

Good Scientific Practice

Professional Standards of
Behaviour and Practice for
Healthcare Scientists
GSP 2025

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1. The purpose of Good Scientific Practice

Patients are the number one priority and their safety in all settings where the healthcare science workforce operate is paramount. The purpose of Good Scientific Practice (GSP) is to set out the professional standards on which safe, effective 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 (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 healthcare science. We are confident that the standards map against HCPC standards and in this respect, they are to Healthcare Scientists as Good Medical Practice is to the medical profession. The standards promote the Healthcare Science Professions' identity; how we are at the core of NHS diagnostics and therapeutics and the standards of GSP are core to the professional standards that are specific to us. In other words, they "come from us and are for us".

The core principles of the NHS are shared across all parts of the United Kingdom, the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for developing their own health policies. All NHS bodies in England, and private and third sector providers that supply NHS-commissioned/-funded services in England, are required by law to take account of the Constitution in their decisions and actions; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>.

GSP is structured into five domains, each of which has sub-domains. These are as follows:

Domain 1: Professional practice – Patient-centred care; Scope of practice; Communication; Professional responsibilities; Working with others.

Domain 2: Scientific practice – Data and reporting; Technical proficiency; Quality assurance.

Domain 3: Clinical practice – Clinical activity; Clinical investigation and therapeutics

Domain 4: Research, development and innovation – Research activity; Service development.

Domain 5: Clinical leadership – Developing self; Leading others.

GSP has specific benefits for different stakeholder groups. These are summarised below.

For patients, carers and the public, it asserts the standards of care and service delivery that they can expect the healthcare science workforce to deliver.

For employers, it supports their healthcare science staff to meet and uphold the highest professional standards in their patient care and service delivery.

For members of the healthcare science workforce, it demonstrates to patients, their families and carers, the public and their colleagues and peers that the care that they provide is underpinned by their adherence to high standards of professional practice, conduct and professionalism, and that upholding patient safety is their first priority in whatever role they undertake.

For educators of the healthcare science workforce, it provides a professional framework to inform the design and delivery of education programmes, including to ensure that future members of the workforce are prepared to engage with and meet high standards of professional practice.

For the National School of Healthcare Science, it provides a professional framework for all education and training curricula and assessment and for accrediting academic and work-based training providers.

For trainees and members of the workforce who undertake further education, training or professional development, it articulates the professional standards that they will need to meet within their new scope of practice.

GSP underpins the Academy's **Equivalence assessment process**. In the case of Scientist Training Programme Equivalence, the Standards provide the benchmark for individuals' assessment in the process. References and additional guidance on how to evidence the standards in this context are included in the document 'GSP 2021 Useful reference points' available on the Academy's website.

As a key part of its public protection role, the Academy uses GSP in cases of fitness to practise, where the conduct or actions of a registrant on our Professional Standards Authority-approved register has been questioned.

Engaging with GSP as a registrant

GSP forms the standards and values that you must meet throughout your career in healthcare science, within your scope and level of practice and role at any one time. Further detail on how you need to fulfil the GSP is provided in the standards of proficiency that are relevant to your practice level and role in healthcare science.

GSP highlights the distinction between ‘scope of practice’ and ‘job role’. This recognises that individuals’ job role at any one time may be more limited than their personal scope of practice (as defined by their current competence). The phrasing is also included in standards for which your scope of practice and job role is significant to their interpretation and application.

Working to GSP confirms to patients and your employer that you are committed to meeting high standards of professional practice and professionalism. Even if you do not have direct contact with patients, your work contributes to patients’ pathways of care in some way. Therefore, the purpose of GSP is to underpin patients’ receipt of a safe and excellent clinical service, to which all members of the healthcare science workforce contribute.

