AHCS Guide for Applicants:

Certificate of Equivalence Scientist Training Programme

(Clinical Scientist)

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Introduction

This document provides guidance on the process of applying to the Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS) for a Certificate of Equivalence in the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are commensurate with those achieved on the Scientist Training Programme (STP).

Good Scientific Practice (GSP) underpins the STP Training programme and the STP Equivalence route and sets out the professional standards on which safe and good working practice is founded for all those in the healthcare science workforce. GSP confirms to employers the standards of behaviour and practice that the healthcare science workforce must achieve and maintain, both in the NHS and all other sectors and settings. The standards in GSP fully meet the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientists (see also appendix 6).

Before submitting your application for STP Equivalence, you need to familiarise yourself with all relevant information sources. These include the following:

- STP Equivalence guidance on the AHCS website: https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/equivalence-guidance/
- AHCS *Good Scientific Practice (2021)*: **https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/equivalence-guidance/**
- NSHCS STP Training curricula: **https://curriculum.nshcs.org.uk/programmes/stp**

Please note STP Equivalence can only be considered if there is an accredited STP curriculum.

You are encouraged to discuss your intention to apply for STP Equivalence with your line manager, mentors and colleagues, including to identify appropriate referees for your application (see **Appendix 4**). You may also wish to seek advice and information from your professional body.

You should also consider that there are other routes to achieving equivalence that allow you to apply to the HCPC for registration as a Clinical Scientist (see below).

Which version of Good Scientific Practice should you use?

If it is before 1 September 2021, and you have already started to map your evidence against the standards in the 2012 version of Good Scientific Practice you should continue to do so.

If you have not started creating your portfolio, please use Good Scientific Practice (**GSP** 2021).

After 1 September 2021, you must map your evidence to the standards in Good Scientific Practice (2021) using the template available in **Appendix 5**. A word version can be downloaded on the Academy's website https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/equivalence-guidance/

An outline of the process

The STP Equivalence process has five stages as follows:

1. **You submit your initial application** to demonstrate your eligibility to go through the process
2. **You upload your portfolio**.
3. **Your portfolio is assessed**.
4. **You are interviewed.**
5. **The outcome of your interview is ratified**, with a successful outcome meaning that you receive certification, giving you eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Clinical Scientist.

Your progression from one stage to the next depends on your achieving a successful outcome at each stage.

This guidance and the online application portal support you in engaging with the requirements of the assessment process, including preparing and uploading your portfolio for assessment.

Should you want advice, please contact equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk and you will be put in contact with the STP Equivalence Lead. There are also dates for drop-in Q&A sessions, for all equivalence applicants Drop-in sessions - Equivalence and Clinical Research Practitioners - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

Your portfolio has to comprise the following elements:

- A summary of your training and experience.
- Your completed *Good Scientific Practice* mapping template.
- Your supporting documents/evidence.

The STP Equivalence process normally takes around six to twelve months to complete, depending on the demand for assessments. The AHCS endeavours to progress your application as quickly as possible.

Equality and diversity

The AHCS believes that excellence is achieved through recognising the positive value and contribution of every individual. It is committed to providing an inclusive development culture in which all individuals are:

- Enabled and encouraged to participate fully.
- Treated on the basis of merit, ability, and potential, with dignity and respect.
- Valued for their positive contributions.

Please note, we use any monitoring data we collect (including gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion/belief, disability) to analyse the Equivalence outcomes and review out processes and procedures. Further information on the equality and diversity policies of the AHCS can be found at https://documents.ahcs.ac.uk/storage/7/-001-AHCS-Equality-and-Diversity-Policy-v1.2-November-2022.pdf

If you have a disability, as defined under the Equality Act (2010) that you feel may affect your engagement in the application and assessment process, please contact the AHCS Administrators before submitting your application; equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk . The Academy can then advise you on reasonable adjustments.

Fee payment

Fee information for the entire equivalence assessment process can be found on the Academy's fees webpage: Registration Fees - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

If your application is rejected as a result of the initial administrative check, you still incur a £50 administration fee.

The full fee is non-refundable once your application has been approved for portfolio submission.

Your fee includes one assessment at the portfolio stage and one at the interview stage. Further assessments require an additional fee.

Remember:

- ***You should read and seek to ensure that you have understood this guidance before you apply for STP Equivalence.***
- ***More guidance is available on the AHCS website*** Equivalence Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)
- ***You will find dates for the drop in Q&A sessions for all equivalence applicants at:*** Drop-in sessions - Equivalence and Clinical Research Practitioners - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

If you have any queries about the application process, please contact the AHCS Administrators at equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk

What is 'Equivalence'?

The STP Equivalence process enables you to demonstrate that the knowledge, skills and behaviours that you have developed through your experience and professional development are comparable with those of someone who successfully completes the formal Scientific Training Programme.

In the context of education, training, qualifications and experience, 'equivalence' is when the outcomes of two processes are directly comparable even though the paths to achieving the outcomes are different. Enacting an equivalence process enables appropriate recognition to be given to individuals' evidenced learning. When equivalence is shown to exist between a prospective new qualification and the qualification or experiential learning a person already holds, repeating education or training is unnecessary, and recognition of equivalence can be given to their evidenced knowledge, skills and behaviours.

In line with this, the Academy's Equivalence process provides access to registration for individuals who have not followed a formal Scientist Training Programme (STP) accredited by the National School of Healthcare Science.

Your application for STP Equivalence is assessed against the following:

- The standards set out in AHCS *Good Scientific Practice 2021 (GSP)*

and

- The relevant accredited STP curriculum.

Your application is considered against *GSP* and the relevant curriculum to establish the following:

- Whether you demonstrate fulfilment of the GSP at the level expected of a clinical scientist;
- Whether you demonstrate that you have the breadth of professional knowledge, skills and behaviours comparable to those held by someone who has completed the relevant accredited STP curriculum.

In selecting evidence to include in your portfolio, you must consider the learning outcomes for the core (generic), rotation (theme) and specialist modules, as set out in the relevant STP curriculum. However, you are not required to map your evidence to the outcomes of the STP curriculum.

The Equivalence process is a form of accreditation of prior experiential and certificated learning. It has no mechanisms (for example, "grandparenting") for seeking or gaining exemption from any elements of the process.

As an applicant for STP Equivalence, you must present an analysis of how your learning and experience and demonstrate how these map against the standards required by *GSP*. You are supported in doing this by completing the mapping template (see **Appendix 5**) as part of your portfolio submission.

Remember:

A copy of Good Scientific Practice is available at Equivalence Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

The NSHCS accredited STP curricula can be found at: https://curriculumlibrary.nshcs.org.uk/stp/

Eligibility

As an applicant for STP equivalence, you may hold a variety of relevant qualifications and experience. To apply, you do not need to possess a Master's level qualification. However, the evidence that you present must demonstrate that you have a comparable level of professional knowledge, skills and behaviours to a trainee who successfully completes the STP.

The AHCS does not prescribe a specific amount or length of experience that you must have accrued to demonstrate equivalence to the STP. However, graduates of the STP have completed three years of Master's level (Level 7[1]) education that includes a minimum of 90 weeks of integrated workplace training. It is unlikely that periods of experience that are substantially less than this will provide opportunity to develop the required knowledge, skills and behaviours to demonstrate equivalence.

Holding a specific qualification or job title, or being paid within a particular Agenda for Change band, do not of themselves provide evidence of STP Equivalence.

The AHCS cannot consider applications for Equivalence from former STP students who have failed to graduate with a Certificate of Completion from the National School of Healthcare Science without evidence of further action. If you are in this position, you need to be able to demonstrate that you have taken appropriate remedial action relating to your reasons for failure as an STP student and pursue an application through the STP Equivalence process.

As a guide, you are expected to have completed at least a one-year period of further training/experience to address shortfalls in your learning and development. However, applications are considered on a case-by-case basis.

[1] For further details about the nature of a level 7 qualification, please see the document Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications, published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf

Alternative routes to HCPC registration

The AHCS offers equivalence against the standards set out in Good Scientific Practice and whether you have a comparable breadth of knowledge, skills and behaviours comparable to someone who has completed the relevant accredited STP curriculum approved by the National School of Healthcare Science (https://curriculum.nshcs.org.uk/programmes/stp).

There are two other routes to achieving equivalence that allow you to apply to the HCPC for registration, as a Clinical Scientist in a variety of specialties.

