

The HSSE Pathway

...one applicant's experience



Rob Biggar MSc CSci MIPEM MInstP

Fellow of the Academy for Healthcare Science

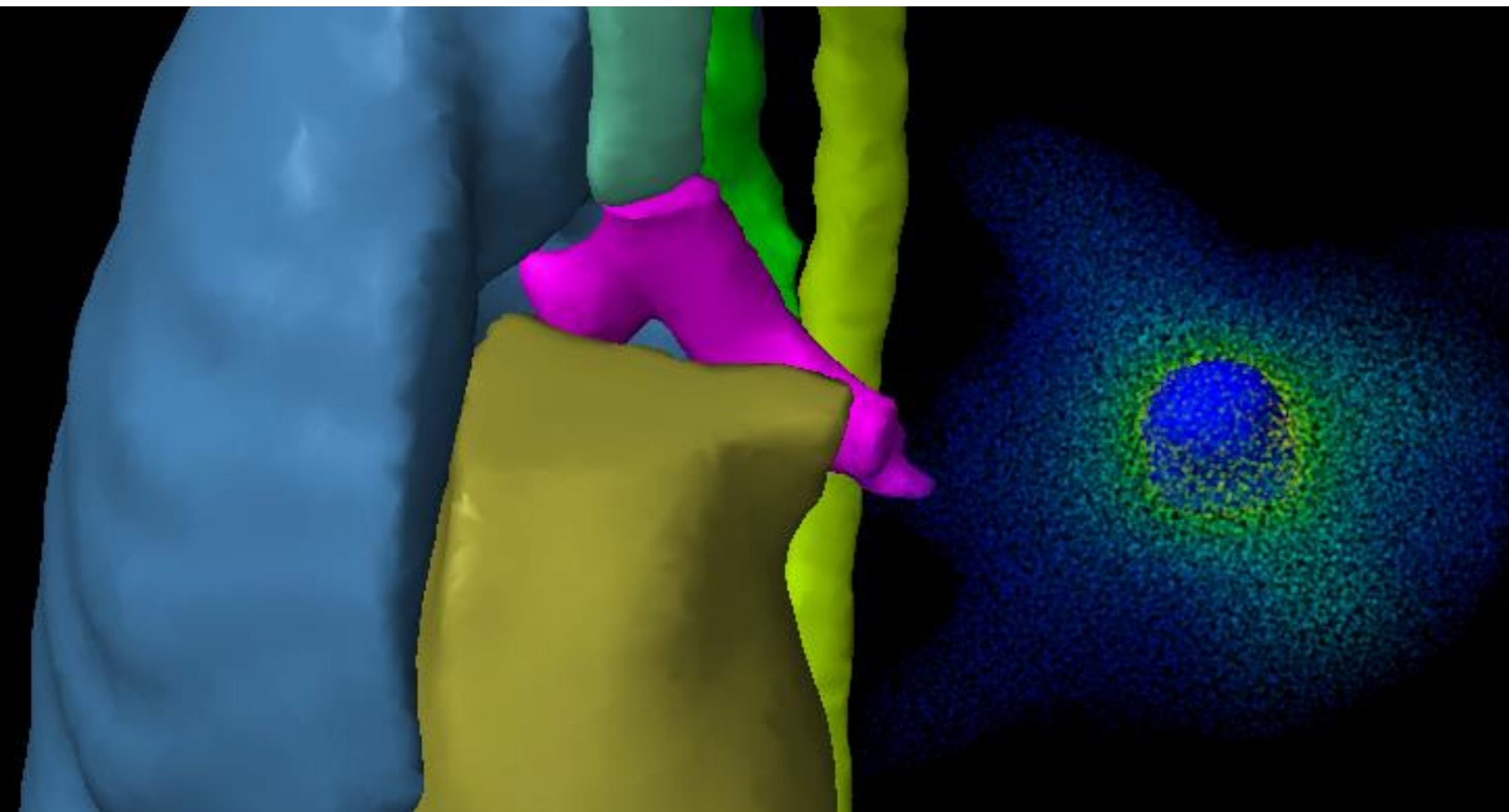
Lead Physicist | Treatment Planning | Medical Physics Expert (MPE)

r.biggar@nhs.net



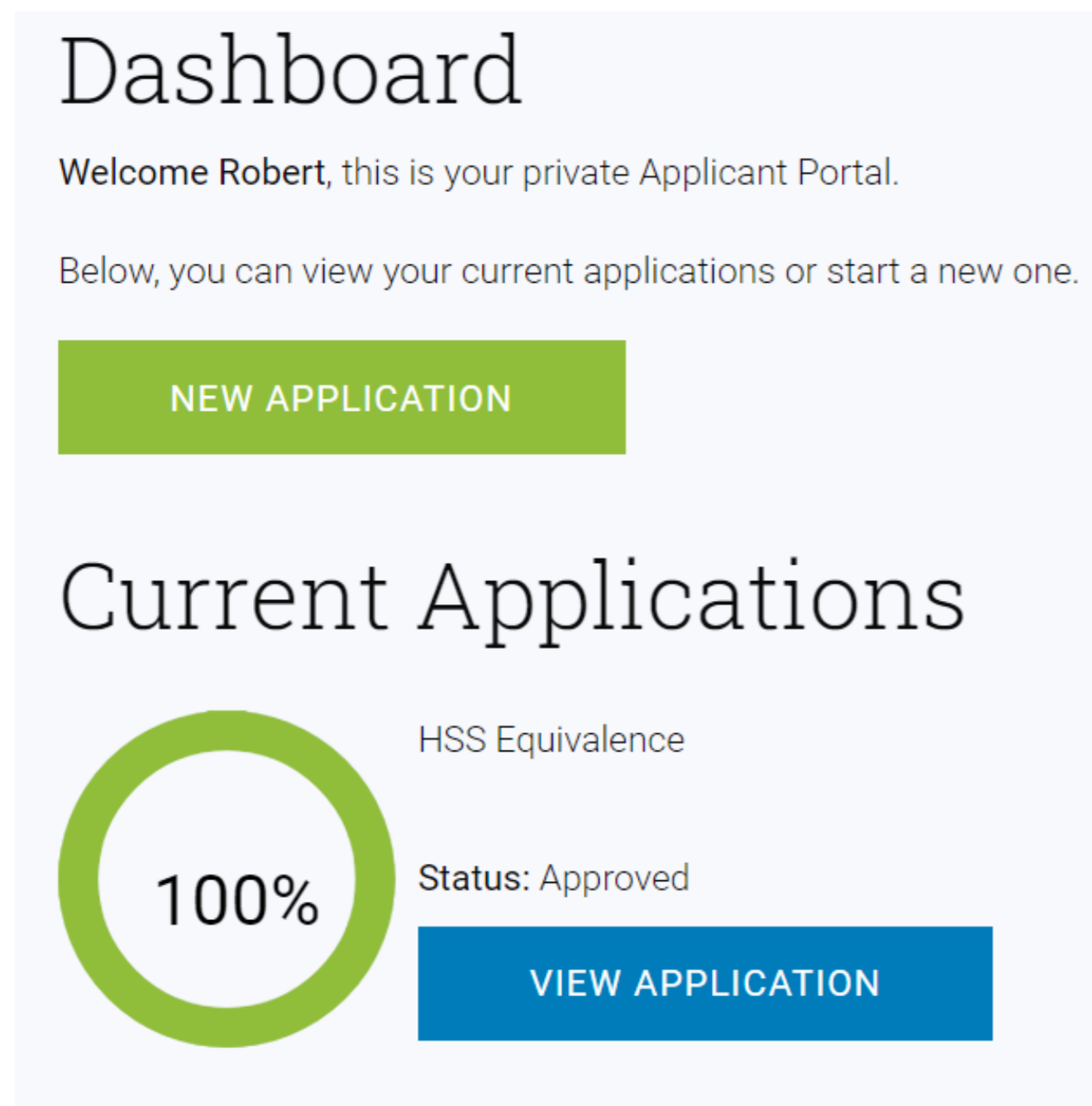
Royal Devon and Exeter

NHS Foundation Trust



Format of this talk...