Some of the GSP standards are not applicable to all posts, or levels of practice at all times. It is indicated in the presentation of the standards whether each applies to all parts of the healthcare science workforce, or to particular registrants, as defined by their level of practice and role. This distinction is intended as a guide and not meant to restrict individuals’ activity in particular areas of practice (subject to their personal scope of practice, competence and job role). The standards of proficiency for each part of the healthcare science workforce provide more detail on specific requirements for each group, depending on registration status. Examples of typical roles of different groups within the healthcare science workforce are provided in Appendix 2. As you move through your healthcare science career, some standards will demand more of you and reflect the different dimensions of activity that become more relevant to your role, level of practice and service contribution as these change and you develop. However, the standards are shared by all members of the healthcare science profession, with their overarching and primary focus on upholding patient safety and delivering high standards of care.

2. Domains of Good Scientific Practice

Domain 1: Professional Practice

1.1 Patient-centered care		Relevant to
1.1.1	<p>You put patients first and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> As part of your duty of care, if you have a concern this should be reported promptly and appropriately, followed-up and escalated if necessary. For example, this might involve following your Trust's/employers individual incident reporting and management policy, engaging with the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework, the QA screening incident assessment processes and whistleblowing procedures when applicable, to fulfil your duty of care or duty of candour.</p> <p>You must make sure that the safety and well-being of patients always comes before any professional or other loyalties.</p>	All
1.1.2	<p>You treat patients and their carers as individuals and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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, shared decision-making about their care and a holistic approach to decision making. - 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> A carer can also be someone who is the patient's guardian or advocate (see appendix 1 for full definition) As a Champion you should lead by example and be able to:</p>	All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate that you do not discriminate against patients, their carers, guardians or advocates, or colleagues in any area of your work including those identified in the Domains set out in Good Scientific Practice. • understand the concept 'patient capacity' and that a person's capacity to make a decision can vary depending on the time that the decision needs to be made and the type of decision that needs to be made (Mind, 2023) • recognize the potential impact of your own values, beliefs (which may be unconscious) on your practice • action reasonable adjustments in practice where appropriate • actively challenging the barriers to inclusion/access to service, including in service design and quality assurance, supporting the implementation of change 	
1.1.3	<p>You respect patients' privacy and only use and disclose confidential information about their care in accordance with legal, ethical and data protection requirements.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> This standard applies across all media through which information is presented, including illustrative clinical records such as photography, medical images, video and audio recordings and digital platforms.</p> <p>Instances where confidential information should be disclosed includes: if you have permission from the patient, carer or guardian, the law allows this, it is in the patient's best interest, or it is in the public interest, such as if it is necessary to protect public safety or prevent harm to other people, where required by law enforcement agencies.</p>	All
1.1.4	<p>You support patients and the public to promote and manage their own health and to use a holistic approach to their well-being.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> For example, by helping them to make informed decision through advice, or 'signposting' to the appropriate support organisation, referral, or other interventions which might not be directly connected to the patient pathway</p>	All
1.2 Scope of practice		Relevant to
1.2.1	<p>You take responsibility for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	All

1.2.2	<p>You engage in continuing professional development (CPD) and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> To clarify that the required knowledge includes the underpinning theoretical knowledge appropriate to your specialty.</p>	All
1.2.3	<p>You engage with annual individual performance review, appraisal, team and service performance reviews and audit processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding the needs and wishes of others and communicate and respond 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. 	All
1.3 Communications		Relevant to
1.3.1	<p>You engage fully with patients, carers and colleagues to understand their needs, preferences and requests and take account of non-verbal cues to inform how you communicate and respond.</p>	All
1.3.2	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Remember that you will need to maintain confidentiality in all situations, including where additional support (such as interpreters or translators) is provided.</p>	All
1.3.3	<p>You have appropriate English language proficiency and communication skills to provide the required standard of service delivery and care in the UK.</p>	All
1.3.4	<p>You complete accurate, legible and contemporaneous records of your activity and comply with legal and workplace requirements and protocols for safe record-keeping and storage.</p>	All