These routes are offered by the following:

- The Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS) – route to 'Clinical Scientist'
- The Institute of Biomedical Sciences (IBMS) – 'Experiential route to HCPC Registration'. https://www.ibms.org/registration/experiential-route-to-hcpc-registration/

If you are fully trained, qualified and working overseas and wish to obtain HCPC registration in the UK as a Clinical Scientist, you should seek information directly from the HCPC on the regulator's international route to registration; ***https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/getting-on-the-register/international-applications/*** **.**

Overview of the STP Equivalence process

Your application for the STP Certificate of Equivalence goes through five stages. Progression from one stage to the next depends on the successful completion of each stage. The process normally takes around six to twelve months depending on demand.

Stage 1: Your initial application

You set up your applicant profile by doing the following:

- **You submit your initial application** to demonstrate your eligibility to go through the process by uploading your initial documentation in line with AHCS requirements (see **Stage 1a, detailed guidance**).
- **You make the payment**.

Following an administrative check

- **You upload your portfolio.**

If you have a disability, as defined under the Equality Act (2010) that you feel may affect your engagement in the application and assessment process, please contact the AHCS Administrators before submitting your application; equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk. Advice on reasonable adjustments can then be given.

Stage 2: Assessment of your portfolio

Your portfolio is reviewed by a specialist assessor and quality assured by a professional assessor/ moderator. The specialist assessor will be from the relevant specialty and will be a registered Clinical Scientist working in the same division as you; for example, Bioinformatics, Physical, Physiological or Life Sciences.

Assessors are asked to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in assessing your portfolio. Alternative arrangements are made for assessment, as appropriate, to manage any potential conflicts of interest.

You are notified of the outcome of the assessment of your portfolio.

Stage 3: Your interview

You are interviewed by a panel of three assessors, with the panel comprising of a specialist assessor, a professional assessor/moderator and one lay assessor. Your interview is normally conducted via video-conferencing[2]. Normally, at least one of your professional assessors will be from the relevant specialty and at least one will be a registered Clinical Scientist who works in the same division. Assessors are asked to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in conducting your interview. Where possible, you are interviewed by the same specialist assessor who reviewed your portfolio.

If you have a disability, as defined under the Equality Act (2010) that you feel may affect your engagement in the application and assessment process, please contact the AHCS Administrators before submitting your application; equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk. Advice on reasonable adjustments can then be given.

Stage 4: Ratification and certification

This stage includes the following:

- The outcome of your interview is ratified.
- You are notified of the outcome.
- The HCPC is notified of the outcome.
- You receive Certification from The Academy if the outcome is one of successful completion.

As a successful applicant, you are eligible to apply to join HCPC's Register as a Clinical Scientist once Stage 4 Ratification has taken place. You do not need to have received a copy of your certificate to apply (see section 5 stage 4).

[2] Currently using Teams: Profession assessors may dial into the Teams session. The lay assessor and applicant must be visible during the interview.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as '*The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own*" (English Oxford Dictionary). It can take the form of submitting someone else's work, word-for-word, as your own; taking significant portions of text from a single source without alterations and without due acknowledgement; and changing key words and phrases, but retaining the essential content of the source, again, without due acknowledgement of the source (Turnitin 2018[4]). The AHCS views plagiarism as both unethical and unprofessional.

The Academy recognises that applicants may follow a similar structure for their portfolio and draw upon a range of material in compiling your evidence. However, any part of your application that requires your original comment or thought must be your own work, with appropriate acknowledgment of sources on which you draw to produce your application. These requirements apply to your personal statement, summary report and supporting evidence.

If instances of plagiarism are suspected or identified in your application, they will be investigated formally by the AHCS and may lead to your application being rejected.

Maintaining confidentiality

Your application for STP equivalence must only include information that it is appropriate for you to share. You must not include any information that compromises patient confidentiality or the confidentiality of another third party (e.g. a colleague).

Just as in other areas of your professional activity, you need to ensure that you do the following:

- Comply with the requirements of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Uphold the trust that patients, colleagues, your employer and the public place in you.
- Demonstrate your fulfilment of *GSP in relation to confidentiality*.

If you draw on material as evidence sources that include others' personal data (e.g. a witness statement) or information that is potentially business-sensitive (e.g. a business case relating to a service development initiative), you must redact all details that could make individuals (patients or colleagues) or a service or organisation identifiable.

If you include any colleague email addresses or other contact details, you must first secure the individuals' permission for this information to be provided and confirm in your portfolio that you have secured their permission.

For information on confidentiality issues, see the HCPC's guidance on confidentiality[5].

For assurance on how the AHCS uses and manages your personal data, please see the Academy's GDPR statement[6].

[4] Turnitin 'Spectrum of Plagiarism' (2018), available at: https://www.turnitin.com/static/plagiarism-spectrum/

[5] https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/meeting-our-standards/guidance-on-confidentiality/

[6] https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/about/about-the-academy/gdpr/

Detailed guidance on each stage of the process

You must make your application online via the AHCS website: **https://app.ahcs.ac.uk/** .

You will receive system-generated emails at various points as you progress through the application process. You are advised to check your 'junk mail" and to set your email rules to seek to ensure that you receive these emails and in a timely manner.

Deadlines are set for each stage of the Equivalence assessment process. You receive notifications of these by email. You must meet these deadlines except in exceptional circumstances; e.g. due to illness. If you wish to seek an extension to a deadline, you must contact equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity.

You can save and return to your application at any point before you make your final submission. You should save your work regularly. Once you click on 'Submit application', you cannot amend any part of your application and it will be processed for assessment.

Stage 1a: Application and payment

Setting up your applicant profile

You need to set up a personal profile on the AHCS online system. Further information on this can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Uploading information and documentation

Once you have selected 'STP Equivalence', you can begin to input the required information and upload the required documentation. The table below provides details about each section that you need to complete.

Personal details Please complete all fields. This includes providing an email address for future contact on your application. You can change the email address that you use for this purpose at any time.
Guidance Please read and confirm that you have read the information in this section about making an application.
Professional Identity Please indicate if you have had or continue to have any previous periods of registration with the AHCS or another health or social care regulatory body, or voluntary registration body or professional body in the UK and/or overseas.

Education and Training

Please complete all fields for all elements of your education and training that you plan to present in your evidence.

If you list education and training elements in this section, please upload a relevant certificate as evidence of completion.

If your most recent or highest academic qualification is not from a UK higher education provider with degree awarding powers, please provide a ENIC (formerly NARIC) Statement of Comparability.

Career Details

Please complete all fields.

Proof of Identity

Please upload documentary evidence as set out below.

- A certified copy of proof of identity (i.e. government-issued photo ID, such as a passport or driving licence).
- You are required to show the original copy of your ID at interview.

A certified copy of your proof of identity must be certified as a true copy of the original by a person of professional standing in the community. This means that the person you ask to certify your document(s) must write on it ***'I certify that this is a true copy of the original document'*** and must sign it and print their name and professional title.

The person certifying your documentation needs to be a professional person (e.g. this can be a statutory-registered healthcare professional, such as an HCPC- or GMC-registered practitioner, or a legal practitioner, such as a solicitor or barrister, or an accountant) or a person of standing in the community.

Examples of the latter include your bank manager; a Justice of the Peace, or other judicial official; a Minister of the Church, Rabbi, Imam or other recognised religious official; a Member of Parliament, Member of Scottish Parliament, Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Member of the Welsh Assembly; or an Officer in HM Armed Forces.

Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Certificate

Please provide a 'Basic' (or enhanced) level DBS check by:

- Uploading a scanned copy of your DBS check; or
- Evidence that your employer has checked your DBS status and confirmed no change has occurred since a certificate was issued.

If you do not have a valid DBS check and your employer cannot provide the necessary confirmation, you can request a basic disclosure from the UK Government (https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record).

If you are an International Applicant and unable to provide a DBS check, please contact the AHCS for advice.

Professional References

Please provide two professional references, one of which must be from your current or most recent employer (see **Appendix 4** below)

Change of Name

Please provide certified evidence of any change in name.

If your change of name is detailed on a certified copy of an AHCS Certificate of Attainment from a UK-approved PTP degree programme or a Certificate of Equivalence from AHCS PTP Equivalence Programme, then you do not need to provide further evidence other than a copy of your AHCS Certificate.

English Language proficiency

If you are **not a UK citizen**, please provide one of the following:

- A scanned copy of certification to demonstrate either your achievement within the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) of an overall score of 7.0, with no individual element below 6.5, or your achievement within the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Internet Based Test of a minimum score of 100/120.
- A certified declaration that English is your first language.
- Evidence of successfully completing an undergraduate or postgraduate degree awarded by UK higher education provider (with degree awarding powers), with confirmation that the admissions criteria for this aware were the same as the English language proficiency requirements set out in the first bullet point above.