Presentation – 30 mins



Dashboard

Welcome Robert, this is your private Applicant Portal.

Below, you can view your current applications or start a new one.

[NEW APPLICATION](#)

Current Applications

HSS Equivalence

100%

Status: Approved

[VIEW APPLICATION](#)

My experience of HSSE

Open Q&A – 10 mins



Questions

Group Discussion – 20 mins



Sharing experiences & issues supporting
HSSE/HSST for departments and for individuals

Presentation

Presentation – 30 mins

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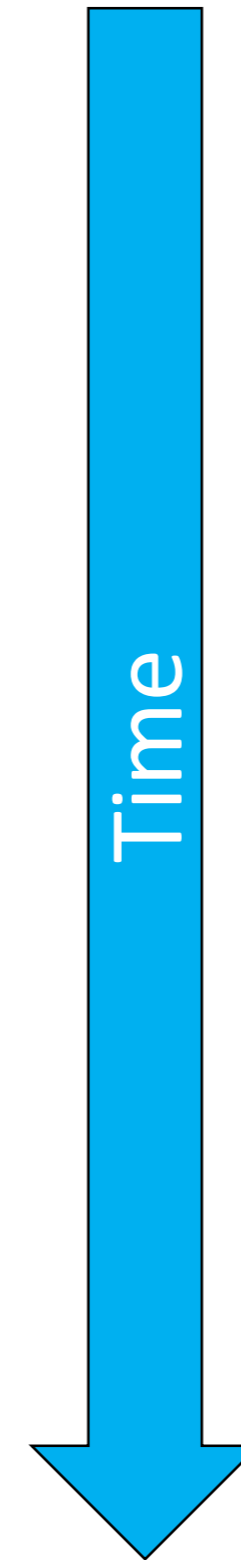


Sharing experiences & issues supporting
HSSE/HSST for departments and for individuals

My background

Putting this presentation in context...

- Former graduate of STP program:
1st ever cohort on that scheme
- HCPC Registered Clinical Scientist:
Specialising in Medical Physics (Radiotherapy)
- Medical Physics Expert:
Expert Practitioner - Legal Register
Special powers under IRMER (radiotherapy legislation)
- Working as Lead Physicist (AFC 8B):
Radiotherapy Treatment Planning
- Considering HSST/HSSE as next step
- HSS Registered
Continuing CPD, aspiring to future AFC consultant posts



Disclaimer!

Very mixed audience today, emphasis on mid-career and HSSE
References to physics –insert clinical science. Not official AHCS advice!

Career Development

Four stages in clinical scientist career pathway...

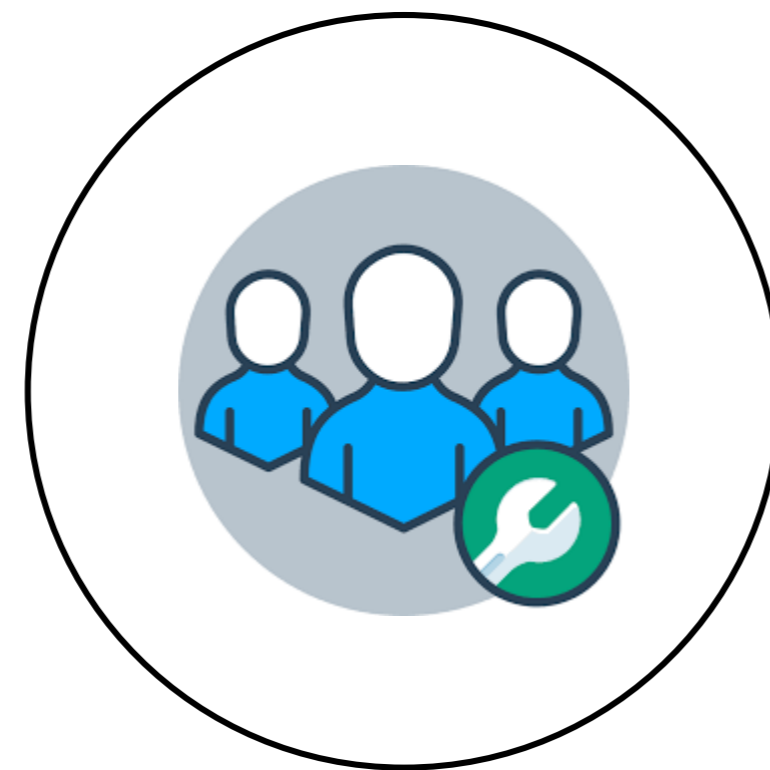


Pre-Registration

STP Trainees

Route 2

Apprenticeship?



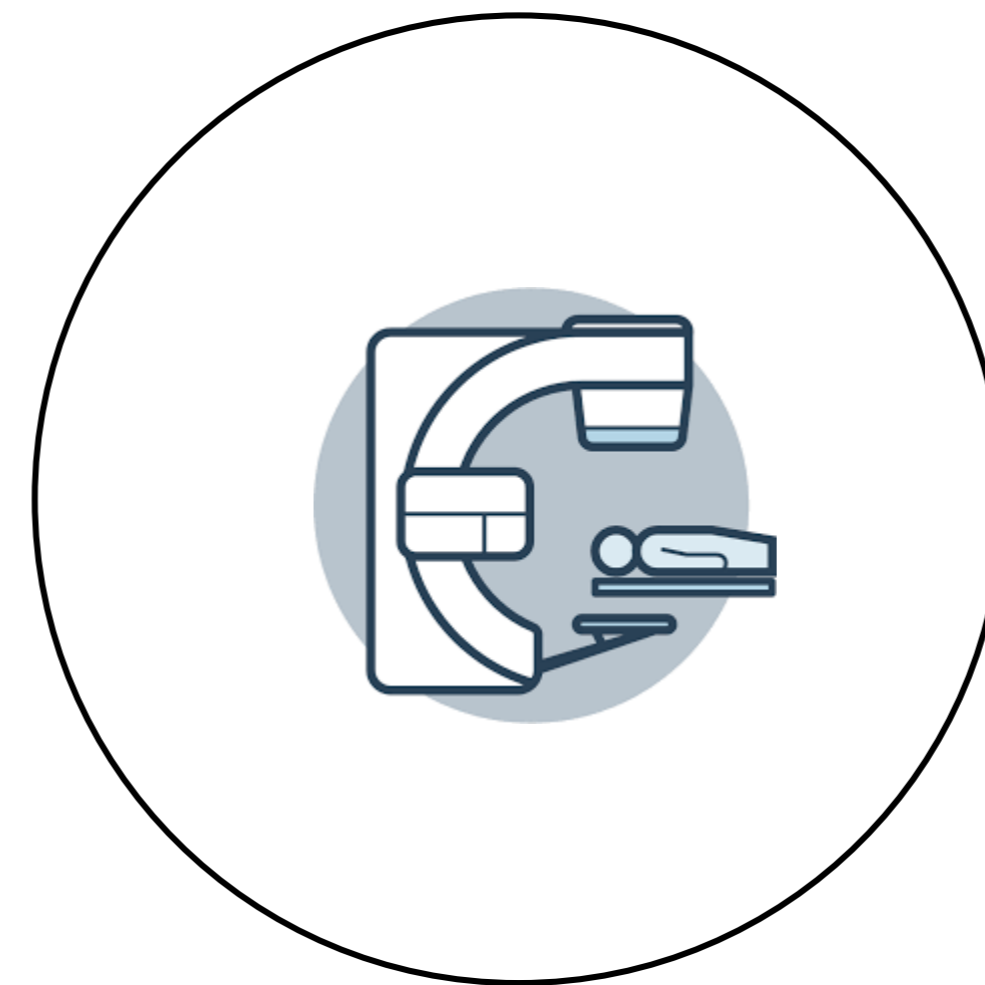
Early Career

<5 years post registration

Consolidation of practice

Managing clinical & project work

MPE accreditation?



