

A guide to registering to work in the independent sector for students from HAC approved courses and their employers

Which courses are approved?

The Council's Examining Body has accredited the degree courses outlined below, in line with clause 1(4) of its approved Standard of Competence (2004). The accredited courses are:

University	Course
Aston University	BSc (Audiology)
De Montford University	BSc (Audiology)
University College, London	MSc (Audiology) diploma with clinical competency certificate
University College, London	BSc (Audiology)
University of Manchester	BSc (Audiology)
University of Manchester	MSc (Audiology) diploma with clinical competency certificate
University of Swansea	BSc (Audiology)

Graduates of these degree courses are eligible for direct admission to the Register of Hearing Aid Dispensers.

Why register with the Hearing Aid Council?

If you want to dispense aids in the private sector then you must register with the HAC. It is illegal to dispense a hearing aid privately if you are not registered with us. All dispensers who sell hearing aids, whether they work full time in the independent sector or work mostly in the NHS, need to register with us beforehand or they are breaking the law.

We are a government body set up to protect consumers who buy hearing aids. We set the standards you must meet to get on and stay on our register. We also investigate complaints about dispensers and their employers.

What is an HAC approved course?

Higher Education Institutes can ask us to approve their courses. Our Examining Body assesses such courses, to ensure that they cover each aspect of dispensing covered by our regulations, and that graduates from the course will be ready to safely. If you graduate from an approved course you are eligible to join our register straight away without further training or exams.

How do you register?

As a graduate from an HAC approved course you can register with us straight away. Most registrants have to sit exams and complete six to nine months of supervised training. You do not need to do this. Once you have graduated you should write to us with:

- proof that you have graduated (such as a photocopy of your degree including your clinical competence certificate);
- a photocopy of photographic ID such as a driving licence or passport; and
- proof of your right to work in the UK (such as an EEA or EU passport, a birth certificate or evidence of acquired rights).

Once we have checked you are eligible we will send you a registration form. We will check your paperwork and your registration form then let you know when you can start dispensing.

Do you need to register if you work for the NHS?

It depends on whether you also work privately selling hearing aids. If you do not do any work selling aids then you do not need to register with us. However if you do any private dispensing, even if you do so from NHS premises or for the NHS or for a very short time, you **must** register with us.

When can you register?

You can register at anytime. If more than two years have gone past since you last dispensed or studied then we may ask you to complete some refresher training.

What does it cost to register?

The Council sets a registration fee each year which everyone must pay to stay on the register. The fee for 2007-8 is £425 plus £125 a one off fee of £125 for first registrants. The fee is pro rata so if you join halfway through the year you pay half of the £425.

How do you stay on the register?

To stay on our register you must comply with our regulations (set out in a Code of Trade Practice), our Continuing Professional Development requirements and pay your registration fee each year.

What will happen after the HAC register is transferred to the Health Professions Council?

The Hearing Aid Council expects to stop operating in April 2009 and the HPC will likely take over regulating all audiologists and hearing aid dispensers. If you are on our register at that time you can be moved to the HPC register automatically. After that date, if you want to start dispensing hearing aids privately then you can apply to join the HPC register. The HPC may approve all the courses we have approved so you will still be eligible to join their register. You may find, depending on your area of practice, that you have to join HPC anyway. If so you will not have to register with HPC a second time to carry out private work.

Where can I find out more information?

You can find more information on our website www.thehearingaidcouncil.org.uk

If you would like to speak to someone then you can call our office on 020 3102 4030.

To apply to join our register please write to us and include:

- proof that you have graduated (such as a photocopy of your degree including your clinical competence certificate);
- a photocopy of photographic ID such as a driving licence or passport; and
- proof of your right to work in the UK (such as a photocopy of an EEA or EU passport, a birth certificate or evidence of acquired rights).

Our address is:

The Hearing Aid Council
70 St Mary Axe
London
EC3A 8BE