

HCPC professional standards

Introduction

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is the statutory regulator for 15 health and care professions including speech and language therapy, with the primary aim of protecting the public. It was established under The Health Professions Order 2001 and sets the legal requirements for speech and language therapists (SLTs) practising in the UK. To work as an SLT and use the protected title 'speech and language therapist', it is mandatory to be registered with the HCPC and adhere to its professional standards. These standards assess and regulate key areas of practice, including:

- training and continuing professional development (CPD)
- professional skills and knowledge
- behaviour and ethical conduct
- health and wellbeing.

This framework is outlined in two key documents:

1. **HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics**
2. **HCPC standards of proficiency for speech and language therapists**

These standards ensure that all registered SLTs maintain high levels of professional competence, ethical practice, and public trust throughout their careers.

Other HCPC key standards all SLTs are required to adhere to include:

1. **HCPC standards of continuing professional development**
2. **HCPC standards of education and training**

HCPC audit

The **HCPC audit** is a process that occurs every two years that ensures SLTs maintain the required standards of professional practice, including **continuing professional development (CPD)**.

Registrants are randomly selected for audit at the time of their HCPC renewal and must submit a **CPD profile** demonstrating how their learning activities have enhanced their practice and benefitted service users. The profile includes a summary of CPD activities, supporting evidence, and a statement

reflecting on professional development. SLTs can use [RCSLT CPD resources and guidance](#) to prepare for the audit, ensuring compliance with HCPC requirements while maintaining high-quality, evidence-based practice. View our [webinar on preparing for a personal HCPC audit](#) and or review more guidance [on the HCPC website](#).

To discuss registration, you can contact the HCPC registration department:

- Telephone: +44(0)845 300 6184 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm)
- Email: registration@hcpc-uk.org

HCPC Registration renewal

Even if you are not selected for audit, you need to renew your registration every two years by making your professional declaration and paying a fee. All SLTs register during a specified time period on a 2 year cycle. Your declaration states that you are and continue to be fit to practise and meet all HCPC standards.

Student SLTs and HCPC standards

HCPC guidance plays a vital role in shaping the education and professional expectations of student speech and language therapists (SLTs). While students are not registered with the HCPC, their training is structured to prepare them to meet the HCPC's Standards of Proficiency upon qualification. Education providers must ensure that their courses equip students with the necessary knowledge, skills and professional behaviours outlined by the HCPC. This includes fostering a strong understanding of ethical practice, communication, safeguarding and the importance of continuing professional development.

The **RCSLT curriculum guidance** is closely aligned with these HCPC Standards of Proficiency, providing a profession-specific framework that ensures consistency in the development of clinical competence. By mapping the RCSLT curriculum directly against the HCPC requirements, training providers support students in making the explicit connection between academic learning, clinical practice and professional regulation. Clinical placements are a key component in helping students apply these standards in real-world settings and develop the confidence and capability to work safely and effectively. This principle applies equally to **traditional degree routes and to SLT apprenticeships**, where work-based learning provides a rich environment for demonstrating how the HCPC standards underpin everyday practice.

By aligning programmes with HCPC expectations from the outset, and by embedding these standards through both the RCSLT curriculum and apprenticeship pathways, student SLTs are

consistently prepared for safe, effective and reflective practice as newly qualified professionals.

HCPC and RCSLT

The **Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) standards** and the **Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) guidance** encourage high-quality, ethical, and evidence-based practice for SLTs in the UK. The HCPC’s primary focus is on the rights and safeguarding of service users, and it sets regulatory standards that all registered SLTs must meet, covering areas such as professional conduct, clinical skills, and continuing professional development. These legally enforceable standards ensure practitioners provide safe and competent care.

RCSLT has a **scope of practice** which sets out the activities and limits of the professional activity of speech and language therapy and speech and language therapists in the UK. In parallel, the RCSLT offers profession-specific guidance, including best practice frameworks, clinical resources and professional development opportunities that align with HCPC regulations. This overlap ensures that SLTs not only meet essential regulatory requirements, but also pursue excellence in their field.