Mid Career

Managing projects

MPE/subspecialty expert

Leading teams & developing others

Consultant accreditation?



Late Career

Already in 'the (consultant) system'

e.g. Heads of department

Strategy Focused

Focus on mentoring/coaching

Career Development

Four stages in clinical scientist career pathway...

HSS Register?



Pre-Registration

STP Trainees

Route 2

Apprenticeship?



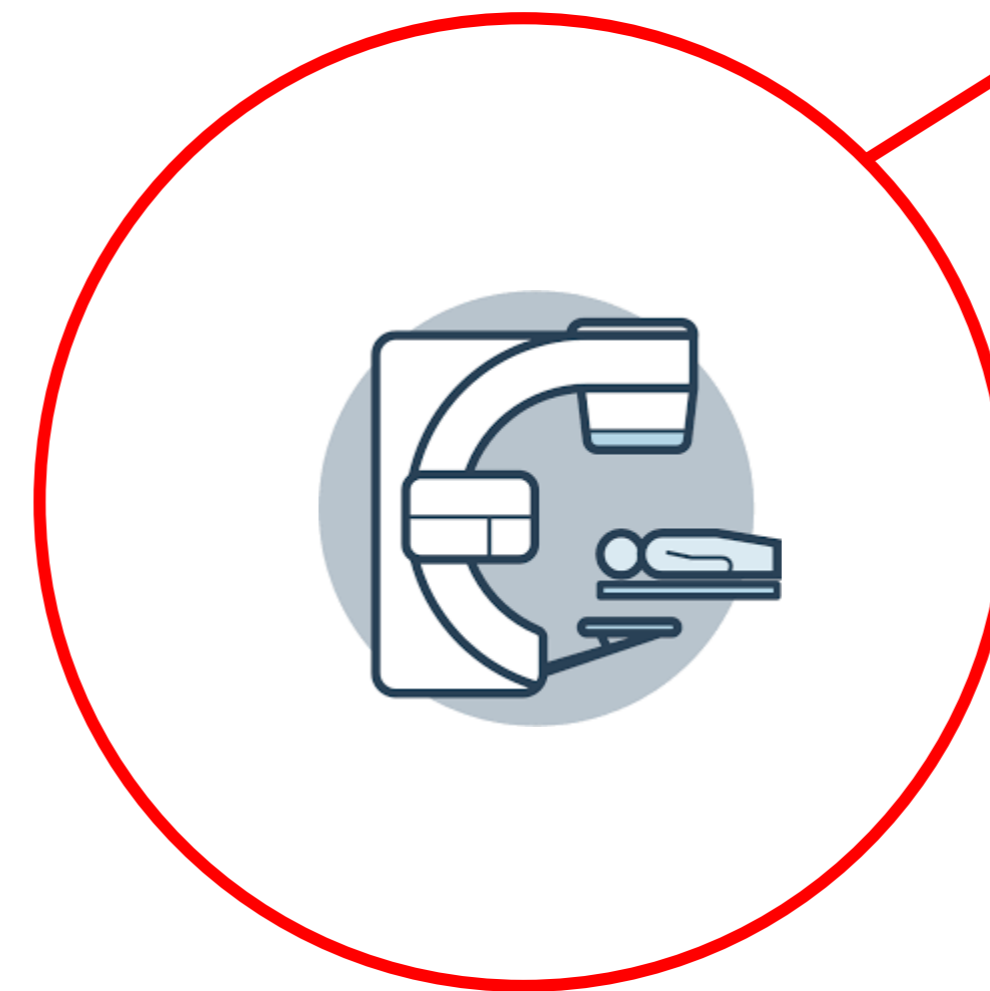
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Late Career

Already in 'the (consultant) system'

e.g. Heads of department

Strategy Focused

Focus on mentoring/coaching

Early Career

Considerations...



- Consolidation and application of knowledge and skills – technical focus
- Working towards medical physics expert (MPE) certification
- Leadership and management development: focus on project management
- Supervision of STP's and NQ's
- Limited ability to apply and practice HSS learning

Early Career

<5 years post registration

Consolidation of practice

Managing clinical & project work

MPE accreditation?

Late Career

Considerations...



Late Career

Already in 'the (consultant) system'

e.g. Heads of department

Strategy Focused

Focus on mentoring/coaching

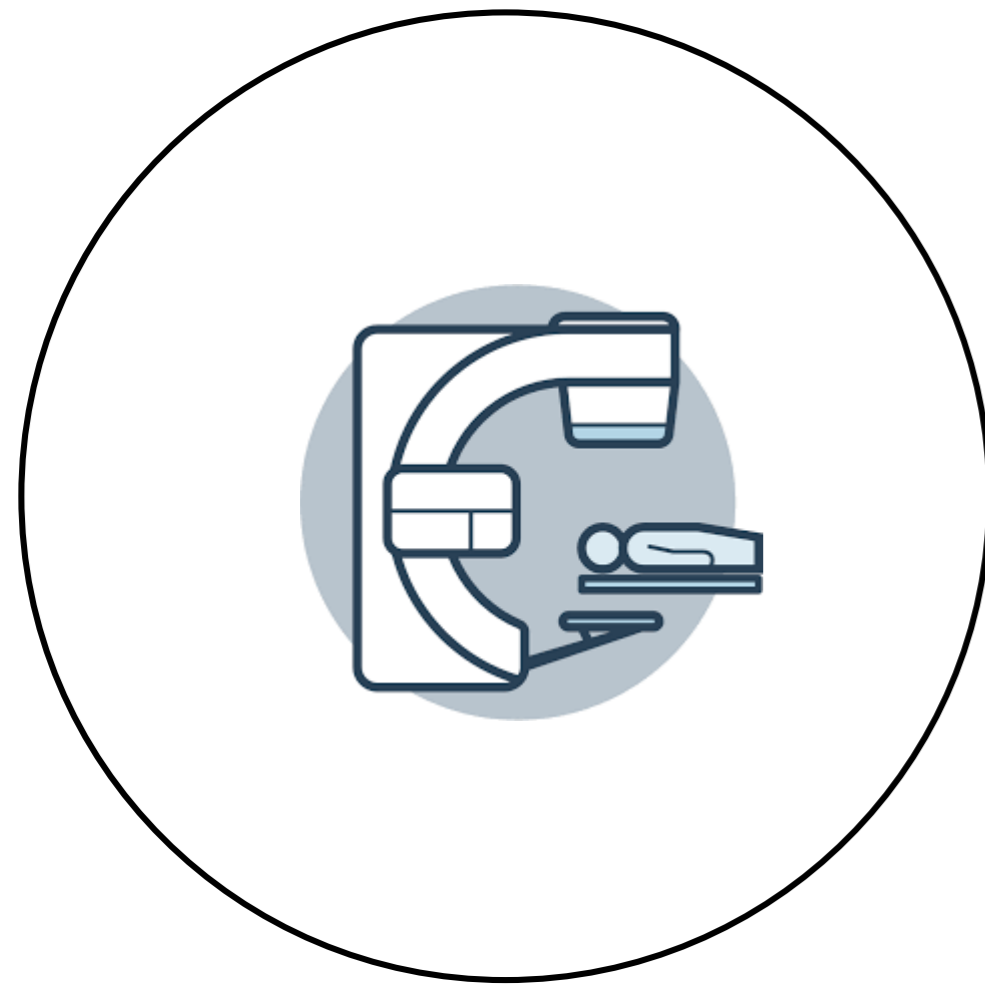
- Established expert in field - transcends subspecialties
- More experience with leadership and management
- Focus on coaching and mentoring
- Influencing 'the system' locally and nationally

- HSST may/not augment existing knowledge, skills and experience
- Joining the AHCS register (portfolio route) is a choice

- Any future moves at the national level to mandate AHCS registration are unlikely to materially affect an individual already well established in a high AFC consultant role.