1.3.5	<p>You use communication formats and channels (spoken, written and digital, and including social media and online networking platforms) in appropriate, professional ways – especially when involving patients and carers</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> This is particularly important when involving patients and carers for the safety of them and yourself. Professional ways include non-discriminatory, respectful, clear, unambiguous, open and honest approaches.</p>	All
1.3.6	<p>You produce materials about your service and professional activity that do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 	All
1.4 Professional responsibilities		Relevant to
1.4.1	You engage with the standards of conduct and behaviour set by your regulatory and/or professional body.	All
1.4.2	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> For example, you must be open and honest about your experience, qualifications and skills.</p>	All
1.4.3	<p>You must declare anything that is a conflict of interest in your professional activity and ensure that this does not impair your decisions or judgements.</p> <p>You must be transparent in how you exercise and share your professional opinion in all contexts</p>	All
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.	All
1.4.5	You engage and co-operate promptly, openly, fully and honestly in complaints and investigation processes, that have been instigated by patients, carers, colleagues	All

	<p>or employer including the following, as the need arises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - Investigations that inform patient safety learning to prevent reoccurrences of incidents <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Be prepared to discuss or escalate any concerns that have been instigated by patients, carers or colleagues where appropriate, including feedback as a method to evaluate and develop your practice</p> <p>You must support patients and carers who want to raise concerns about the care, treatment or other services they have received</p>	
1.4.6	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affect or impede your capacity to practice safely and effectively. - Put others' health and safety at risk. - Undermine the trust and confidence placed in you as a healthcare scientist. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Having an understanding of how to manage the emotional burden that comes with working in a pressured environment, identifying if something is wrong, where to get support, and the process for raising any concerns with your employer or with HCPC is needed if you think your fitness to practise is at risk.</p> <p>Concerns about your health include your safety and your mental and physical health, including anxiety and stress which can show themselves in a variety of ways.</p>	All
1.4.7	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Such risks can be due to a variety of reasons, for example increased anxiety and stress. Therefore, being able to recognise when a patient or carer or colleague is experiencing these and take appropriate action, whether this is adapting your practice or providing support, is important.</p>	All

1.5 Working with others		Relevant to
1.5.1	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> To apply this standard, you will need to build and sustain professional relationships both as an autonomous practitioner and as a member of a team. By seeking multi-source feedback from colleagues and patients you can reflect on how it could change your practice.</p>	All
1.5.2	<p>You should make best use of the resources available to you, including others' time and expertise, efficiently and judiciously to optimise the quality and efficacy of patient care and service delivery. You should also think in the context of sustainability of the environment and the social and economic impact of your practice.</p>	All
1.5.3	<p>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.</p>	All
1.5.4	<p>You undertake safe, effective supervision of colleagues and trainees, as required including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Remember, the principles listed above regarding delegating work and also apply to any colleague that you work with.</p>	All
1.5.5	<p>You arrange with your line manager for essential elements of your roles and responsibilities to be covered during periods of planned absence, including by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contributing to handover to colleagues who have the scope of practice and 	All

	<p>competence to undertake activities in place of you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adhering to your workplace's business continuity arrangements. 	
1.6 Safety		Relevant to
1.6.1	You consider all elements of safety when undertaking your role. This includes the accuracy and performance of investigations, interpretation of results, supervision and training of trainees, advice you may give to others and resource management.	All

Domain 2: Scientific Practice

2.1 Data and reporting		Relevant to
2.1.1	<p>You undertake investigations and/or therapy, including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	All
2.1.2	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Remember to take account of the principles and legal requirements of information governance and data</p>	All
2.1.3	<p>You develop investigative strategies, procedures and processes, taking account of relevant clinical and other sources of information and evidence-based practice.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> To clarify that 'information' also includes the underpinning theoretical knowledge appropriate to your specialty.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
2.1.4	<p>You interpret and critically evaluate data to inform the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your decision-making. - Your development of action plans. - Your advice and recommendations to others on further investigations, screening and management options. 	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
2.1.5	<p>You provide scientific advice to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform the safe, effective delivery of services. - Support your colleagues' clinical decision-making relating to individual patients 	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