Good character and Health

Please state if you have a physical or mental health condition(s) that could impair your fitness to practise as a clinical scientist.

If you indicate that you have such a condition, your application will be reviewed by a senior member of the AHCS, in line with the Academy's fitness to practise requirements. You may be asked to provide further information in order that full are fair consideration can be given to your application in this area.

Personal Statement

Your personal statement should provide a summary of your professional experience. It must not exceed 1000 words.

Your statement should provide the following:

- A description of your previous experience and the duties that you have undertaken.
- A summary of your past and current research activity (including a list of relevant publications) and/or involvement in audit or service development projects.
- The names, qualifications (including professional registration) and contact information of two individuals who can verify the veracity and currency of your Personal Statement, at least one of whom should be on a professional register. These individuals will be invited through the system to verify your personal statement. Your personal statement must be verified by both individuals and the administrative checks completed successfully before you can continue with your application.
- Sufficient detail to account for your experience and supervised training in preparation for meeting the duties and responsibilities of a clinical scientist.

Declarations

Please read and tick the box if you are willing to affirm the declarations.

Equality Monitoring Information

This section of the application form **does not** form part of the assessment process.

You do not have to disclose your details, but please ensure that you select the option *'I do not wish to disclose'* if this is the case.

Payment

You need to make payment using the AHCS's secure payment system. This is run by the third-party service provider GoCardless.

You will be asked to set up a Direct Debit. However, this is for a single payment of the application fee.

The application fee for the STP Equivalence programme can be found at https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/the-register/for-healthcare-scientists/registration-fees/

Complete Application

When you have provided all the information/documentation required, click 'Submit application'.

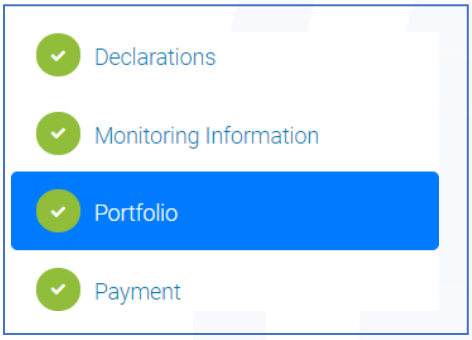
An administrative check is undertaken once you have uploaded your documentation and paid the administration fee. You may be contacted if you have not provided all the information required.

Stage 1b: Uploading your portfolio

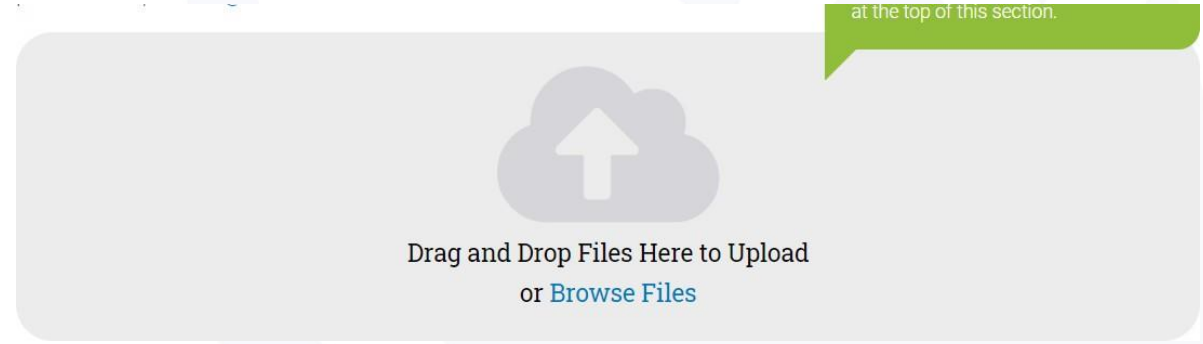
You can upload your portfolio content once you have gone through Stage 1a. From this point, you have six months to complete and submit your portfolio.

This section explains the information that you need to supply in your portfolio. Further information on evidence types is provided in Appendix 3.

A 'portfolio' button will appear on your application dashboard. You should click on



You can then drag and drop files or browse file to upload them into this section.



The content of your portfolio

The portfolio is your opportunity to demonstrate the following:

- You put patients at the centre of your practice even if your role is not patient facing.

  Examples of non-patient facing roles include working in Bioinformatics, Biomedical Sciences or Clinical Engineering, where your role directly impacts on the care and welfare of the patient, but may not involve direct, face-to-face contact with patients. Gaining experience within multi-disciplinary teams, shadowing clinical colleagues and reflecting on how your role improves patient outcomes can all provide strong evidence for the Clinical Domain in your portfolio submission.

- You have undertaken an adequate period of supervised training in the duties and responsibilities commensurate with those of a clinical scientist.

- Your knowledge, skills and behaviours that you have achieved through your education and working experience meet the standards of *GSP* and are comparable to those of someone who successfully completes an NSHCS-accredited Scientist Training Programme.

- You have reflected on your training and experience and how your learning and practice have developed through this process.
- You are aware of all relevant legislation, the risks involved in working in healthcare environments, and approaches to risk management and mitigation to uphold the health and safety of all parties.

The evidence in your portfolio must support your summary of your experience and demonstrate how you meet the standards in each GSP domain and the outcomes of the relevant curriculum.

The structure of your portfolio

Your portfolio should comprise the following:

- A contents list
- A summary of your relevant training and experience (see **Section 5**)
- Your completed *GSP* Mapping Template[7].
- Your supporting evidence for each standard. You can use a single piece of evidence to support more than one standard. However, you should also ensure that your supporting evidence has a suitable variety and breadth (see ***Appendix 3*** for more guidance on this).
- A reflective account describing; *why becoming a Clinical Scientist is important to you and importantly how you have demonstrated that you made the patient your first concern during the Equivalence process.* This reflective piece should be no longer than 500 words and should be submitted as a piece of evidence in the Appendix to protect word count.

Presenting your portfolio

Your portfolio is assessed electronically. It is therefore best if you upload your portfolio as a single pdf document. The AHCS's system allows for a maximum of three documents to be uploaded if you are not able to upload your material as a single pdf.

Your portfolio must fulfil the requirements set out below.

- Be your own work, with any input from others duly acknowledged (see the section above on **plagiarism)**.
- Be no longer than 150 pages in total.

  Portfolios that are fewer than 60 pages are unlikely to contain sufficient evidence. Portfolios over 150 pages will be returned to the applicant.
- Use a font size for text of 12 point.

[7] A blank mapping template (Word version) can be found at: Equivalence Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

- Include page numbers, clearly labelled evidence in your Appendix and consider numbering each paragraph to help the mapping process.
- Must not include any confidential data, such as a patient's name, date of birth, address

  If such information is included, the portfolio will be rejected by the assessment panel and returned to the applicant (see section above on **Maintaining confidentiality**).
- Must not include 'photo-reduced' or resized certificates or other evidence to fit more than one to a page.
- Provide certified translations of any evidence that is not in English.

Summary report of your training and experience

Your summary report must meet the requirements set out below.

- You should write a reflective statement of no more than 500 words describing *why becoming a Clinical Scientist is important to you and importantly how you have demonstrated that you made the patient your first concern during the Equivalence process.* This reflective piece should be no longer than 500 words and may be submitted as evidence in the Appendix to protect word count.
- Provide information on your relevant training and experience; past and current research (include a list of relevant publications if applicable),your involvement in audit, quality assurance, service development projects etc.
- Clearly set out how you meet the standards within the GSP domains and signpost assessors to your relevant supporting evidence for how you meet each standard. Note: Assessors should **not** have to do the mapping for you or have to search for the evidence within the portfolio on your behalf. You should cite the evidence throughout the summary report from the mapping document. The mapping document should also include the location of the evidence in the Appendix. If your portfolio is poorly organised and difficult to follow, the assessor can recommend an outcome 2 (see below) and the portfolio will be returned to you for further work. The assessor will provide feedback to guide you as to what changes are required
- Include your reflection on how your activities and training have contributed to your fulfilment of the standards and competences required of a Clinical Scientist.
- Be well structured and straightforward to read.
- Not exceed 5000 words.
- It is recommended that the paragraphs in your summary are numbered.
- Remember your summary report is individual to you

Good Scientific Practice mapping template

You must upload your completed *GSP* mapping template (see **Appendix 5**).