Mid Career

Considerations...



- Practicing and experienced MPE
- Managing projects
- Line manager and leading team(s)
- Leadership and management development: focus on people and resource management
- Beginning to transcend sub-specialty boundaries
- Good ability to apply and practice HSS learning

Mid Career

Managing projects

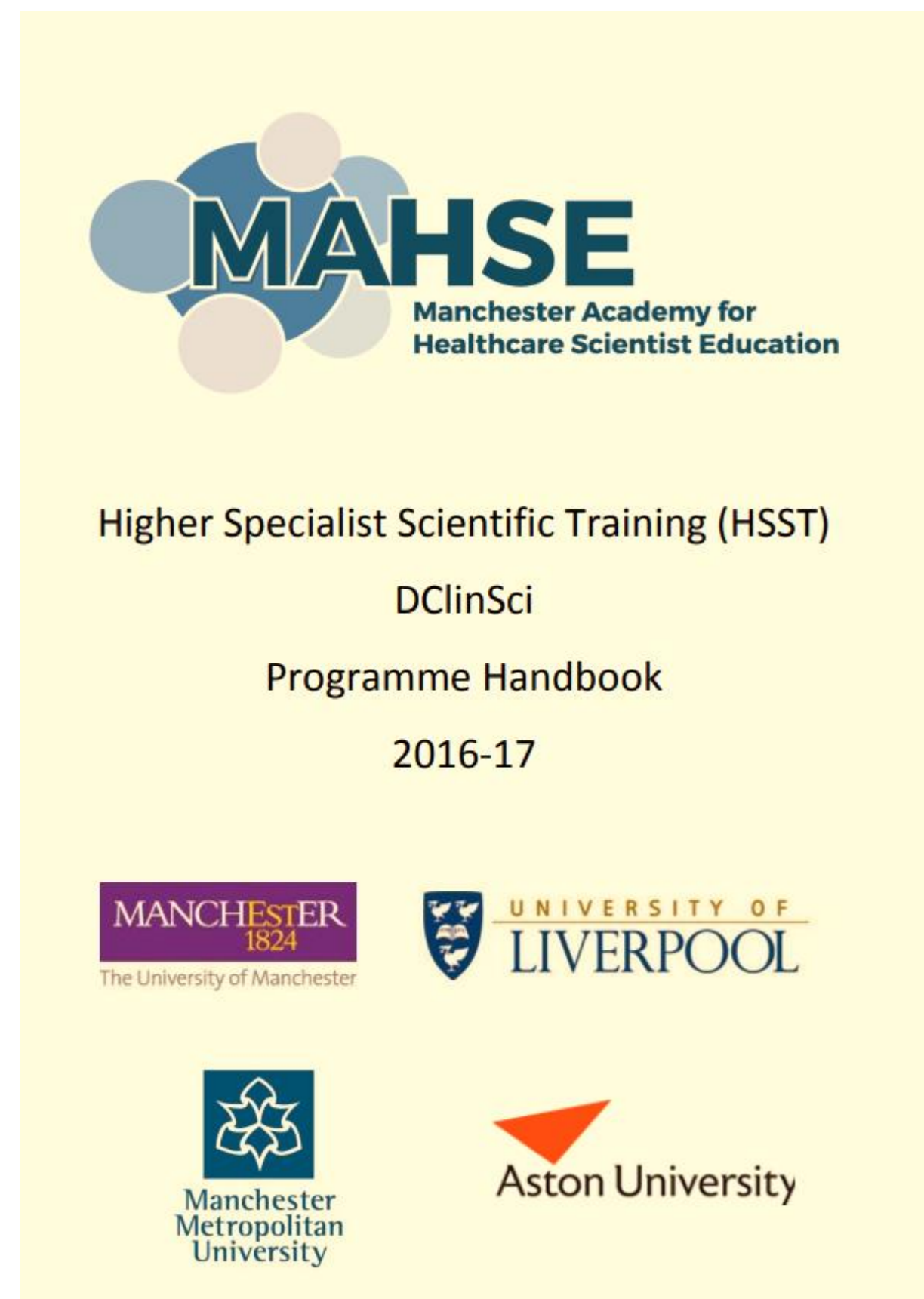
MPE/subspecialty expert

Leading teams & developing others

Consultant accreditation?

Mid Career – HSST? (1)

The structured approach...



HSST is a relatively new Healthcare Science training and development pathway designed to equip staff to fulfil future consultant clinical scientist roles.

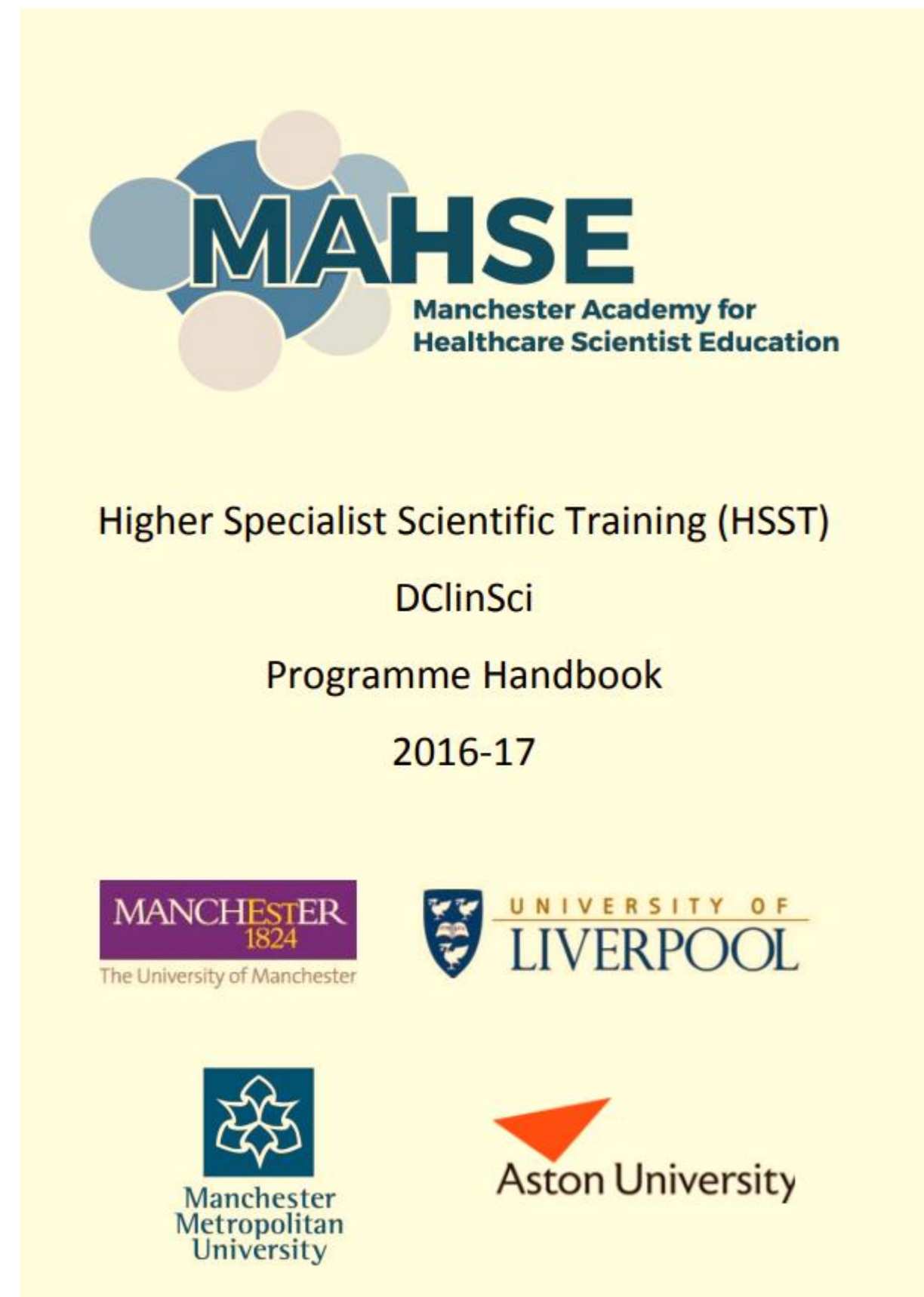
HSST is just a pre-accredited means of proving someone meets the AHCS “standards of proficiency” expected of a consultant level scientist.

