standard due to the commercial nature of the role. The retail sale of hearing aids requires that the ethics of the HCPC are adhered to and this warrants a different set of skills, knowledge and behaviours concerned with the in-practice and domiciliary sales nature of the role. Hearing Aid Dispensers must also understand the implications of selling in the patient's own home and the need to work in partnership with the patients support and family throughout rehabilitation, recognising where the patient has appropriate cognition to be making commercial decisions and where necessary to work within the wider healthcare setting concerning referrals to other suitable healthcare professionals.

Q7. Please provide a full description below of what the occupational role involved (or roles in the case of a proposed core and options standard). The information you provide here is crucial to our assessment of whether the occupational role is suitable for an apprenticeship, so please be as comprehensive as possible, and always refer to the criteria and guidance set out in the "How to" guide for Trailblazers. In particular, the information should include: Main duties and responsibilities - please set out clearly what someone in this occupation will actually be doing; the range of environments/sectors/industries in which someone in this occupation could work; a summary of key competencies/skills etc required for full occupational competence; how the occupational role typically fits within the wider work hierarchy; who would they be working with, and what is the usual relationship between the roles.

A Hearing Aid Dispenser (HAD) is an autonomous healthcare professional, registered in the UK by The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), to test and assess hearing and provide a range of hearing healthcare services, including the retail sale of hearing instruments and other hearing related devices. The HCPC provides 'standards of proficiency' for the tasks and activities of the HAD and the professional body, The British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists (BSHAA) provide a guidance on professional practice for the role of a HAD.

The core activities of a Hearing Aid Dispenser are:

1. To conduct full hearing consultations which include;

- understanding the patients concerns and lifestyle needs of their hearing
- a full physical examination of the outer ear, a process called otoscopy
- maintaining an aseptic working environment and complying with health and safety protocols, including the control of infection
- a range of traditional assessments to identify the nature of the hearing loss
- deciding whether there is a need for medical intervention or GP referral
- providing advice regarding wax management and where appropriate conducting wax removal procedures
- providing advice and education with regards to the management of tinnitus
- scientific measurement of the patients hearing capability, a process called audiometry
- educating patients regarding the degree and nature of any hearing loss
- using a range of advanced audiological assessment tools
- assessments to identify the impact of any hearing loss on the patient's ability to hear speech in quiet and in background noise
- assessing the patients cognition in relation to making decisions and informed choice regarding their hearing healthcare
- make a recommendation regarding the suitability of available technology and where appropriate, sell an ethical hearing solution
- ensuring that patients records are maintained
- operating IT systems as necessary in the performance of the role which may include MS Windows, IOS, and Cloud based platforms.

2. To conduct Appointments for the fitting of Hearing Instruments, involving;

- checking the functionality of hearing instruments and fitting together of component parts prior to the appointment
- checking the patients outer ear
- programming the instrument technology for the patients prescription
- providing education, training, advice and guidance for the wearing, use of and general maintenance of the hearing system
- discussion with patients and family members in the construction of a rehabilitation plan
- ensuring that rehabilitation plans are documented and records maintained

3. To Conduct Rehabilitation Appointments

- to resolve any patient difficulties regarding the wearing and use of their hearing instruments
- further education, training and support as necessary for the patient to fully integrate their instruments into their life
- maintaining patient records

4. To Service, Repair and Maintain Patients Hearing Instruments

- providing triage services for patients and their hearing instruments where the instruments have developed faults or are no longer providing benefit

5. To provide education, advice, guidance and training on a range of hearing healthcare topics including;

- Hearing Screening
- Wax management
- Tinnitus management and retraining
- Balance

Q7. Please provide a full description below of what the occupational role involved (or roles in the case of a proposed core and options standard). The information you provide here is crucial to our assessment of whether the occupational role is suitable for an apprenticeship, so please be as comprehensive as possible, and always refer to the criteria and guidance set out in the "How to" guide for Trailblazers. In particular, the information should include: Main duties and responsibilities - please set out clearly what someone in this occupation will actually be doing; the range of environments/sectors/industries in which someone in this occupation could work; a summary of key competencies/skills etc required for full occupational competence; how the occupational role typically fits within the wider work hierarchy; who would they be working with, and what is the usual relationship between the roles.