You should list your evidence against each standard in the *GSP* domains to demonstrate that you hold the knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the *GSP* standards as a Clinical Scientist.

In completing your *GSP* mapping template, you also need to consider the learning outcomes in the relevant STP curriculum. You need to seek to ensure that the evidence you provide helps your assessors to be assured that your learning and development has equivalence with someone successfully completing an accredited STP programme. This is where reflection really adds to the quality of your evidence.

Your supporting evidence

Your evidence must be clearly labelled and show that you have personally carried out activity in key areas or practice, and not just observed activity being done. Statements just indicating your attendance or participation in activity on their own are not sufficient. You must also provide a brief reflective description of how specific elements of your experience have helped you to develop and achieve a particular standard, and where you have identified that you may have additional learning and development needs.

You should take care to ensure that your evidence is well selected, of high quality, and only includes information that it is appropriate for you provide. In particular, you should bear in mind the following points:

- You do not need to provide a detailed, day-to-day training diary or logbook.
- You should not provide the full text of any published work, report, thesis, project or essay. Instead, you should provide summaries of your evidence. As examples, an executive summary or an abstract is appropriate if your evidence is a published report or article for which you are an author.
- You should not include certificates of attendance for every meeting in which you have been involved. Well selected evidence of attendance with reflection on the benefits of attending the meeting is good quality evidence of CPD.
- You should only provide information on activity that has directly contributed to providing evidence of how you have met a *GSP* standard(s).

Appendix 3 provides more detailed guidance on the types of evidence to include to demonstrate equivalence within the individual *GSP* domains.

A common comment from assessors is that applicants' evidence does not demonstrate a sufficient breadth of experience, knowledge and skills at a Theme level[8], but focuses solely on the specialist content of the STP programme. Looking at the rotation (as well as the specialist) modules is helpful.

You are not required to demonstrate the practical skills expected in the rotation modules. However, you should be able to demonstrate the equivalent knowledge and understanding and that you have had exposure to the area. In this instance, shadowing is an appropriate activity to evidence. You need to describe the insights and understanding that shadowing has given you and include your critical reflections on these. Your reflective piece should synthesise your description of your activity and the benefits you have distilled from your activity in terms of your learning and development.

Remember:

- ***Your portfolio needs to evidence how you meet the GSP and directly relate to the learning outcomes of the relevant STP curriculum.***
- ***You should write a reflective statement of no more than 500 words, describing the importance of achieving registration as a Clinical Scientist (you may add this to your Appendix to help with word count).***
- ***You need to include high-quality, clearly labelled evidence that includes your critical reflection on your experience and professional development, in line with the demands of Master's level learning.***
- ***You can save and return to your application at any point before you finally submit it.***
- ***You should save your work regularly.***
- ***Once you click 'Submit application', you cannot make any further amendments or additions to your application.***
- ***If you need further help, save your work and contact equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk .***
- ***You are limited to resubmit your portfolio a maximum of three times.***

[8] Blood Sciences, Cardiac, Critical Care, Vascular, Respiratory and Sleep Sciences, Cellular Sciences, Clinical Bioinformatics, Clinical Engineering, Clinical Pharmaceutical Sciences, Gastrointestinal Physiology and Urodynamic Science, Genomic Sciences, Infection Sciences, Medical Physics, Neurosensory Sciences, Reconstructive Science.

Stage 2: Assessment of your portfolio

Your assessment panel

Assessors are appointed from the AHCS's pool of professional and lay assessors.

Normally, the panel for portfolio stage comprises two professional assessors. The professional assessor will be from the relevant specialty and will be a registered Clinical Scientist, the other member of the panel will be a professional assessor/moderator

Assessors are asked to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to each assessment, with appropriate action taken to ensure that each application is fairly assessed.

All applications for STP Equivalence are assessed against the standards set out in *Good Scientific Practice (GSP)*[9] no matter the specialty or role. As an applicant, you must satisfy the assessors that you have provided sufficient evidence of the knowledge, skills, and behaviours associated with *GSP* at the clinical scientist level.

Assessors review your portfolio in terms of your *GSP* mapping template, summary report and supporting evidence. They first assess whether your evidence demonstrates that you have met all the domains of the *GSP*; i.e. professional practice, scientific practice, clinical practice, research and development and innovation, and clinical leadership.

Assessors also consider whether you have the comparable breadth of knowledge, skills and behaviours as someone who has successfully completed the relevant NSHCS accredited STP curriculum[10].

Possible outcomes of Stage 2

After assessors have reviewed your portfolio, they recommend one of the following three possible outcomes:

Outcome 1: You should progress to the interview stage (**Stage 3**).

Outcome 2: You need to supply more evidence (see below).

Outcome 3: Your application is rejected.

You are informed of the outcome. If the outcome is either that you need to provide more evidence or your application is rejected, you receive feedback.

If you need to provide further evidence, you can submit this either as a separate document or as clearly highlighted additions to your portfolio. This enables your new evidence to be reviewed by your assessors to determine whether it meets their information needs.

[9] Good Scientific Practice can be found at Equivalence Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

[10] Available at https://curriculumlibrary.nshcs.org.uk/stp/

Stage 3: Your interview

The purpose of your interview is to use generic and specialist questions and scenarios to do the following:

- Confirm your knowledge, skills and behaviours and how you apply them in the workplace setting.
- Ensure that you meet the standards set out in *GSP*.
- Ensure that your knowledge, skills and behaviours are comparable to someone who has successfully completed the NSHCS-accredited Scientist Training Programme.

The assessment panel comprises of a Specialist assessor, a professional assessor/moderator and one lay assessor. The lay assessor chairs the panel and your interview.

Your interview is normally conducted via video-conferencing[11], although there may be instances where an assessor uses tele-conference. Your interview is scheduled for 60 minutes. It usually lasts between 40 and 60 minutes. You may have access to your portfolio should you or the assessors wish to discuss particular area/s during the interview. However, it is not appropriate to have crib sheets or notes which would give you any unfair advantages.

Assessors usually each ask you a number of questions, some of which are scenarios, relating to each of the *GSP* domains. They take notes while you answer. And you may also write down the question if you feel this will help you provide a structured answer. Your interview is to confirm your specialist knowledge, skills and behaviours as you have described in your portfolio as related to the learning outcomes of the curriculum and to your job description. Use of artificial intelligence or other online material to create your response is strictly prohibited. At the end of your interview, the panel chair gives you the opportunity to comment. After this, you are asked to leave your virtual interview.

You are strongly advised to conduct a 'test-call' with the Equivalence Administrator ahead of your interview to ensure you are comfortable with engaging with the technical arrangements and you can resolve any practical difficulties. You are sent details of how to book a test-call in a system-generated email. This also provides information on the video-conference system used for interviews.

If you have any queries about using the video-conference system, please contact equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk

There should be no contact between applicant and assessor by social media or any other means for the entirety of the application, it is considered a breach of conduct and a conflict of interest to do so.

[11] We currently use Teams Note, professional assessors may dial into the meeting. The lay assessor and applicant must be visible during the interview.

Possible outcomes of Stage 3

Assessors can recommend one of the outcomes itemised below.

Outcome 1: You have demonstrated equivalence and should be awarded the STP Certificate of Equivalence.

Outcome 2: You may be able to demonstrate equivalence, but further evidence is required.

Outcome 3: You have not demonstrated equivalence.

If **Outcome 2** is awarded, you receive feedback on the areas in which further evidence is required. This can include that you need to secure some additional experience and/or undertake some further training before resubmitting your application. You will be given instructions regarding a timeline to undertake this.

In this scenario, you are usually invited to a second interview. The cost of this is currently covered by your initial fee. Any subsequent interviews may require payment of an additional fee. Applicants can only have a maximum of three interviews per application.

Where **Outcome 3** is awarded, you are advised of the action that you need to take. This may include undertaking a full Scientist Training Programme. If you wish to apply for STP Equivalence again, you must submit a new application and pay the fees again.

Stage 4: Ratification and certification

All STP Equivalence outcomes require ratification by the AHCS's Education, Training and Standards Committee before they can be released. Once ratification has taken place, you are notified of this by email. Shortly after that, you will be able to access your STP Certificate of Equivalence through the AHCS system.

If you are awarded Outcome 1, the HCPC is advised of this, and you are eligible to apply to register with the HCPC as a Clinical Scientist.

It normally takes the HCPC up to 10 working days to process applications for registration and update its register. You do **not** need to have received a copy of your STP Certificate of Equivalence to apply to join HCPC's register[12].