2.2 Technical proficiency		Relevant to
2.2.1	<p>You develop and maintain your technical proficiency, in line with your scope of practice, competence and job role, including to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> You must seek feedback from patients, carers and colleagues and use it to improve your practice.</p>	All
2.2.2	<p>You engage with health and safety requirements and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adhere to relevant legislation. - Comply with health and safety protocols and requirements in your workplace. - Actively participate in regular mandatory health and safety training. - Maintain 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. <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Use any concerns raised to highlight and mitigate risk (see standard 1.4.6)</p>	All
2.2.3	<p>You follow all relevant health and safety procedures in your day-to-day practice, including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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, ionising radiation and electricity. - Using correct methods of disinfection, sterilisation and decontamination. - Dealing with waste and spillages correctly 	All
2.2.4	<p>You follow all relevant health and safety procedures in your day-to-day practice, including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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, ionising radiation and electricity. - Using correct methods of disinfection, sterilisation and decontamination. <p>Dealing with waste and spillages correctly</p>	All

2.3 Quality assurance		Relevant to
2.3.1	You maintain an effective audit trail of your activity, adhering to local protocols and practices.	All
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. <i>Additional guidance</i> 'Quality assurance process' includes both those internal and external to your organisation, including external accreditation system where available for your specialty.	All
2.3.3	You actively engage in risk assessment, management and mitigation activities.	All
2.3.4	You contribute to enacting, reviewing and updating service delivery processes and procedures to uphold patient, service user and public safety, in line with your scope of practice, competence and job role and informed by current best practice.	All
2.3.5	You set, maintain and/or apply quality standards, control and assurance measures for service delivery, with a focus on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <i>Additional guidance</i> Key to identifying opportunities for quality improvement is through reflective practice. Evidence of such reflective practice, including that which is structured and recorded will strengthen your portfolio submission. Reminder - the STP Equivalence process is based on reflection, including reflective pieces as part of your evidence base will also strengthen your portfolio.	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

3.1 Clinical activity		Relevant to
3.1.1	<p>You obtain informed consent from individual parties (patients, or their carers or other appropriate authorities) before you do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake an investigation or examination. - Provide treatment. - Involve individuals in teaching or research activity. 	All
3.1.2	<p>You understand and engage with the significance of your actions, findings and advice for informing others' clinical decisions about patient care.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> 'Others' in this context includes the multidisciplinary team.</p>	All
3.1.3	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Problem solving will be part of the clinical analysis process.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist
3.1.4	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>The wider implications for optimising the efficiency and effectiveness of clinical investigations for individual patients or groups of patients.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.1.5	<p>You monitor and report on patients' conditions, progress and prognoses.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.1.6	<p>You refer patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional or service, ensuring that you do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put patients' needs and safety first. - Recognise when elements of patient care sit outside your scope of practice, competence and job role. 	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

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	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.2 Clinical investigation and therapeutics		Relevant to
3.2.1	<p>You undertake detailed clinical or psycho-social assessments, investigations or analysis, including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using appropriate techniques and equipment. - Accurately and fully record the nature and results of your assessments. - Regularly reviewing the outcomes of assessments, including in partnership with patients <p><i>Additional guidance</i> You should complete all records promptly and as soon as possible after providing care, treatment or other services. These records must be kept securely by protecting them from loss, damage or inappropriate access.</p>	All
3.2.2	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Additional guidance</i> Using problem solving techniques may also be part of this planning and decision-making process You should complete all records promptly and as soon as possible after providing care, treatment or other services.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.2.3	<p>You undertake a quality-assured approach to investigations and designing products and procedures as an integral part of your contribution to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Screening. - Diagnoses. - Treatments. <p>Contribution to care-planning, management and rehabilitation.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.2.4	You prioritise the delivery of investigations, interventions, services and treatments based on your informed understanding of patients' clinical need, including palliative care needs.	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

3.2.5	You advise colleagues on using technologies, investigative processes and interventions to inform, progress and monitor patient care.	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
3.2.6	<p>You share all relevant information with colleagues involved in patient care, ensuring adherence to legal and ethical requirements relating to confidential and sensitive personal data, when you do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delegate or refer care to colleagues in your team/service. - Refer patients to other health or social care providers. 	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