Your CPD program can be designed with reference to HSST competencies, **regardless** of your interests in the HSST programme and whether or not this features within the departmental workforce plan.

This CPD should equip you with the equivalent skills and **keep pace** with those on a formal HSST route. Registration by equivalence **(HSSE)** **is an end option here.**

Mid Career – HSST? (2)

The structured approach...



- You've got to be in it for the right reasons!
- Personal decision
- Serious commitment of time and effort (5 years)
 - Particularly in first 2-3 years with the coursework load
 - 1/5 days work allocation is unlikely to be sufficient - evenings and many weekends of own time
- Improve leadership skills in the workplace
- Effective at advancing the higher scientific knowledge
- May be suitable for someone looking for a more structured CPD approach or lacking research experience
- Not necessarily suitable for someone already working at a level in line with HSS domains

Mid Career – HSSE?

The CPD approach...



Higher Specialist
Scientist Equivalence:
Guidance for Applicants

- Lines up with HSS domains
- Identify gaps and tailor training to suit the individual
 - E.g. increasing research output
 - Leadership programs
- Still ‘keep pace’ with those on the formal HSST program
- Potentially more organic pace of progression
- Less formal, but requires individual to be more assertive with their own CPD
- May miss out on what you don’t know you don’t know!
- Slightly cloudy process, little precedent thus far

HSS Register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



Search Results

You will be able to view the decisions taken by our Fitness to Practise Panels and Interim Orders Panels here. Sanctions will also be clearly demonstrated against the registrants name on our searchable register.

You can search by either ID, name, location or specialism by filling in the relevant fields and then pressing the search button.

Found 7 result(s).

ID	Name	Register	Location	Specialism	Expiry Date
21221	Mr Robert Biggar	HSS	Exeter	Radiotherapy Physics	Mar 3, 2022
2405	Mr (William) Peter Colley	HSS	Cottingham	Radiotherapy Physics	Sep 7, 2021
3674	Dr Robert Farley	HSS	Leeds	Radiotherapy Physics	Sep 20, 2021
17334	Dr Martyn Gilmore	HSS	Bebington	Radiotherapy Physics	Feb 10, 2022
20660	Dr Geoffrey Heyes	HSS	Birmingham	Radiotherapy Physics	Feb 8, 2022
21284	Dr Simeon Nill	HSS	Sutton	Radiotherapy Physics	Jan 18, 2022
8354	Mr Andrew Robinson	HSS	London	Radiotherapy Physics	Apr 12, 2022

Search the Academy for Healthcare Science Register

Are you an Applicant? Visit Applicant Portal

SEARCH

Can't find a Applicant?
[Contact us](#) or [Start a New Search](#)

Not currently correlated with AFC Consultant level posts or NHS workforce planning

...for group discussion

HSS Register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



Why so few numbers considering several cohorts of HSST have graduated?

...for group discussion

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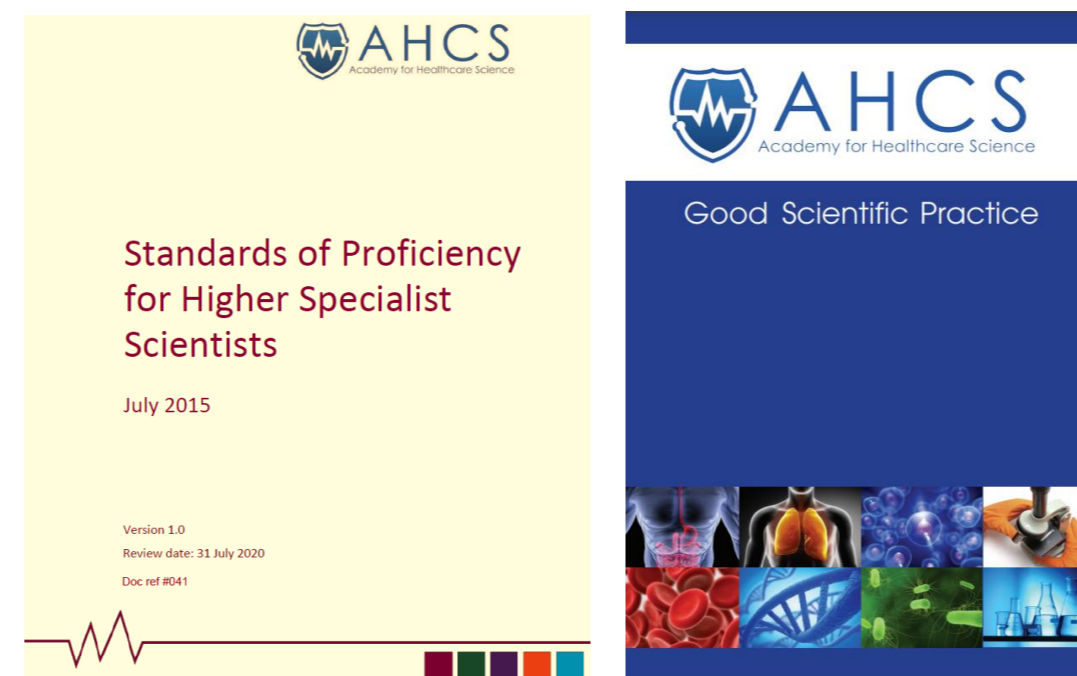
Routes to register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