[12] Further details about how to apply to the HCPC can be found at http://www.hpc-uk.org/apply/

Complaints and appeals

The AHCS has mechanisms to ensure that applicants, assessors, staff and the public have the opportunity to participate fully in the development and improvement of services. It is expected that all parties are able to take full advantage of these to provide the AHCS with feedback.

There may be occasions when applicants feel that they have received or been offered insufficient feedback as they progress through the application process. For this reason, the AHCS has a complaints procedure. This should be used if applicants believe that informal attempts to resolve the matter with the AHCS have not been successful. Information about the complaints procedure can be found at https://documents.ahcs.ac.uk/storage/151/-039-AHCS-Appeals-and-Complaints-Process-for-Equivalence-Applications-v1.0-November-2023.pdf

Applicants can also appeal outcome decisions if they reasonably believe that they have experienced a procedural or administrative irregularity during the STP Equivalence process. Appeals against the judgements of assessors, ratification decisions or other decisions made by the Education, Training and Professional Standards Committee cannot be considered.

Appeals must be made within 28 calendar days of receipt of the outcome decision. Appeals are considered by a dedicated Appeals Panel. The panel may undertake an investigation on the matters raised in the appeal, including by requesting written statements or interviews, as deemed appropriate. The Appeals Panel then summarises their determination in a report. The report is provided to the applicant and assessors and is retained on file by AHCS. The judgements of Appeals Panels are final.

The AHCS appeals policy can be found on the AHCS website: Equivalence Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science (ahcs.ac.uk)

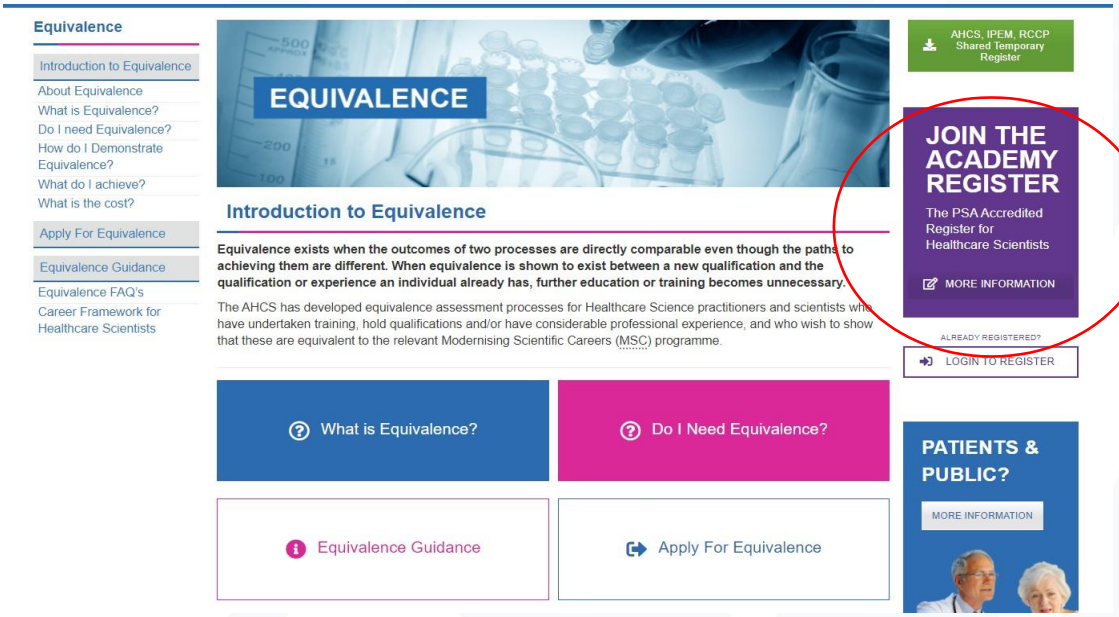
Appendix 1: Abbreviations used in this guidance.

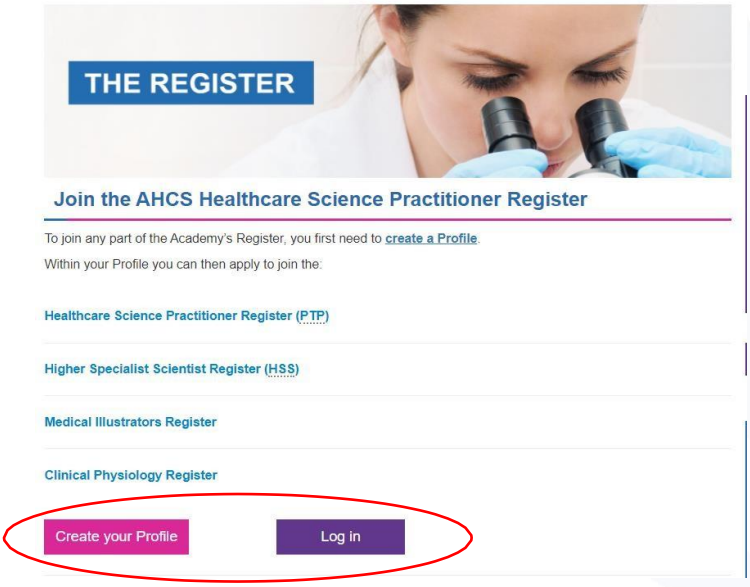
AHCS	Academy for Healthcare Science
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
ENIC	UK National Information Centre
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GSP	Good Scientific Practice
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
HCS	Healthcare Science
IELTS	International English Language Test System
MDT	Multi-disciplinary teams
NSHCS	National School of Healthcare Science
PDP	Personal development plan
STP	Scientist Training Programme
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language

Appendix 2: Setting up your applicant profile

To progress your application, you need to create a personal profile on the AHCS online system. The guidance below explains how to do this.

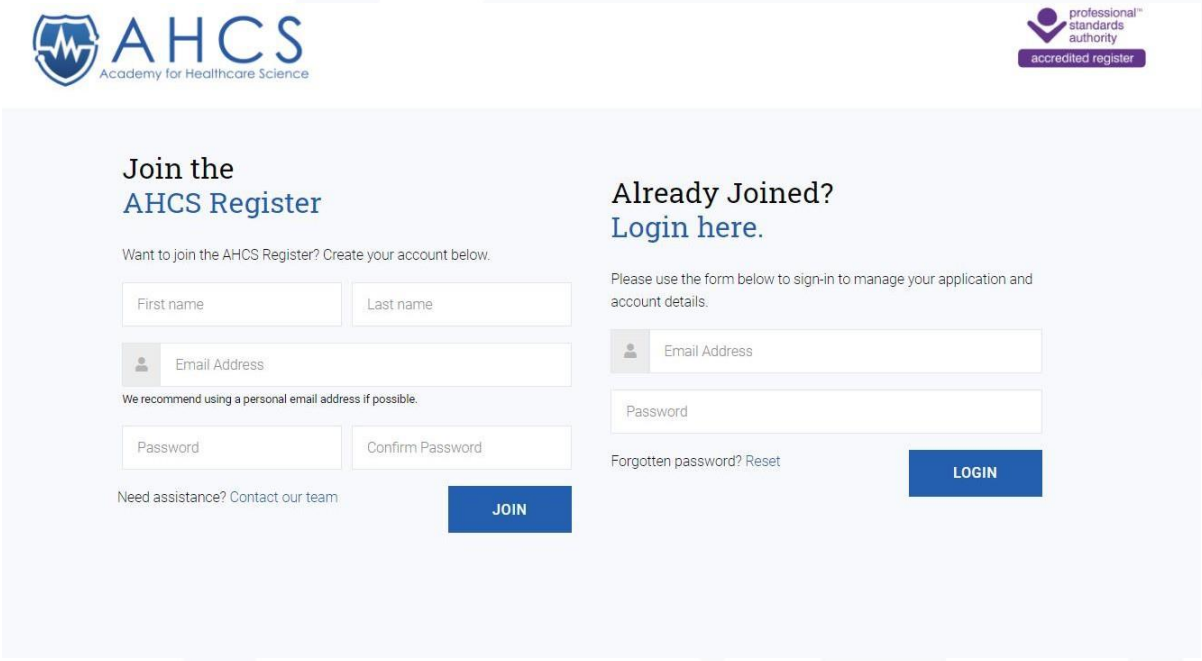
1. Go to the Academy's Equivalence webpage https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/ .
2. Click Join the Register.



