

First-ever Professional Registration Now Open for Educational Audiologists

Joy Rosenberg, BAEA Officer; MA/MSc Deaf Education Programme Leader, Mary Hare with University of Hertfordshire



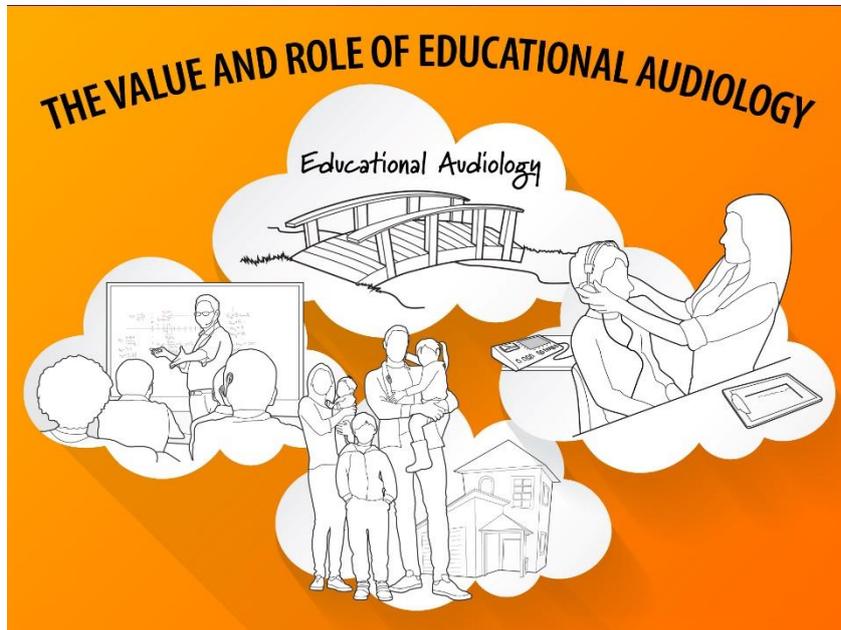
Lizanne Steenkamp, BAA Board Director (EAR); RCCP PBEC Chair; Lecturer in Audiology, Queen Margaret University



For the first time ever in the UK and in many other countries, Educational Audiologists can now register professionally. In summer 2018, the voluntary registration opened with the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP). High practice standards in clinical physiology competencies and database of registrants made public for six disciplines are the hallmarks of RCCP. Raising awareness of the value of the role of Educational Audiologist relative to Clinical Audiology is one aim of the new registration.

Children and young people who are deaf and their families will benefit significantly from the impact of this professional registration, which makes the British Association of Educational Audiologists (BAEA) extremely pleased about this achievement. The initiative was mandated by a majority of BAEA membership several years ago because of the potential for professional registration to progress joined-up working between Health and Education, as well as promotion of public recognition and understanding of the need for these links and the educational audiology role that

makes it happen across many authorities. Empirically, the issue is evidenced by data presented at 2017 BATOD conference and cited in 2017 Department for Education *Future of the Sector* report by Brian Lamb. Anecdotally, evidence from MESH** knowledge management Guides and BAEA case studies were presented internationally at the Hearing Across the Lifespan conference in 2018, and in a British Society of Audiology (BSA) Grow CPD e-learning module in 2019.



The development of a memorandum of agreement between the British Association of Educational Audiologists (BAEA) and the British Academy of Audiology (BAA) was established as part of the process of created the register. BAA oversaw RCCP accreditation of the Educational Audiology postgraduate course (the only one in the country). Since the 1990's, Educational Audiologists

have been trained at Mary Hare (now affiliated to University of Hertfordshire). For more than a decade correspondence archives show that registration has been an aim for the profession, but autumn of 2014 saw this process begin in earnest when British Association for Educational Audiologists (BAEA) first met with the British Academy of Audiology (BAA) and Registration Council of Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) to plan the way forward for accreditation and registration routes for Educational Audiologists. The process developed from there to review the registration journey, including BAA endorsement of the academic content and delivery of the course by the BAA Accreditation of Academic Education Committee (AAEC) in winter 2017 as the first step. When the MSc/PGDip Educational Studies (Educational Audiology) course was reviewed for BAA endorsement consideration was given to identification of the necessary steps for accreditation (covering clinical competencies typically).

This process highlighted the importance of joined-up working in the ways in which these two different, but related professional bodies collaborated, providing mutual benefit for each profession's development. Once the course was successfully endorsed in February 2017, an RCCP accreditation was then successfully achieved in April 2018. This means that starting November 2018, new graduates of the course are the first who are automatically eligible to register. Equivalency process with RCCP is the option now available to prior graduates to pursue registration.

Many services are being negatively impacted by fiscal issues. For Educational Audiology, as a nonmandated but extremely valuable role, professional registration opening comes as at a judicious time due to the risk in some areas of the Educational Audiology role being cut or not renewed.

By empowering Educational Audiologists to continue to enact their bridging role with clinical audiology, registration will further benefit children and young people who are deaf and their families. Enhanced joined-up working between Health and Education due to registration will help raise awareness and recognition of the need for these links.

For additional benefit to joined-up working between Health and Education related to audiology, Mary Hare will begin in Sept 2019 to offer stand-alone module options (subject to imminent university validation) from the MSc PGDip Educational Audiology course. This need was evidenced by results of a Professional Opinion Survey in 2017 showing that both Heads of Service and practitioners in the educational and clinical audiology fields would embrace such shorter-term CPD opportunities. Topics such as Radio Aids , Pyschoacoustics, Anatomy and Physiology, Whole Case Management and Developing Communication, Speech and Language, will be covered in the modules. These will also appeal to Teachers of the Deaf topping-up skills, possibly whilst awaiting opportunity in future to undertake the entire qualification. For nearly five decades since 1970's Education Act, leaders in deaf education have engaged in efforts liaise with the wider audiology field in this way. These efforts have now come to fruition with achievement of the voluntary professional registration, the first-ever for Educational Audiologists.

Contact Details:

j.rosenberg@maryhare.org.uk

www.maryhare.org.uk/professional-courses/postgraduate-courses

www.herts.ac.uk/apply/schools-of-study/education/partnerships-in-education/uk-education-partners

LSteenkamp@gmu.ac.uk

<https://www.rccp.co.uk/articles/50/The-Process-of-Application-to-the-Register>