Domain 4: Research, Development and Innovation

4.1 Research activity		Relevant to
4.1.1	<p>You contribute to an active research culture, in keeping with your scope of practice and job role, by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	All
4.1.2	<p>You act with openness, honesty, probity and integrity in all stages of the research process, including by adhering to research governance frameworks and protocols relating to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design. - Ethics approval. - Funding. - Public/patient involvement. - Data-gathering and analysis. - Reporting, dissemination and publication. 	All
4.1.3	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	All
4.1.4	<p>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.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist
4.1.5	<p>You critically evaluate and apply research and other available evidence to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

4.2 Service development and Innovation		Relevant to
4.2.1	<p>You participate in service evaluation and quality improvement activities, including to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek and respond to patient's 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. 	All
4.2.2	<p>You engage with innovative technologies and practice to enhance service delivery, including by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 	All
4.2.3	<p>You assess and evaluate new technologies before introducing and integrating them into your routine clinical practice, informed by the available evidence base.</p>	Practitioner, Scientist, Higher Specialist Scientist

Domain 5: Clinical Leadership

5.1 Developing of self		Relevant to
5.1.1	You demonstrate self-awareness, including about your leadership style and its impact on others. The activity of seeking mentorship may be beneficial to aid developing of self	All
5.1.2	You develop, maintain and apply your leadership skills, behaviours and qualities in line with your scope of practice and job role.	All
5.2 Leading others		Relevant to
5.2.1	You value and recognise your colleagues' knowledge, skills and contribution to service delivery and patient care.	All
5.2.2	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. - Encourage staff to report concerns and not prevent anyone from raising concerns. <p>Additional guidance Always remember to ensure that you are open and honest about your experience, qualifications and skills</p>	All

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Autonomous - An individual's ability to use their professional judgement to make independent decisions about their work

Audit procedures - Processes intended to review the quality of care, treatment and other services being provided, to determine where there could be improvements.

Carer - Anyone who looks after, or provides support to, a family member, partner or friend, guardian or advocate.

Care, treatment or other services - A general term to describe the different work that the healthcare science workforce carry out

Champion – A person who vigorously supports or defends a person or cause. In championing equality diversity and inclusion an individual would actively consider, promote awareness of, and defend the needs of all different groups and individuals, recognizing that these needs can be affected by differences of any kind, including, but not limited to practiced characteristics intersectional experiences and cultural differences. A champion would also have awareness of the relevant disability legislation.

Colleague - Other health and care professionals, students and trainees, support workers, professional carers and others involved in providing care, treatment or other services to patients.

Conduct - A health and care professional's behaviour.

Consent - Permission for a health and care professional to provide care, treatment or other services, given by a patient, or someone acting on their behalf, after receiving all the information they need to make that decision.

Delegate - To ask someone else to carry out a task on your behalf.

Disclose - Making a formal decision to share information about a patient with others, such as the police.

Discriminate – To treat unfairly a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people. This includes treating others differently because of your views about their lifestyle, culture or their social or economic status, as well as the characteristics protected by law – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Duty of candour - Is a professional responsibility to be open and honest with patients when things go wrong with the care, treatment or other services that you provide by:

- informing patients or, where appropriate, their carers, that something has gone wrong
- apologising
- taking action to put matters right

- making sure that patient or, where appropriate, their carers, receive a full and prompt explanation of what has happened and any likely effects.

Saying sorry is:

- always the right thing to do
- not an admission of liability
- acknowledges that something could have gone better
- the first step to learning from what happened and preventing it recurring.”

[drawn from CQC document and NMC guidance]

Escalate - To pass on a concern about a patient’s or carer’s safety or wellbeing to someone who is better able to act on it, for example, a more senior colleague, a manager or a regulator.

Ethics - The values that guide a person’s behaviour or judgement.

Fitness to practise - Having the skills, knowledge, character and health required to practise your profession safely and effectively.

Leadership - The ability to act as an example to others by exhibiting positive values and behaviours. This is not limited to positions of management and can be demonstrated in any role or professional context.

Mental Capacity – the ability of an individual to understand information and make decisions about their life and/or the ability to communicate decisions about their life (Mind, 2023)

Multidisciplinary clinical meetings - A general term to describe when professionals from different specialties/professions meet to discuss a patient’s care.