HCPC Roles and responsibilities	Shared roles and responsibilities	RCSLT Roles and responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory regulatory body • Maintains register of qualified SLTs • Sets standards of proficiency • Oversees CPD requirements • Investigates fitness to practice concerns • Can impose sanctions or remove individuals from the register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uphold code of conduct and ethical practice • Promote high standards in service delivery • Support public confidence in the profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional body for SLTs • Offers clinical guidance and best practice standards • Provides CPD opportunities and resources • Advocates for the profession nationally • Supports research and evidence-based practice • Represents SLTs in policy and workforce planning

Further information regarding the difference between HCPC, the RCSLT and Trade Unions can be found in the **Organisation Comparison Table** (RCSLT 2025).

The shared focus areas of the RCSLT and the HCPC

Clinical competence and professional ethics

Both the HCPC standards and RCSLT guidance emphasise the importance of clinical competence and professional ethics in speech and language therapy. The HCPC requires SLTs to work within their **scope of practice** and apply evidence-based interventions while adhering to professional conduct rules to protect service users. The RCSLT provides more detailed guidance on how to implement these principles, including ethical decision-making frameworks, supervision recommendations, and case-based examples. Both organisations stress the importance of maintaining service users' dignity, gaining informed consent, and ensuring culturally responsive care. By following both HCPC standards and RCSLT guidance, SLTs can deliver safe, effective, and ethically sound services.

Evidence-based practice

The HCPC mandates that SLTs provide care based on **current research** and best available evidence, ensuring interventions are effective and justified. The RCSLT supports this requirement by offering access to research updates, clinical guidance, and position papers that help SLTs stay informed about the latest developments in the field. Additionally, the RCSLT facilitates professional networks and **clinical excellence networks** where SLTs can collaborate and share best practice.

Central to this is the acknowledgement of the triad of evidence-based practice, which emphasises the integration of empirical and research evidence, practice-based evidence and professional expertise, alongside the experiences and perspectives of service users. This combined approach ensures that practitioners not only comply with HCPC regulations but also have the resources to continually improve their clinical decision-making in a person-centred and contextually relevant way.

By actively involving service users in shaping priorities, evaluating outcomes and sharing lived experiences, co-production ensures that their voices form a recognised strand of evidence in decision-making. This reflects both HCPC requirements for person-centred practice and the RCSLT curriculum's emphasis on inclusive, collaborative approaches.

Safeguarding and service user rights

Safeguarding is a fundamental requirement under HCPC regulations, which obligates SLTs to protect service users from harm and act in their best interests. The RCSLT reinforces this by providing **safeguarding guidance** on recognising and responding to concerns. Both the RCSLT and HCPC emphasise the importance of confidentiality, respecting autonomy and promoting equitable access to services. This shared commitment ensures that SLTs uphold the highest standards in safeguarding and service user rights, reducing risks and improving outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

The HCPC requires all SLTs to engage in CPD to maintain their registration, ensuring they stay up to date with new knowledge, technologies and clinical approaches. The RCSLT plays a crucial role in supporting this by offering CPD resources such as online learning modules, workshops, mentoring schemes, supervision frameworks, and a **member enquiries service**.

RCSLT's structured CPD opportunities align with HCPC's requirements, making it easier for SLTs to demonstrate their ongoing competence. This partnership ensures that SLTs continue to develop their expertise, ultimately improving the quality of care they provide to service users. The **RCSLT CPD Diary** can be used to record and reflect on CPD activity and provide evidence for the HCPC audit supports SLTs to record CPD activity and provide evidence for the HCPC audit.

Equity, diversity, and belonging (EDB)

Both the HCPC standards and RCSLT guidance prioritise equity, diversity, and belonging (EDB) (sometimes known as equality, diversity and inclusion or EDI) to ensure that speech and language therapy services are accessible, fair, and responsive to the diverse needs of service users. The HCPC mandates that SLTs practise in a non-discriminatory manner, respect cultural differences, and uphold service users' rights. The RCSLT expands on this by providing **practical resources and advocacy** to support inclusive practice. Our EDB strategy helps SLTs address health inequalities, use culturally competent approaches, and challenge systemic barriers within healthcare and education settings. By aligning with both HCPC regulations and RCSLT initiatives, SLTs can contribute to a profession that is equitable, inclusive, and reflective of the communities they serve.