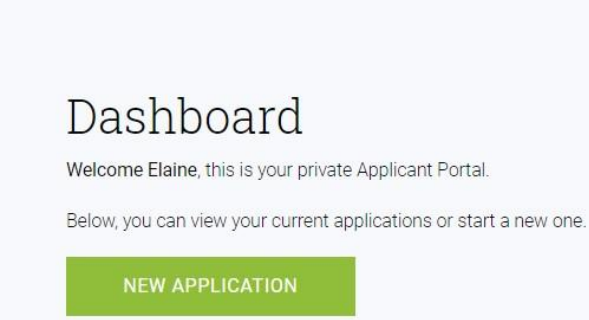


3. Click on 'Create your profile' or 'log in' if you already have an account.

4. Once your details are registered and verified, you can log in and complete your application (see below).



5. Once you have signed in for the first time, you can gain access to your private applicant portal. To do this, you need to click on 'New Application' and select 'STP Equivalence'.



6. You can work through the menu provided in any order to add information and upload your documentation, as directed.

Remember:

- **You can save and return to your application at any point before you finally submit it.**
- **You should save your work regularly.**
- **Once you have clicked 'Submit', you cannot amend or add to your application.**
- **If you need help in uploading your information, save your work and contact equivalence@ahcs.ac.uk.**

Appendix 3: Additional guidance on compiling your evidence

The table below sets out examples of the kinds of evidence that you may submit to support your STP Equivalence application. The list is not exhaustive. It provides examples and is intended purely as guidance. You may submit more, less information or different types of information for each domain of GSP. You can use any one piece of evidence to support your application in relation to more than one domain or standard. However, you are expected to provide more than one piece of evidence for each domain. Remember to include a reflective statement of no more than 500 words describing the importance of achieving registration as a Clinical Scientist (you may add this to your Appendix to help with word count).

Domains of Good Scientific Practice	
Domain	**Examples of evidence**
1. Professional Practice	• Personal references • Health reference • Your CPD records • Your appraisal forms • Your PDP and/or reflective log signed by a senior scientist • Outputs from multi-source feedback relating to your practice and development • Your participation in MDTs • Minutes that demonstrate your participation in team meetings • Your professional body activity • Your engagement with Trust policies • Your understanding of Statutory Regulatory Body standards and processes and the responsibilities that these impart on registrants • Evidence of training that you have delivered • Feedback you have received on delivering training sessions • Information on how you conduct supervisory meetings with trainees • Witness statements Patient information or training information that you have developed or to which you have made a contribution.

2. Scientific Practice	• Evidence of your scientific and technical practice against the STP programme outcomes • Clinical experiential learning in the appropriate curriculum and the domains in GSP • Your critical analysis of the evidence that you submit • Shadowing and critical reflection • Reports on your placements or secondments • Annotated diagrams • Project reports, with an indication of your specific involvement and contribution • Attendance at training and your reflections of the impact of that training on your learning and practice Case studies • Your review and development of standard operating procedures • Your participation in audit • Your participation in appropriate quality management systems Incident forms and reflection on your learning points from incidents
3. Clinical Practice	• Evidence of your clinical practice against the programme outcomes • Your clinical experiential learning in the appropriate curriculum and the domains in GSP • Your critical analysis of your evidence of the above • Case studies relating to your practice • Evidence of your clinical advice/interpretation to clinical staff • Examples of your reports Examples of witness statements.

4. Research, Development and Innovation	• Evidence of how you have undertaken and disseminated research, service development or innovation • Your participation in service developments • Your published reports • Your critical appraisal of research literature and its application in your practice • Your peer-reviewed publications • Your presentations/posters at conferences and scientific meetings • Your specific research training, such as the NIHR module Good Clinical Practice Undertaking a research degree (MPhil, MRes, PhD or Professional Doctorate)
5. Scientific and Clinical Leadership	• Personal and employer references • Output from multi-source feedback on your approach and development • CV • Witness statements • Project reports, with an indication of your specific involvement and contribution • Business cases, with clarity on your role and contribution to producing these

Appendix 4: Guidance for referees

You are expected to share this guidance with your referees before they write a reference for you.

Your STP Equivalence application must be accompanied by two professional references. These should normally be supplied by individuals who have acted as your supervisor or manager. At least one of the references must be from your current or most recent employment.

In preparing a reference, referees will find it helpful to review the following:

- The domains of Good Scientific Practice (GSP)
    - Domain 1: Professional practice
    - Domain 2: Scientific practice
    - Domain 3: Clinical practice
    - Domain 4: Research, development and innovation
    - Domain 5: Clinical leadership
- A copy of the relevant Scientist Training Programme (STP) curriculum.

Applicants are assessed against the standards set out in the GSP domains, in the context of the STP Training curriculum for their particular specialty. Applicants need to provide evidence of their clinical competence and a level of specialist scientific knowledge that is commensurate with successfully completing a relevant NSHSC accredited Scientist Training Programme.

Line managers (or other appropriate senior colleague) providing a reference are asked to confirm the following:

- The applicant's current duties and responsibilities.
- That the applicant has undergone an appropriate/adequate period of supervised training in the duties and responsibilities of a clinical scientist and/or is working at the appropriate clinical scientist level.

All referees are asked to confirm the following:

- The capacity in which they are writing the reference for the applicant; for example, as a line manager, supervisor, or colleague.
- How long they have known the applicant.
- Their understanding of the applicant's professional abilities, skills, knowledge and competences.
- Whether they support the application.

Referees should write on headed note paper and must provide the following information about themselves:

- Their highest educational and professional qualifications, current position and place of work.
- Their position and place of work when the applicant was working with them.
- Their HCPC/GMC registration number, if applicable.
- Contact details, including email, in case more information is needed.

Reference must be provided on official headed paper from the referee's employing organisation.

Completed references should be sent to the applicant to upload onto the AHCS system. There is no need for referees to liaise with the AHCS directly.

Appendix 5: Good Scientific Practice (2021) Mapping Template

Note - all new Equivalence applicants from 1 September 2021 should refer to the revised GSP. From this date, STP Equivalence applicants must map their evidence to the GSP 2021 standards, using the mapping template available on the Academy's website; https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/equivalence/equivalence-guidance/

Please indicate where the evidence for each standard is in your portfolio. If it is in your summary report, please indicate the paragraph number; if it is a piece of evidence, please give the evidence number. This template is for illustrative purposes only, please use the latest template found on AHCS website; *Evidence Mapping Template*

Domain 1: Professional Practice

1.1 Patient-centred care		***Evidence Location***
1.1.1	You put patients first and do the following: - Act in the interests of patients' safety and well-being at all times. - Fulfil your duty of care if you have a concern about a patient's safety. - Fulfil your duty of candour if something goes wrong in a patient's care. - Adhere to safeguarding requirements and uphold the interests of vulnerable individuals in how you deliver care.	For example Paragraph 1, Appendix a, c, g
1.1.2	You treat patients and their carers as individuals and do the following: - Champion equality, diversity and inclusion in how you address individual needs and contribute to service delivery. - Share information with patients and their carers to support engagement in their care and shared decision-making about their care. - Respect individuals' rights, autonomy, values, beliefs and wishes about how they engage in diagnostic and therapeutic processes while in your care. - Maintain patients' dignity in how you deliver care.	

1.1.3	You respect patients' privacy and only use and disclose confidential information about their care in accordance with legal, ethical and data protection requirements.	

1.1.4	You support patients and the public to promote and manage their own health and well-being.	
1.2 Scope of practice		***Evidence location***
1.2.1	You take responsibility for the following: - Understanding and engaging with your scope of practice, your personal competence and the parameters of your job role (recognising that these may be different, and each will change, as you develop and service needs change). - Your decisions and actions (and inactions) and explaining and justifying these when required to do so. - Working within your current scope of practice, competence and job role. - Being clear to others about the nature of your roles and responsibilities. - Identifying and taking appropriate action when a potential activity or area of decision-making falls outside your scope of practice and competence.	
1.2.2	You engage in continuing professional development (CPD) and do the following: - Maintain and develop your knowledge, understanding and skills in line with your practice and role, including in response to changes in patient need, the evidence base, technological advances and service delivery requirements. - Identifying when planned changes to your job role or your broader plans for developing your career create CPD needs. - Keep a structured record of your CPD activity to evidence how you maintain and update your knowledge, understanding and skills in line with changing needs in patient care, service delivery and your job role. - Adhere to the specific CPD requirements of your regulatory and/or professional body.	