HSS

Standards of Proficiency



AHCS Good Scientific Practice

Routes to register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



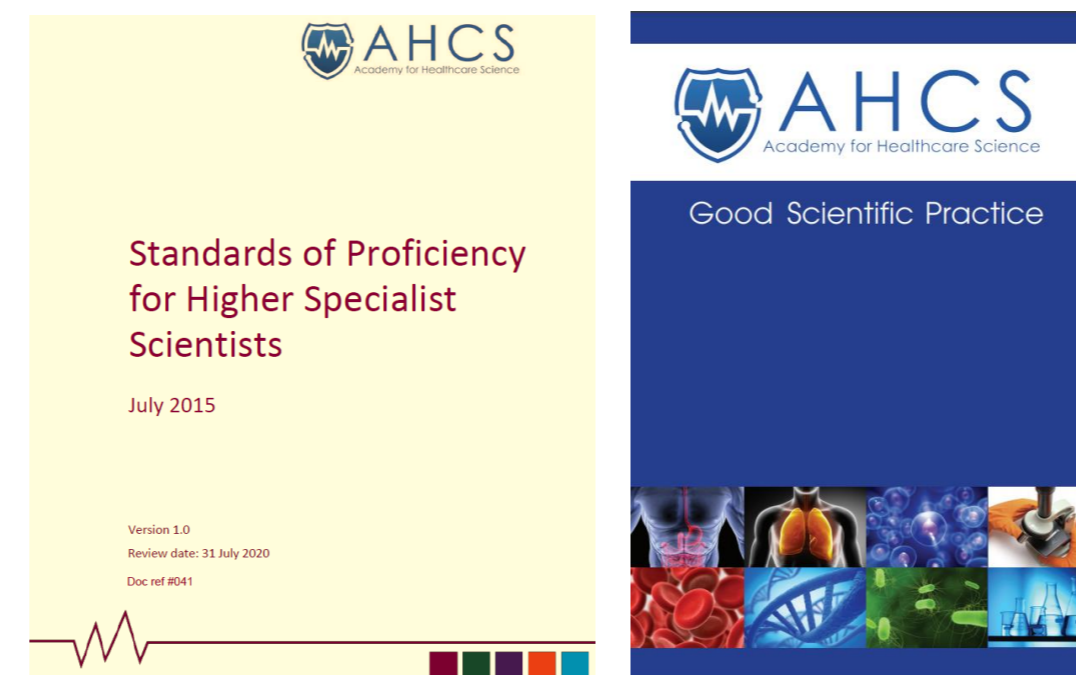
HSST

Certificate of Completion

Completion of 5 year part time
doctorial level academic programme
with work based development work.
Fulfilled by University of Manchester

HSS

Standards of Proficiency



HSST Curriculum (NSHCS)



AHCS Good Scientific Practice

Routes to register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



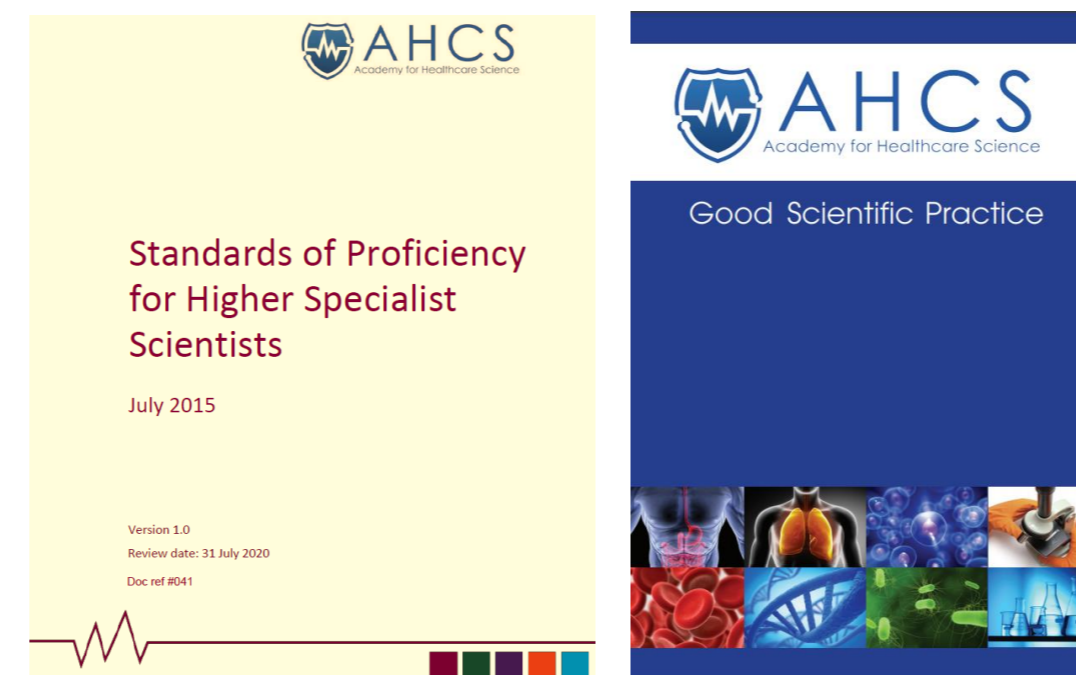
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HSS

Standards of Proficiency



AHCS Good Scientific Practice

HSSE

Certificate of Equivalence

Real world experience culminating in formal
submission of evidence of equivalence.
Demonstrating skills, knowledge and
experience meeting SoP and GSP.
Fulfilled by AHCS equivalence online portal

HSST Curriculum (NSHCS)



Routes to register

HSS 'Consultant' Register



HSST

HSS

HSSE

Certificate of Completion

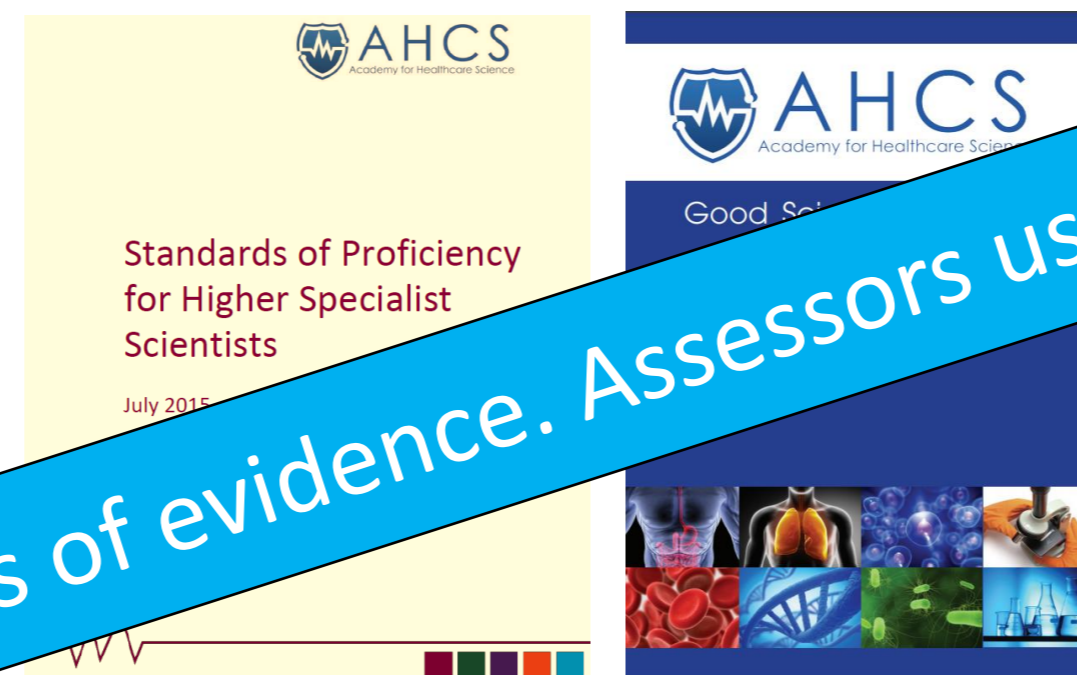


Standards of Proficiency



Certificate of Equivalence

Completion of 5 year part time
doctorial level academic programme
with work based development work.
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Examples of evidence. Assessors use this!