Responsibility for policy development and compliance

All employers, including service leaders, managers, self-employed professionals, and sole practitioners, are responsible for developing and maintaining local policies aligned with national frameworks and legislation. For independent SLTs, this responsibility extends to ensuring that their own policies and procedures covering areas such as safeguarding, data protection, record keeping, consent, and clinical governance and that they are robust, evidence-based, and clearly documented.

Service-level responsibility

Heads of service and professional leads must ensure they and their staff understand how their organisation responds to national and regional legislation. This includes:

- identifying which legislation is implemented through local policies and strategies, and how this is achieved
- recognising any gaps in compliance
- determining actions to achieve compliance
- understanding the organisation's required response.

Service leads should view legislation as a tool for driving service improvements, ensuring alignment with national and regional policies. For instance, the **Race Relations (Amendment) Act** places a duty on organisations to promote race equality. This provides a legal framework for developing business cases to enhance speech and language therapy services, ensuring they meet the linguistic, cultural, and religious needs of Black, Asian and all minoritised communities.

Service managers must ensure that their policies comply with legislative requirements. They should identify key individuals within their organisation to support this process and highlight any policy gaps caused by organisational or service limitations. These issues should be raised with senior management through appropriate channels to ensure accountability and commitment to service improvements.

Accountability

Accountability in speech and language therapy is multi-faceted, encompassing professional, contractual, and societal responsibilities. The following information outlines the key aspects of accountability, detailing obligations, monitoring processes and enforcement mechanisms.

Contractual accountability

- **Accountable to:** Employer/contractor of service (organisation or individual).
- **Responsibilities:** Ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and the safety and wellbeing of individuals.
- **Requirements:** Compliance with employment law, contracts of employment, local practice standards, national service frameworks (NSF), and service level agreements.
- **Monitoring and assurance:** Individual performance reviews (IPR), supervision, peer reviews, audits, reporting systems, and outcome measures.
- **Enforcement:** Civil courts and industrial tribunals.

Independent SLTs: For sole practitioners or small independent providers, contractual accountability relates directly to the contracts agreed with commissioners, schools, case managers, or private clients. These contracts must clearly set out the scope of service, responsibilities, and terms of engagement. Independent SLTs are also responsible for ensuring their own insurance, safeguarding procedures, and governance frameworks are in place to meet contractual obligations.

Professional accountability

- **Accountable to:** Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the professional conduct committee.
- **Responsibilities:** Delivering safe and effective services while upholding professional and ethical standards.
- **Requirements:** Adherence to HCPC standards of conduct, proficiency, and continuing professional development (CPD), ethical research guidelines, and duty of care.
- **Monitoring and assurance:** HCPC registration, RCSLT CPD processes, IPR, supervision, peer reviews, individual feedback, and outcome measures.
- **Enforcement:** HCPC regulatory mechanisms.

Independent SLTs: Independent SLTs must establish their own systems for supervision, peer review, CPD tracking, and reflective practice to evidence compliance with HCPC standards. They are also expected to maintain accurate clinical records, safeguarding logs, and evidence of outcome measurement.

Societal accountability

- **Accountable to:** The public and legal system.
- **Responsibilities:** Ensuring public safety and wellbeing through ethical and lawful practice.
- **Requirements:** Adherence to criminal and civil law, duty of care, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Monitoring and assurance:** Individual reports, peer reviews, and supervision.
- **Enforcement:** Criminal and civil courts.

Independent SLTs: As autonomous practitioners, independent SLTs carry direct societal accountability for their practice. This includes ensuring compliance with safeguarding legislation, GDPR and data protection requirements, equality and diversity legislation, and all other relevant national and local legal frameworks. They must also have robust complaints procedures in place and be prepared to demonstrate transparency and accountability to clients, families, commissioners, and regulators.

Service leaders, managers, and practitioners, including independent practitioners, must actively engage in maintaining accountability at all levels. This includes staying informed about legal and regulatory changes, implementing best practice, and ensuring that services remain compliant with national and professional standards. When gaps or challenges arise, they should be addressed through appropriate organisational channels, in the case of independent practitioners, through professional networks, peer supervision, and consultation with regulators, to ensure continuous service improvement.

Meeting HCPC Standards: A practical resource guide for SLTs

Further information on specific HCPC guidance, RCSLT resources, and other external materials that can support SLTs in meeting the HCPC Standards of Proficiency is outlined in the tables in this section. This information is intended to provide examples of the support available and does not represent an exhaustive list. Additional resources may be found on the [RCSLT guidance pages](#), within the [RCSLT professional development scenarios](#), on the HCPC website, and in both national and local guidance.