1.2.3	You engage with individual, team and service performance review and audit processes, including by doing the following: - Responding constructively to the outcomes of specific processes. - Engaging in emergent learning and development activities to enhance individual and team performance, service delivery and patient care.	

1.3 Communications		*Evidence location*
1.3.1	You listen to patients, carers, service users and colleagues to understand their needs, preferences and requests and take account of non-verbal cues to inform how you communicate and respond.	
1.3.2	You communicate in ways that take account of the needs of your intended audience, adapting how you present information to seek to achieve relevance and clarity and to aid understanding.	
1.3.3	You have appropriate English language proficiency and communication skills to provide the required standard of service delivery and care in the UK.	
1.3.4	You complete accurate, legible and contemporary records of your activity and comply with legal and workplace requirements and protocols for safe record-keeping and storage.	
1.3.5	You use communication formats and channels (spoken, written and digital, and including social media and online networking platforms) in appropriate, professional ways.	
1.3.6	You produce materials about your service and professional activity that do the following: - Present clear, accurate information in a format appropriate for the target audience (e.g. patients, carers or other healthcare professionals). - Provide clarity on when you are giving advice or expressing a professional opinion and the basis and parameters of this. - Comply with relevant legal, ethical and professional requirements and codes, including those relating to advertising, presenting research data, and writing for publication	

1.4 Professional responsibilities		*Evidence location*
1.4.1	You engage with the standards of conduct and behaviour set by your regulatory and/or professional body.	
1.4.2	You act as an ambassador for healthcare science, behaving and conducting yourself in ways that uphold the profession's reputation and reflect the trust that the public, patients, employers and colleagues place in the profession.	
1.4.3	You declare anything that could create a conflict of interest in your professional and workplace activity and are transparent in how you exercise and share your professional opinion in different contexts.	
1.4.4	You have appropriate indemnity cover (recognising) that this may be provided by your employer) for your activity as a healthcare scientist, including for any activity that you undertake outside your primary job role.	
1.4.5	You engage and co-operate promptly, fully and honestly in complaints and investigation processes, including the following, as the need arises: - The complaints and fitness to practise policies and procedures of your employer, regulatory and/or professional body. - An investigation into a complaint made about your own conduct or competence. - An investigation into others' conduct or competence if you are invited to input to the process.	
1.4.6	You declare any matter relating to your health, character or conduct to your employer, regulatory and/or professional body, in line their requirements, that has the potential to do the following: - Affect or impede your capacity to practise safely and effectively. - Put others' health and safety at risk. - Undermine the trust and confidence placed in you as a healthcare scientist.	
1.4.7	You take appropriate steps if you identify that a patient, their carer or a colleague poses a risk to your own or others' health and safety, including by making alternative arrangements for patient care, if required, to avoid fulfilment of need being compromised.	

1.5 Working with others		*Evidence location*
1.5.1	You work with colleagues in your workplace and representatives of other organisations, engaging in multi-disciplinary team-working and inter-agency collaboration to meet patient needs safely, effectively and efficiently.	
1.5.2	You use available resources, including others' time and expertise, efficiently and judiciously to optimise the quality and efficacy of patient care and service delivery.	
1.5.3	You contribute to others' learning and development in line with your scope of practice, competence and job role, and engage with the importance of being a competent educator as an integral component of your role as a healthcare scientist.	
1.5.4	You undertake safe, effective supervision of junior colleagues and trainees, including by doing the following: - Engaging with the responsibilities that you retain when you delegate activity to others. - Satisfying yourself that the colleague to whom you plan to delegate a specific activity has the knowledge, understanding and skills to undertake it safely and effectively - Checking that the colleague understands their role and responsibilities in enacting the planned delegated activity, including relating to informed consent and raising any concerns about patient safety. - Checking that the colleague knows how to seek advice, if required, once undertaking the delegated activity. - Providing appropriate levels of guidance, support and intervention to maintain patients' and others' safety through the specific delegation arrangements that you put in place. - Keeping delegation arrangements under review and modifying them if this is needed to uphold safe patient care and effective service delivery.	

1.5.5	You arrange with your line manager for essential elements of your roles and responsibilities to be covered during periods of planned absence, including by - Contributing to handover to colleagues who have the scope of practice and competence to undertake activities in your place of you. - Adhering to your workplace's business continuity arrangements.	

Domain 2: Scientific Practice

2.1 Data and reporting		*Evidence location*
2.1.1	You undertake investigations and/or therapy, including by doing the following: - Adhering to up-to-date standard operating procedures. - Using appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods in how you undertake activities relating to screening, diagnosis, prognosis, monitoring and/or treatment of disease, disorders and normal states of health. - Using appropriate methods and approaches to analyse information.	
2.1.2	You report on investigations and/or therapy that you undertake in a timely manner, presenting information on your activity, analysis and findings in a clear and succinct format.	
2.1.3	You develop investigative strategies, procedures and processes, taking account of relevant clinical and other sources of information and evidence-based practice.	
2.1.4	You interpret and critically evaluate data to inform the following: - Your decision-making. - Your development of action plans. - Your advice and recommendations to others on further investigations, screening and management options.	
2.1.5	You provide scientific advice to do the following: - Inform the safe, effective delivery of services. - Support your colleagues' clinical decision-making relating to individual patients	

2.2 Technical proficiency		*Evidence location*
2.2.1	You develop and maintain your technical proficiency, in line with your scope of practice, competence and job role, including to do the following: - Use instruments, equipment and methodologies. - Gather, measure, generate and analyse data. - Engage and comply with current best practice in how you select and use available, relevant instruments and equipment. - Provide technical advice to others to ensure the safe and effective delivery of services.	
2.2.2	You engage with health and safety requirements and do the following: - Adhere to relevant legislation. - Comply with health and safety protocols and requirements in your workplace. - Actively participate in regular mandatory health and safety training. - Remain up-to-date changes to health and safety protocols. - Escalate a health and safety issue either that you identify or to which you are alerted that poses a risk or actual hazard to yourself and/or others.	
2.2.3	You follow all relevant health and safety procedures in your day- to-day practice, including by doing the following: - Selecting and correctly using and disposing of appropriate personal protective equipment to ensure your safe contact with and use of specimens, raw materials, clinical and special waste, equipment, ionisation, radiation and electricity. - Using correct methods of disinfection, sterilisation and decontamination. - Dealing with waste and spillages correctly	

2.2.4	You engage with information and communications technology (ICT), including by doing the following: - Maintaining your ICT knowledge, understanding and skills to perform your role safely, efficiently and effectively. - Keeping up to date with ICT developments and advances that have the potential to enhance service delivery and patient care.	

2.3 Quality assurance		*Evidence location*
2.3.1	You maintain an effective audit trail of your activity, adhering to local protocols and practices.	
2.3.2	You participate in quality assurance processes as an integral part of service delivery, including regular and systematic audit and service evaluation exercises.	
2.3.3	You actively engage in risk assessment, management and mitigation activities.	
2.3.4	You contribute to enacting, reviewing and updating service delivery processes and procedures to uphold patient, servicer user and public safety, in line with your scope of practice, competence and job role and informed by current best practice.	
2.3.5	You set, maintain and/or apply quality standards, control and assurance measures for service delivery, with a focus on the following: - Maintaining and demonstrating the delivery of safe, effective patient care. - Identifying the need for restorative action to address deficiencies in service delivery. - Identifying opportunities for quality improvement.	

Domain 3: Clinical Practice

3.1 Clinical activity		*Evidence location*
3.1.1	You obtain informed consent from individual parties (patients, or their carer, service users or other appropriate authorities) before you do the following: - Undertake an investigation or examination. - Provide treatment. - Involve individuals in teaching or research activity.	
3.1.2	You understand and engage with the significance of your actions, findings and advice for informing others' clinical decisions about individual patients' care.	
3.1.3	You provide clinical analysis and advice appropriate to your specialty, including by planning and progressing investigative strategies and clinical protocols to optimise diagnosis, monitoring and therapy of patients with a range of disorders.	

