

## The Consultant Clinical Scientist in Transfusion - Overview and Reflections on the Journey to FRCPath

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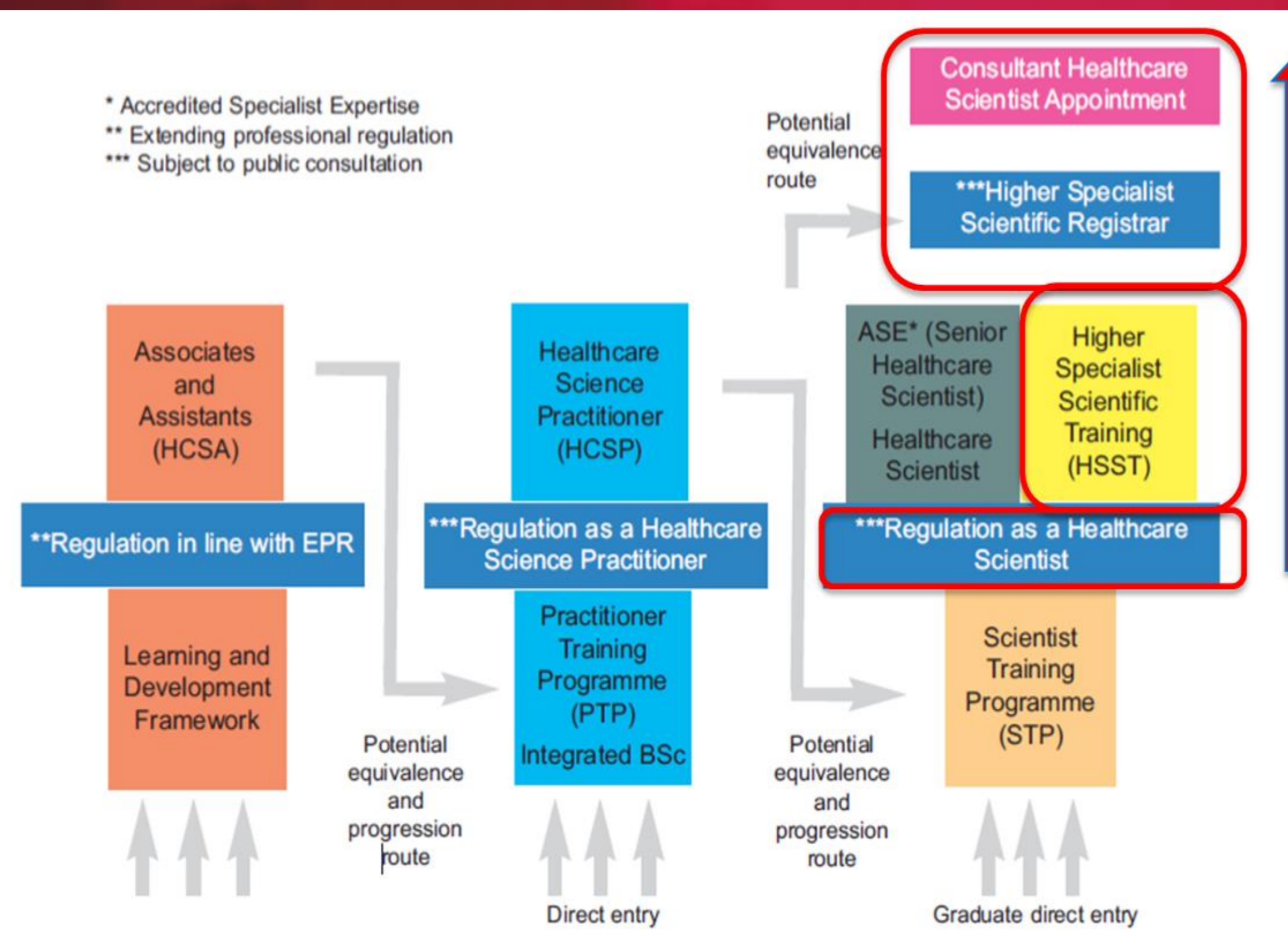
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### INTRODUCTION

The Higher Specialist Scientific Training (HSST) programme was established to enable a career pathway to Consultant Scientist status for healthcare scientists working in the NHS. HSST is a bespoke 5-year doctoral level workplace-based programme which aims to train healthcare scientists to provide expert consultant level advice as part of a multidisciplinary approach to patient management, to meet the challenges of delivering healthcare at the limits of science.