- Hearing protection
- Clinical ear care management

6. To supervise, coach and train trainee or student hearing aid dispensers, as required through the trainees or students education programme, and provide supervision for Hearing Care Assistants (HCAs) or Dispensing Assistants (DAs) who operate under the delegated authority of the HAD

7. To operate within the specific employers business model; understanding the business and commercial aspects of the retail hearing healthcare sector as necessary for the fulfilment of the HAD role within commercial practice. This may include, and is not limited to; Understanding Marketing, Profit and Loss, Quality systems, the law in relation to the retail sale of hearing instruments.

Please provide an overview of the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for these roles.

The mandatory minimum standards of knowledge, skills and behaviours, required in this role, are set out in the Standards of Proficiency and also the Ethical Standards of the Health and Care Professions Council.

In addition a Hearing Aid Dispenser must have commercial and business knowledge and skills sufficient to contribute to a retail sales business without, compromising the HCPC standards or ethical standards.

Knowledge of the motivation and drivers that will assist a hearing impaired client to gain acceptance of their hearing condition and to make a purchasing decision is key within this role and this must be balanced with the knowledge of the ethical standards required in the profession together with the skill to sensitively manage the client journey and place the patient at the centre of everything that a hearing aid dispenser does.

How will the apprenticeship allow the individual to develop transferable skills to perform the role in a business of any size or relevant sector?

The clinical skills in audiology, including the testing, programming and fitting of hearing instruments is a core skill set that under the professional standards set out by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), The British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists (BSHAA) and British Society of Audiology (BSA) are immediately transferable across all businesses within the independent private sector as well as within the public sector (NHS) and across sectors under 'Any Qualified Provider' (AQP) schemes.

Q8. Will the occupation require rigorous and substantial training of at least 12 months prior to the end-point assessment to achieve full competence, with off-the-job training accounting for at least 20% of the apprenticeship? Please provide detail of what this will include.

We believe that this occupation will require rigorous and substantial training of around 14 - 18 months to achieve full competence, at least 20% of which will be off-the-job training following the curricula of the education providers approved by the Health and Care Professions Council to provide eligibility to apply for registration as a HAD.

There is significant on the job training which is supervised by a dedicated practice educator (PE) via a development portfolio and logbook. The PE will usually be a HCPC registrant with not less than 12 months full registration and a member of the employer's workforce. The logbook process will record all elements of competence sign off and demonstrate that minimum levels of activity have been completed by the apprentice. The work based learning log -book is to be part of the final assessment process. The

Q8. Will the occupation require rigorous and substantial training of at least 12 months prior to the end-point assessment to achieve full competence, with off-the-job training accounting for at least 20% of the apprenticeship? Please provide detail of what this will include.

supervision of the apprentice will change over the duration of the apprenticeship from the direct supervision of a manager, mentor or PE through to 'Indirect (remote)Supervision' once an appropriate level of skill, knowledge and competence has been observed for the apprentice to be deemed competent and safe to work with patients under indirect supervision.  
Existing routes to professional registration are described by the HCPC within their standards of education and training. The hearing aid dispenser apprenticeship programme is required to meet this mandatory criteria.  
The proposed on the job training element, using mentors, practice educators and work based log books for competence assessment is entirely consistent with the Standards of Education and Training set out by the HCPC and followed by existing approved education and training providers.

What will the duration of the apprenticeship be?

A minimum of 14 months to a maximum of 24 months depending on the structure of the core education programme already approved by the HCPC for eligibility to apply for registration.

Q10. We are committed to ensuring that the standard we design provides sufficiently transferable skills to enable a successful apprentice to perform this role in an employer of any size and in any relevant sector. We are collectively representative of our sector(s) and are willing to work with other employers who come forward with an interest in this occupation and with colleagues from other sectors where our standards are closely related. We will develop the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan in line with the latest edition of the Institute's "How to" Guide for Trailblazers, will aim to complete this process within a year and are committed to working with relevant sector organisations to promote the use of the resulting standard once it is ready for delivery.

We collectively agree to statement 10.

Q13. Name and email address of contact we can use publicly on the gov.uk website (and Institute website when ready) as a contact point for any enquiries relating to the Trailblazer. (By filling out this box you consent to the publication of these details. If you wish to opt out please leave this box blank)

**Name of public contact**

**Email address**

Q15. Do you have a copy of the draft standard? If so, please include it with your submission.

**Add comments below:**

We have not yet commenced work on the proposed standard except to confirm that it will include the existing HCPC standards of proficiency and the professional guidance standards and scope of practice for a HAD published by BSHAA.