Real world experience culminating in formal
submission of evidence of equivalence.
Demonstrating skills, knowledge and
experience meeting SoP and GSP.
Fulfilled by AHCS equivalence online portal

HSST Curriculum (NSHCS)



AHCS Good Scientific Practice

Equivalence Process

This is the most important document



Higher Specialist
Scientist Equivalence:
Guidance for Applicants

Equivalence Process

1. Submit application online (£280 fee, one-off)
2. Admin checks by AHCS – qualifications, DBS, Job description, HCPC verified
3. Full assessment by panel
 - a) Specialist – i.e. Consultant Radiotherapy Physicists
 - b) Clinical Expert – same division, e.g. Non-ionising Physicist
 - c) Lay Person

Outcome (~6-8 weeks)

Equivalence Achieved



Apply to join HSS Register using certificate of equivalence (£50/year)

Further Evidence Required



Portfolio required (6 months):
Only in domains which were insufficient
200 pages max, 5000 word summary report
+Mapping matrix against HSS SoP
+Supporting evidence documents

Equivalence Not Demonstrated



Individual advised they're not close to the required standard and to re-apply in the future following further training and/or experience.

Equivalence Portal

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `app.ahcs.ac.uk/portal/dashboard`. The page features a left-hand navigation menu with the following items: **Dashboard**, **My Applications** (containing [HSS Equivalence](#) and [HSS Register](#)), [My Profile](#), and [Logout](#). The main content area is titled **Dashboard** and includes a welcome message: "Welcome Robert, this is your private Applicant Portal. Below, you can view your current applications or start a new one." A prominent green button labeled **NEW APPLICATION** is positioned below the welcome text. Under the heading **Current Applications**, there are two application cards. The first card is for **HSS Equivalence**, showing a green circular progress indicator at **100%** and a status of **Status: Approved**, with a blue **VIEW APPLICATION** button below it. The second card is for **HSS Register**, also showing a green circular progress indicator at **100%** and a status of **Status: Approved**, with a blue **VIEW APPLICATION** button below it. The top right corner of the page displays the user's name **Robert Biggar** and a profile icon. The footer of the page contains the copyright notice **© 2021 AHCS**.

Equivalence Portal

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `app.ahcs.ac.uk/portal/application/20811/overview`. The user is logged in as Robert Biggar. The main heading is "Overview" with a 100% completion indicator. A "Read Only" warning box states: "Please note that your HSS Equivalence application is now Read Only. Please contact the Administrator on equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk if any changes are required." The application progress is shown in a grid of 10 items, all marked as "COMPLETED":

Category	Status
Personal Details	COMPLETED
Guidance	COMPLETED
Professional Identity	COMPLETED
Education and Training	COMPLETED
Career Details	COMPLETED
Documents	COMPLETED
Good Character & Health	COMPLETED
Declarations	COMPLETED

The left sidebar contains the following navigation items:

- Dashboard
- My Application
 - HSS Equivalence
 - Overview (selected)
 - Personal Details
 - Guidance
 - Professional Identity
 - Education and Training
 - Career Details
 - Documents
 - Good Character & Health
 - Declarations
 - Monitoring Information
 - Payment
 - Job Description / Person Specification
 - Certificate
 - Complete Application
- My Profile
- Logout

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Application Requirements

- ✓ Personal Details
- ✓ Guidance
- ✓ Professional Identity
- ✓ Education and Training
- ✓ Career Details
- ✓ Documents
- ✓ Good Character & Health
- ✓ Declarations
- ✓ Monitoring Information
- ✓ Payment
- ✓ Job Description / Person Specification

- Usual demographic information
- Qualifications history
- Work history
- Declarations, payment

- Verified current job description and person spec.

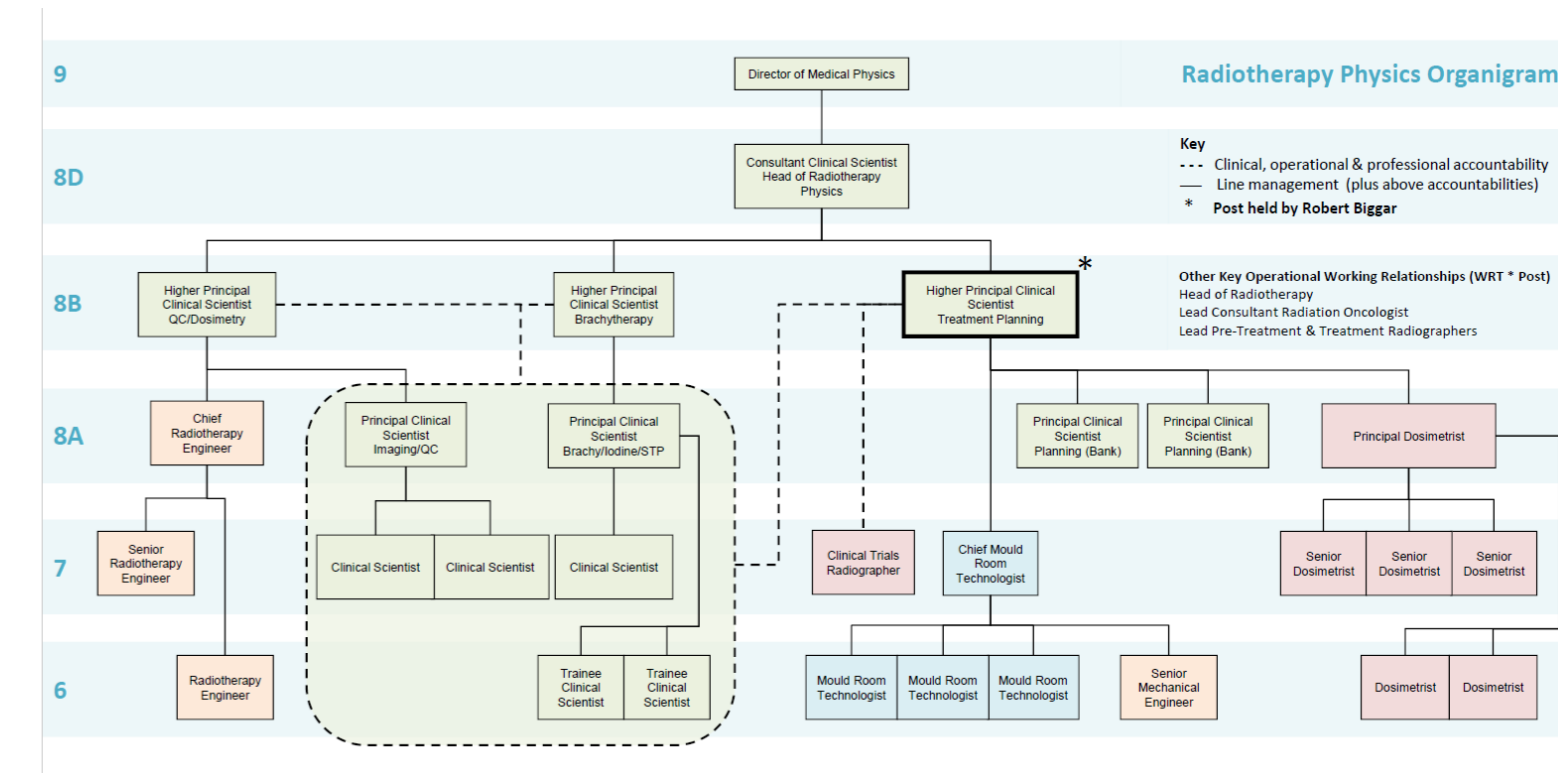
Pro Tip! I added a dept. organigram to put this in context

- ***Documents***

2 x Professional References

Extended Summary CV (1500 words max)

Current DBS



Documents Section

- ✓ Personal Details
- ✓ Guidance
- ✓ Professional Identity
- ✓ Education and Training
- ✓ Career Details
- ✓ Documents
- ✓ Good Character & Health
- ✓ Declarations
- ✓ Monitoring Information
- ✓ Payment
- ✓ Job Description / Person Specification

Please note that your HSS Equivalence application is now Realised by the HSS Administrator on equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk if any changes are required.