3.1.4	You interpret and advise on complex and/or specialist data in the context of the clinical question being posed, your scope of practice and role, including by providing the following: - The results obtained through your investigation or examination. - Your analysis and interpretation of the results. - The basis of your diagnostic or therapeutic opinion or advice, including any caveats to this. - The relevance of your findings for informing further decision-making and actions on the part of the responsible clinician. - The wider implications for optimising the efficiency and effectiveness of clinical investigations for individual patients or groups of patients.	
3.1.5	You monitor and report on individual patients' condition, progress and prognosis.	
3.1.6	You refer patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional or service, ensuring that you do the following: - Put individual patients' needs and safety first. - Recognise when elements of patient care sit outside your scope of practice, competence and job role.	
3.1.7	You represent the work of your team in multi-disciplinary clinical meetings, including to inform discussion on patient outcomes, service delivery and service evaluation.	
3.2 Clinical investigation and therapeutics		***Evidence location***
3.2.1	You undertake detailed clinical or psycho-social assessments, investigations or analysis, including by doing the following: - Using appropriate techniques and equipment. - Accurately and fully recording the nature and results of your assessments. - Regularly reviewing the outcomes of assessments, including in partnership with patients	
3.2.2	You plan, decide and advise on clinical or scientific investigations or products to meet patients' diagnostic, predictive, therapeutic, rehabilitative and/or treatment needs, taking account of all relevant information that is available to you and in appropriate consultation and partnership with others.	
3.2.3	You undertake a quality-assured approach to investigations and designing products and procedures as an integral part of your contribution to the following: - Screening. - Diagnoses. - Treatments. - Contribution to care-planning, management and rehabilitation.	
3.2.4	You prioritise the delivery of investigations, interventions, services and treatments based on your informed understanding of individual patients' clinical need.	

3.2.5	You advise colleagues on using technologies, investigative processes and interventions to inform, progress and monitor individual patients' care.	
3.2.6	You share all relevant information with colleagues involved in individual patients' care, ensuring adherence to legal and ethical requirements relating to confidential and sensitive personal data, when you do the following: - Delegate or refer care to colleagues in your team/service. - Refer patients to other health or social care providers.	

Domain 4: Research, Development and Innovation

4.1 Research activity		*Evidence location*
4.1.1	You contribute to an active research culture, in keeping with your scope of practice and job role, by doing the following: - Engaging in evidence-led practice. - Managing and/or participating in research activity. - Encouraging and engaging in debate on research and its development and application in practice. - Progressing and engaging in research collaborations with others.	
4.1.2	You act with honesty, probity and integrity in all stages of the research process, including by adhering to research governance frameworks and protocols relating to the following: - Project design. - Ethics approval. - Funding. - Public/patient involvement. - Data-gathering and analysis. - Reporting, dissemination and publication.	
4.1.3	You select and use research methodologies, including experimental and collaborative approaches, in ways that fit with your scope of practice and role and that achieve the following: - Address a specific research question or topic. - Fit with the design and scale of a research project. - Involve patients and the public, when appropriate. - Are informed by and address all relevant ethical considerations.	
4.1.4	You develop, evaluate, validate and verify new developments (including to do with new scientific, technical, diagnostic, monitoring, treatment and therapeutic procedures) and adapt and integrate new procedures into your routine practice once you are assured by evidence of their safety, efficacy and effectiveness.	
4.1.5	You critically evaluate and apply research and other available evidence to do the following: - Inform your own practice and ensure that this remains leading-edge. - Inform your colleagues' practice and professional development. - Contribute to quality improvements in service delivery. - Enhance patient care and outcomes. - Contribute to and share new knowledge in line with meeting the public interest.	

4.2 Service development		*Evidence location*
4.2.1	You participate in service evaluation and quality improvement activities, including to do the following: - Seek and respond to patient and service user views and feedback. - Act on the outcomes of activities to inform service developments and enhance service delivery. - Share the outcomes of activities, in appropriate ways, to contribute to a culture of continuous quality improvement.	
4.2.2	You engage with innovative technologies and practice to enhance service delivery, including by doing the following: - Identifying and appraising innovative approaches to service delivery relevant to your service and role. - Supporting and advising colleagues (including within the wider healthcare team) on adopting new technologies. - Sharing learning from adopting, implementing and evaluating specific technologies in service delivery.	
4.2.3	You assess and evaluate new technologies before introducing and integrating them into your routine clinical practice, informed by the available evidence base.	

Domain 5: Clinical Leadership

5.1 Developing of self		*Evidence location*
5.1.1	You demonstrate self-awareness, including about your leadership style and its impact on others.	
5.1.2	You develop, maintain and apply your leadership skills, behaviours and qualities in line with your scope of practice and job role.	
5.2 Leading others		*Evidence location*
5.2.1	You value and recognise your colleagues' knowledge, skills and contribution to service delivery and patient care.	

5.2.2	You contribute to distributed leadership within your team or service, including by doing the following in line with your scope of practice and job role: - Acting as a role model and leading by example. - Addressing the development needs of those for whom you have leadership, management, supervision and/or training responsibilities. - Engaging in reviews of team performance. - Engaging in activity (including CPD) to enhance team performance. - Engaging in exercises to address deficiencies in team performance. - Distilling, sharing and applying learning from team development activities. - Celebrating team success.	

Appendix 6: Why we use Good Scientific Practice Standards in the STP Certificate of Equivalence

Background

The purpose of Good Scientific Practice (GSP) is to set out the professional standards on which safe and good working practice is founded for all those in the healthcare science workforce. GSP also confirms to employers the standards of behaviour and practice that all members of the healthcare science workforce must be supported to achieve and maintain, both in the NHS and all other sectors and settings. The standards are essential for all members of the workforce to perform their job role activities; provide safe, effective patient care; and demonstrate their professionalism.

GSP uses the Health and Care Professions Council's (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientists and Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics as its benchmarks. It also draws on other regulatory and professional body standards and expresses them within the context of the healthcare science.

Good Scientific Practice and the STP Equivalence process

The STP Equivalence Programme is approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a route to registration as a Clinical Scientist on their statutory register. Since the initial approval by HCPC in 2014, the Academy has used the standards set out in Good Scientific Practice as the basis of our assessment process. We have successfully demonstrated that the standards published in Good Scientific Practice cover all the HCPC Standards of Proficiency at each of our periodic reviews by HCPC.

At our most recent review by HCPC we were asked to make sure the revised Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientists (2022) were embedded in the STP Equivalence assessment process before their formal introduction in September 2023. We took this opportunity to test out the rationale for continuing to use GSP as well as undertake a detailed mapping of each of the 122 Standards of Proficiency against the standards in GSP. A small Task and Finish Group was set up to guide the work.

Our rationale

We use the standards in GSP rather than the HCPC Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientist because:

- The standards within GSP have been designed and reviewed by, and for, healthcare scientists without having to take account of any other professions. The language of GSP is specific to healthcare science. The language used in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency, particularly the generic standards, needs to work across the 15 professions that it regulates, and often it is not entirely applicable to all the specialties within healthcare science.
- The standards within GSP provide a framework across all levels of the healthcare science workforce therefore applicants should be familiar with GSP and its application to their level of practice prior to applying for STP Equivalence
- We can adapt GSP to respond to changes in relation to regulation and good practice more quickly than HCPC, who have to work to the legislation that governs their work. For example, last year we refined the wording in respect of sustainability in response to a recommendation by the Professional Standards Authority, the body which oversees all health and care regulators.

In the STP Equivalence process, applicants must demonstrate that they meet the standards set out in GSP, through the assessment of a portfolio of evidence, and an interview. In addition, applicants have to demonstrate that they have a comparable level of knowledge, skills and behaviours as someone

completing the Scientist Training Programme accredited by the National School of Healthcare Science on behalf of Healthcare and Care Professions Council. This is a masters level programme and therefore applicants must demonstrate through their portfolio and the answers given at interview, that they have the required characteristics of masters level learning and working at the level of a clinical scientist such as:

- dealing with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrating self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continuing to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level
- having a **systematic understanding** and **critical awareness** of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is informed by the forerunners of their professional practice
- can undertake **independent** critical analysis of current research and knowledge
- have originality in the application of their knowledge
- having a practical understanding of how established techniques of enquiry are **used to create and interpret knowledge** in the discipline
- can **evaluate** methodologies and approaches, critique and where appropriate propose new hypotheses
- engaging with complex scientific and clinical roles. There may be high risk, low volume activities which require highly skilled staff able to exercise clinical judgement about complex facts and clinical situations.

[Drawn from the Quality Assurance Agency (2014) The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies – level 7 (masters level) descriptors; Description of the clinical scientist role, AHCS 2021)]

Our Education, Training and Standards Committee and our External Examiner confirmed that the standards in Good Scientific Practice map to the HCPC's revised Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientists and supported the discussion of the Task and Finish Group and agreed the rationale for the continued use of Good Scientific Practice in the STP Certificate of Equivalence Programme.