Patient - Those who receive care, or a service provided by the healthcare science workforce. The term includes patients and clients.

Patient information – there are a numerous ways in which patient information can be presented, including but not limited to: numerical, text, and illustrative clinical records, such as photography, medical images, video and audio recordings and digital platforms.

Regulatory body - An organisation responsible for the regulation of individuals on their register(s) in order to ensure public safety. Regulatory bodies may oversee registers that are voluntary or statutory to join.

Refer - To ask someone else to provide care, treatment or other services which are beyond your scope of practice or, where relevant, because the patient has asked for a second opinion.

Reasonable adjustments – To take such steps as it is reasonable to avoid disadvantaging a disabled person substantially in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled (UK Disability Act 2010)

Research - Clinical research is the basis of how we develop new treatments, techniques and gain the understanding to continually improve healthcare and to build the evidence for new, safe and effective approaches

Safeguarding - The action that is taken to promote the welfare of an individual adult or child and protect them from harm.

A definition in relation to children:

“Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children’s health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes”

(NSPCC, 2023).

A definition in relation to adults:

“Protecting an ‘adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances” (The Care Act statutory guidance, December 2023, paragraph 14.7)

Scope of practice - The areas in which a health and care professional has the knowledge, skills and competence necessary to practise safely and effectively

Appendix 2: The healthcare science workforce

About the Healthcare Science Workforce

Healthcare Science plays an increasingly important role in the delivery of high-quality health and social care. Using rapidly changing science and technology to assess, test, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate, the healthcare science workforce is the 'backbone' of the NHS.

There are over 50,000 people working in the healthcare science workforce, which represent just five per cent of the NHS workforce, yet their work underpins eighty per cent of clinical diagnoses for patients. In addition, they play a key role across treatment pathways, particularly in the areas such as genetic disorders, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and cancer.

There are five main groups in the Healthcare Science workforce in the UK. It is important to emphasise that the role of each one of these groups is recognised equally in providing high quality patient services and as such, are much valued NHS professionals who keep their knowledge and skills up to date and provide evidence-based care throughout their careers

- Healthcare Science Assistants and Associates who support the work of Healthcare Science Practitioners and Clinical Scientists. They perform safe, quality assured, protocol driven, routine, technical and scientific procedures across Healthcare Science. The Healthcare Science Associate works more independently with less direct supervision than a Healthcare Science Assistant.
- Healthcare Science Associates also support the work of Healthcare Science Practitioners and Clinical Scientists. They work more independently with less direct supervision than a Healthcare Science Assistant.
- Healthcare Science Practitioners who use their expertise in applied technical and scientific techniques to deliver safe quality assured tests, investigations, medical devices management and procedures (in some cases, including specialist therapeutic interventions) on samples, patients and equipment. Senior Healthcare Science Practitioners develop roles in specialist practice, teaching and management.
- Clinical Scientists who have clinical and specialist expertise in a specific healthcare science specialism, underpinned by broader knowledge and experience within a healthcare science theme. Clinical Scientists undertake complex scientific and clinical roles, defining and choosing investigative and clinical options, and making key judgements about complex facts and clinical situations. Whilst many work directly with patients, others work in indirect, non-patient facing roles, however, their work significantly impacts on patients or populations outcomes. They are often involved in lead roles, in innovation and service improvement, research and development, and education, and training. Some pursue explicit joint academic career pathways which combine clinical practice and academic activity in research, innovation and education.
- Higher Specialist Scientists who may undertake further training (a five-year doctoral level Higher Specialist Scientist Training programme) or go through the equivalence process and are then able to progress to Consultant Clinical Scientists by applying for specific posts. These roles are integral to patient care and enabling more effective use of the Consultant medical resource. Consultant Clinical Scientists make a very important contribution to high quality, safe and effective patient care through technological advances, innovation and improved interaction and communication with clinical teams and patients (NHS Employers 2016).

Please note that the Consultant Clinical Scientist group is referred to as Higher Specialist Scientist to match the relevant part of the AHCS Professional Standards Authority Accredited Register.