Documents ✓

Please upload the following documentation in support of your application.

- A certified copy of one form of identification.
- Two professional references.
- CV to include 1,500-word (maximum) summary of your career to date, making explicit reference to how the five domains set out in the HSS Standards of Proficiency have been met.
- A DBS certificate dated within the last 3 years, or evidence that your employer has checked your DBS status and confirmed no change has occurred since a certificate was issued.

2 x Professional References
Extended Summary CV
Current DBS
Certified ID (passport etc)

Pro Tip!

There is no limit on additional documents you can upload. However, the assessors don't want a portfolio by stealth!

Domains

Within the HSS: Standards of proficiency...

05 Domains

16 Standards

63 Sub-Standards

Equivalence 'portfolio' should explicitly reference how all 63 sub-standards have been met through knowledge, skills and experience.

Domain One: Professional Practice	
Standard 1 – Practise with the professionalism expected of a Consultant Clinical Scientist	
Standard 2 – Ensure professionalism in working with peers and with service users	
Standard 3 – Ensure professionalism in areas of governance and service accreditation	
Standard 4 – Direct the education and training of others	
Domain Two: Scientific Practice	
Standard 5 – Lead scientific services	
Standard 6 – Direct scientific validation and evaluation	
Standard 7 – Assure safety in the scientific setting	
Domain Three: Clinical Practice	
Standard 8 – Ensure clinical relevance of scientific services provided	
Standard 9 – Deliver effective clinical services	
Domain Four: Research, Development and Innovation	
Standard 10 – Lead research, development and innovation in clinical priority areas	
Standard 11 – Evaluate research, development and innovation outcomes to improve scientific service provision	
Standard 12 – Promote a culture of innovation	
Standard 13 – Assure research governance	
Domain Five: Clinical Leadership	
Standard 14 – Ensure strategic leadership	
Standard 15 – Ensure clinical scientific leadership	
Standard 16 – Assure effective management of resources	

Domains

Within the HSS: Standards of proficiency...

05 Domains

16 Standards

63 Sub-Standards

Equivalence 'portfolio' should explicitly reference how all 63 sub-standards have been met through knowledge, skills and experience.

Pro Tip!

Consider proportional word count in your 1500 word CV. I combined evidence for clinical practice and leadership.

Domain	Sub-standards	Words
Professional Practice	23	548
Scientific Practice	12	286
Clinical Practice	6	143
Research, Development and Innovation	12	286
Clinical Leadership	10	238
Total:	63	1500

Domain One: Professional Practice

Standard 1 – Practise with the professionalism expected of a Consultant Clinical Scientist

Standard 2 – Ensure professionalism in working with peers and with service users

Standard 3 – Ensure professionalism in areas of governance and service accreditation.....

Standard 4 – Direct the education and training of others.....

Domain Two: Scientific Practice

Standard 5 – Lead scientific services

Standard 6 – Direct scientific validation and evaluation.....

Standard 7

Domain Three

Standard 8

Standard 9

Domain Four

Standard 1

Standard 1

service pro

Standard 1

Standard 1

Domain Five

Standard 1

Standard 1

Standard 1

STANDARD 5 – LEAD SCIENTIFIC SERVICES

5.1 Assess the demand and specification for evolving scientific services with users, clinical colleagues and other relevant stakeholders

5.2 Evaluate the scientific literature and other scientific sources and work with others to develop scientific and business cases for service improvement

5.3 Lead a clinical scientific department offering a broad range of services and creating a culture of continuous improvement and innovation

5.4 Provide a high level of scientific expertise to complex problems in own area of specialist practice

5.5 Ensure that clinical scientific services are delivered with a commitment to excellent quality, safety, confidentiality, accountability, reliability, communication and professional and managerial integrity

Professional References

- Two Referees (1 must be HCPC/GMC registered) who will support your application in writing
 1. Current line manager
 2. Another senior colleague with direct working relationship (e.g. Chief exec, director, consultant, senior lecturer etc)
- Written, long form letter (~1 page) - old-fashioned job reference
- Verifying content of applicants CV
- Direct knowledge of applicants expertise and current practice
- Commentary supporting how the applicant meets HSS SoP's and is **working at a consultant level**

Pro Tip! - Ancillary references

Additional references beyond the official 2 to round out some other domains (mentioned in assessors report)
Trust Chairman and Lead Governor - evidencing **professional practice** and wider contribution to healthcare.
Research and Trials Radiographer - further evidencing research, innovation domain

With thanks to Andy Nevill, Eduardo Villarreal, James Brent, Louise Turtle and Peta Foxall

Extended CV

The difficult bit!...

- 1500 word (max) extended CV evidencing all 5 domains, 63 sub-standards of proficiency through your career - skills, knowledge and experience:
 - Also capturing the essence of good scientific practice and examples commensurate with HSST curriculum
- Demonstrate a wider commitment to healthcare science – transcending subspecialties or even division
- Significant contribution/impact to your field – research, training etc
- Evidencing consultant level practice

- Very personal to you
- Not exhaustive, try to vary examples used for evidence to demonstrate breadth
- This will take time, tough to recall your whole career quickly
- Don't be TOO British! Make it clear what you have done.

Pro Tip!

- Use additional document attachments but don't go mad! – e.g. list of publications
- Format? Free, but make it as easy for the assessors as possible
 - Separate list of acronyms, particularly for lay assessor

All the stuff...

- 01 HSST Curriculum
<https://curriculumlibrary.nshcs.org.uk/hsst/>
- 02 AHCS Equivalence Portal
<https://app.ahcs.ac.uk/portal/dashboard>
- 03 HSS 'Consultant' Register
<https://app.ahcs.ac.uk/search>
- 04 Good Scientific Practice
HSS Standards of Proficiency
HSSE Guidance for Applicants
<https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/equivalence-guidance/>
- 05 IPEM HSSE Special Interest Study Day

The screenshot shows the AHCS (Academy for Healthcare Science) website. The top navigation bar includes links for About, Patients & Public, Our Registers, Directories, Equivalence, Education & Training, Professional Bodies Council, Fellows, and News / Events. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area is titled 'Equivalence' and features a large blue banner with the word 'EQUIVALENCE' and an image of laboratory glassware. Below the banner, there is a section for 'Equivalence Guidance' with a text update regarding COVID-19 assessment delays. A 'General Guidance' section lists various documents for download, including Good Scientific Practice 2012 and 2021, and AHCS Equality and Diversity Policy. The 'Certificate of Competence Guidance' section lists roles like Anatomical Pathology Technologist and provides links to practitioner handbooks and standards of proficiency. The 'Higher Specialist Scientist (HSS) Equivalence Guidance' section includes links to flowcharts, standards, and handbooks. The 'Scientist Training Programme (STP) Equivalence Guidance' section is partially visible at the bottom. On the right side, there are several promotional boxes: 'AHCS, IPEM, RCCP Shared Temporary Register', 'JOIN THE ACADEMY REGISTER' (The PSA Accredited Register for Healthcare Scientists), 'ALREADY REGISTERED? LOGIN TO REGISTER', 'PATIENTS & PUBLIC?' (MORE INFORMATION), and 'Helpful Links' (Sign in to The Register, Search The Register, The Register Overview).

Q&A Section

FAQ's

1. What is the minimum level for equivalence?
2. Do you need a PHD?
3. Do you have to fulfil all of the HSST curriculum?
4. Is it easier than HSST?
5. How long does it take to build a portfolio?
6. Types of evidence

Open Q&A – 10 mins



Questions?

Group Discussion – 20 mins



Sharing experiences & issues supporting HSSE/HSST for departments and for individuals

Group Discussion

Presentation – 30 mins

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