HCPC standard of proficiency 1 – Practise safely and effectively within the scope of practice

Practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice

Overview of standard: SLTs must work within their professional competencies, ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge for safe and effective practice. They should seek supervision or refer cases outside their expertise to appropriate professionals, prioritising patient safety at all times.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Scope of practice</u> • <u>Health, safety and wellbeing</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Evolving roles</u> • <u>CPD and lifelong learning</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Scope of practice</u> • <u>Advanced practice and second opinions</u> • <u>Referral criteria/scope of practice</u> • <u>Burnout</u> • <u>Impact of workplace on your health</u> • <u>Continuing professional development</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public Health England: Best start in speech, language and communication</u> • <u>National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) – Clinical Guidelines</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 2 – Practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession

Overview of standard: SLTs must adhere to legal and ethical frameworks that govern their work, including safeguarding, data protection, and consent laws. They must maintain professional integrity, advocate for service users’ rights, and ensure ethical decision-making in all aspects of care.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Standards of conduct performance and ethics</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Safeguarding</u> • <u>Consent</u> • <u>Duty of care</u> • <u>Enabling service users</u> • <u>Personalised care</u> • <u>Supported decision making and mental capacity</u> • <u>Eating and drinking with acknowledged risks</u> • <u>Interpreters</u> • <u>Bilingualism</u> • <u>Working with interpreters (children’s services)</u> • <u>Diversity, inclusion and anti-racism</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Eating and drinking with acknowledged risks</u> • <u>Organisational policy</u> • <u>Duty of care/caseload pressures</u> • <u>Mental capacity – Safeguarding</u> • <u>Cultural competence</u> • <u>Ethical resource management</u> • <u>Data protection</u> • <u>Bilingual student/ peer placement</u> • <u>Confidentiality on shared devices</u> • <u>Threats of harm</u> • <u>Multilingual family waiting for NHS request independent assessment</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS e-learning medico-legal training</u> • <u>NHS e-learning public health ethics</u> • <u>RCP Supporting people who have eating and drinking difficulties</u>

HCPC standard 3 – Look after their health and wellbeing, seeking appropriate support where necessary

Look after their health and wellbeing, seeking appropriate support where necessary

Overview of standard: It is essential for SLTs to sustain their physical and mental wellbeing to provide safe and effective care. They must engage in continuing self-reflection on emotional wellbeing and its impact on practice, seek support when needed, and be aware of any factors that may impact their ability to practise competently.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Health, safety and wellbeing</u> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Burnout</u> • <u>Impact of workplace on your health</u> • <u>Impact of cost of living</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS health and wellbeing framework</u> • Local/regional policies • <u>Mind – Wellness Action Plan</u> • <u>Mental Health at work</u> • <u>GOV.UK – Access to Work</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 4 – Practise as an autonomous professional

Practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement

Overview of standard: SLTs are responsible for making independent clinical decisions based on their professional expertise and evidence-based practice. They should be confident in their assessments, adapt interventions as needed, and be accountable for their actions while collaborating with colleagues when necessary.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Supervision, leadership and culture</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Evidence-based practice</u> • <u>Supervision</u> • <u>Care pathways</u> • <u>Lifelong learning</u> • <u>Use of new interventions</u> • <u>Supported decision making and mental capacity</u> • <u>Managing risk</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Continuing professional development</u> • <u>Therapy without evidence</u> • <u>Evidence based practice and shared care</u> • <u>New resource management</u> • <u>Research appraisal</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Intensive Care Society - The Speech and Language Therapy Pillar</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 5 – Recognise the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice

Recognise the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice and practise in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner

Overview of standard: SLTs must recognise and respect the diverse backgrounds of service users, ensuring culturally sensitive and inclusive care. They should adapt their communication, assessment methods, and interventions to meet the needs of individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>HCPC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-26</u> • <u>Equality, diversity and inclusion fact sheet</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Equity, diversity and belonging</u> • <u>Inclusive communication</u> • <u>An SLT's guide to Ramadan</u> • <u>Raising concerns about racism</u> • <u>Bilingualism</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Bilingual student/ peer placement</u> • <u>Ethical resource management</u> • <u>Multilingual family waiting for NHS request independent assessment</u> • <u>Gender identity</u> • <u>Cultural competence</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Gov UK Equality Act 2010: guidance</u> • <u>Breaking down gender stereotypes in legal writing</u> • <u>Equality Commission for Northern Ireland – legislation</u> • <u>NHS unconscious bias and allyship</u> • <u>Gov UK Reasonable adjustments for workers with disabilities or health conditions</u> • <u>Gov UK Inclusive Communication</u> • <u>NHS England Reasonable adjustments</u> • <u>NHS e-learning cultural competence</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 6 – Understand the importance of and maintain confidentiality

Understand the importance of and maintain confidentiality

Overview of standard: SLTs must understand the limits of confidentiality, principles of information governance, and recognise situations where sharing information is necessary to safeguard service users or the public.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Confidentiality</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Confidentiality</u> • <u>Safeguarding</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Confidentiality and court</u> • <u>Data protection</u> • <u>New research impact and confidentiality</u> • <u>Confidentiality on shared devices</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS e-learning information governance</u> • <u>ICO GDPR guidance and resources</u> • Local guidance related to safeguarding & governance

HCPC standard of proficiency 7 – communicate effectively

Communicate effectively

Overview of standard: Effective communication is essential for SLTs, who must demonstrate appropriate verbal and non-verbal skills, adapt communication methods to suit service users' needs, and ensure they meet the required English language proficiency standards.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Communication and using social media</u> • <u>Person centred care</u> • <u>Standards of Proficiency for Internationally Trained Professionals</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Eating, drinking and swallowing</u> • <u>Inclusive communication</u> • <u>AAC</u> • <u>Digital health and technology</u> • <u>Technology</u> • <u>Telehealth</u> • <u>Enabling service users</u> • <u>Personalised care</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Technology reflections</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>IELTS understanding your score</u> • <u>NHS England Accessible Information Standard</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 8 – Work appropriately with others

Work appropriately with others

Overview of standard: SLTs should build and sustain professional relationships, collaborate effectively as part of multidisciplinary teams, and work in partnership with service users, carers, and other professionals to plan and evaluate interventions. SLTs should understand the qualities, behaviours and benefits of leadership and recognise and develop leadership skills appropriate to their practice.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Person centred care</u> • <u>Supervision, leadership and culture</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Collaborative working</u> • <u>RCSLT ASLTIP statement on best practice in supporting CYP</u> • <u>Enabling service users and carers</u> • <u>Personalised care</u> • <u>The disabled student experience during training</u> • <u>Supporting LGBTQIA+ colleagues in the workplace</u> • <u>Supporting SLTs with disabilities in the workplace</u> • <u>Leadership resources</u> • <u>Independent</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Team social events</u> • <u>Team dynamics</u> • <u>MDT relationships and SLT role</u> • <u>Shared caseload management</u> • <u>Social worker - service expectations</u> • <u>NHS to independent practice</u> • <u>Effective Teamwork</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHSE working in partnership with people and community's statutory guidance</u> • <u>Scottish Gov Health and social care - Planning with People: community engagement and participation guidance</u> • <u>Department of Health Co-Production Guide for Northern Ireland - Connecting and Realising Value Through People</u>
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HCPC standard of proficiency 9 – Maintain records appropriately

Maintain records appropriately

Overview of standard: Accurate and secure record-keeping is crucial. SLTs must ensure records are comprehensive, stored securely, and comply with data protection and confidentiality requirements.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Record keeping</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Writing for work</u> • <u>Guidance for SLTs on their roles and responsibilities under the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated Code of Practice</u> • <u>Additional learning needs (Wales)</u> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS e-learning for all users of electronic health records</u> • <u>Gov UK SEND code of practice 0 to 25</u> • <u>Gov Wales Additional Learning Needs Code</u> • Local policies such as Data Protection and Data Handling.

HCPC standard of proficiency 10 – Reflect on and review practice

Reflect on and review practice

Overview of standard: Continuous self-reflection and seeking feedback are vital for SLTs to improve their practice, identify learning needs, and enhance their professional development.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reflective practice</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Healthcare improvement</u> • <u>Professional development framework</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reflective clinical rationale</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS - Transformative Reflection</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 11 – Assure the quality of their practice

Assure the quality of their practice

Overview of standard: SLTs should engage in quality assurance processes and clinical governance, participate in audits, adhere to best practice guidelines and commit to continuous improvement to maintain high standards of care.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Evidence based practice</u> • <u>Outcome measurement</u> • <u>Healthcare improvement</u> • <u>Lifelong learning</u> • <u>Service planning</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Continuing professional development</u> • <u>Therapy without evidence</u> • <u>Evidence based practice and shared care</u> • <u>New resource management</u> • <u>Research appraisal</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Quality improvement made simple</u> • <u>GOV.UK - Newborn Hearing Screening - Clinical Governance</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 12 – Understand and apply key concepts

Understand and apply the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession

Overview of standard: A speech and language therapist (SLT) in the UK should have a strong foundation in the core principles of speech, language, and communication science, as well as related fields such as linguistics, psychology, and anatomy. They should ensure their practice aligns with current guidance and best practice in speech and language therapy.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Clinical guidance</u> • <u>Diversity, inclusion and anti-racism</u> • <u>Pre-registration eating, drinking and swallowing competencies</u> • <u>Information for newly qualified practitioners</u> • <u>Curriculum guidance</u> • <u>Enabling service users</u> • <u>Personalised care</u> • <u>Technology</u> • <u>Literacy resources</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cultural competence</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Standards of education and training</u> • <u>NHS e-learning cultural competence</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 13 – Draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice

Draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice

Overview of standard: SLTs must integrate their knowledge and skills to critically assess, diagnose, and manage communication and swallowing disorders, employing evidence-based approaches and adaptations to intervention tailored to individual needs.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Clinical guidance</u> • <u>Evidence based practice</u> • <u>Use of new interventions</u> • <u>Care pathways</u> • <u>Pre-registration eating, drinking and swallowing competencies</u> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>IELTS understanding your score</u> • <u>NICE: Stroke Rehabilitation in adults</u> • <u>DoE: What Works: Interventions for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs</u> • <u>Health Improvement Scotland Sign guidelines</u>

HCPC standard of proficiency 14 – Establish and maintain a safe practice environment

Establish and maintain a safe practice environment

Overview of standard: SLTs must establish and maintain a safe practice environment by understanding and adhering to health and safety legislation, identifying and managing risks, implementing effective hazard control measures and upholding strict infection prevention protocols. This ensures the safety and wellbeing of both service users and practitioners in all clinical and professional settings.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Raising concerns, openness and honesty</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>COVID-19</u> • <u>Managing risk</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Infection control</u> • <u>Threats of harm</u> • <u>Serious clinical incident</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NHS England: National infection prevention and control</u> • <u>Gov UK Health and Social Care Act 2008</u> • Local Policies in relation to Infection Prevention and Control, Moving and Handling • Local Policies for clinical governance related to incident reporting, health and safety and whistleblowing

HCPC standard of proficiency 15 – Promote health and prevent ill health

Promote health and prevent ill health

Overview of standard: SLTs can promote health and prevent ill health by providing early intervention, education, and preventative strategies to support communication and swallowing needs, reducing the risk of long-term complications. They can also collaborate with other healthcare professionals, families, and educators to raise awareness of speech, language, and swallowing disorders, ensuring timely access to support and promoting overall wellbeing.

HCPC guidance	RCSLT guidance	RCSLT professional development scenario	Other external guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Addressing health inequalities</u> • <u>Public health</u> • <u>Raising awareness</u> • <u>Local influencing</u> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Gov UK: Best start in speech, language and communication</u> • <u>Royal Society for Public Health: Speech and Language Therapists</u>

Reflection question

How do you ensure that your practice aligns with HCPC standards and RCSLT guidance? What do you do to demonstrate this alignment in day-to-day clinical decision-making or through continuing professional development (CPD)?

What skills, tools or experience do you need to develop to meet these standards?

How can you evidence meeting the standards?

Contributors

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- Maria Luscombe FRSLT
- James Martin, Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist (Head & Neck)
- Katie Masters, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist
- Claire Matheson, Service Lead Adult Learning Disability
- Rosalind Gray Rogers, Programme Director for Speech and Language Therapy
- Jo Taylor, Speech and Language Therapist