### SCIENTIFIC CAREER PATHWAY



### RATIONALE

- People are now living longer with complex comorbidities requiring multiple treatments.
- The increased diversity of the patient population, with increasing number of transfusion dependent patients who are difficult to transfuse with the available donor base i.e. those with haemoglobinopathies.
- Advances in therapies requiring specialist transfusion advice and compatibility testing pathways.
- Advances in automated testing and their interpretation / follow up has led to a change in skillset and skill mix.
- There are acknowledged workforce shortages across the NHS, including increasing shortages of clinical staff with an interest in transfusion.
- Challenges in recruitment and retention of scientific staff and lack of career progression or clear career pathway.
- Loss of / reduction in training budgets and suitable postgraduate courses, specialising in transfusion.
- Reconfiguration of pathology services may result in unintended loss of transfusion expertise and risk to service.
- Blood transfusion is often overlooked in consolidation planning.

### HSST OVERVIEW

- HSST is a 5 year part-time doctoral, work-based programme of study, provided through a collaboration between Health Education England, the Royal College of Pathologists, The National School of Healthcare Science, The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University,
- It comprises three main components;
  1. Taught PgDip in Leadership in Healthcare (University of Manchester - Manchester Academy for Healthcare Scientist Education)
  2. FRCPath part 1 and part 2 examinations within your area of speciality.
  3. Innovation project – Doctoral level research (Manchester Metropolitan University)
- Completion of all of the above required elements leads to DClinSci and FRCPath qualification, and eligibility to apply for a consultant scientific post.
- The programme is shaped by the trainee and their employer to develop a bespoke training experience

NHS  
Health Education England

{ National School of  
Healthcare Science

The Royal College of Pathologists  
Pathology: the science behind the cure

MANCHESTER  
1824  
The University of Manchester

Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

### ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

- The trainee is assessed throughout the training programme via completion of an online assessment tool (OneFile), Annual reviews of progression and multisource feedback.
- Learning is through a mixture of experiential (in post), taught (case based discussions), and observational (placement) based opportunities.
- Trainees are encouraged to teach others within their area of expertise and to engage with external professional organisations in order to develop further.

### CONSULTANT CLINICAL SCIENTIST ROLE

- Consultant scientists within transfusion may work in blood service or hospital trust roles to offer advice on patients with complex transfusion requirements, service development, teaching and strategic leadership.
- They are able to input to high level organisational strategy, offering insight into the changing environment of transfusion science testing and treatment.
- They complement medically qualified colleagues by providing scientific input when alongside other healthcare professionals as part of a multidisciplinary team.

### CHALLENGES

- The role in transfusion is new and therefore the roles and responsibilities of a consultant scientist will differ between workplaces depending on need.
- A clear vision of the end role and targeted, bespoke workplace training will enable trainees to effectively progress.
- Support from an employer, the provision of an educational supervisor and a clinical supervisor are key to the development of a successful trainee.
- Protected time must be allocated for the trainee to complete aspects of their training. Departments who want to secure funding to develop a trainee must commit to allocating time for training.

### CONCLUSIONS

- HSST is an opportunity to develop a Consultant Scientist workforce who will be able to provide scientific expertise and leadership suitable for a modern NHS.
- Whilst the training scheme is challenging, a collaborative approach by the employer and employee enables successful trainees to progress.
- By involving consultant scientists in transfusion pathways patients benefit from truly multidisciplinary care.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Images supplied by the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS)