

Accredited Registers

Condition Review: Academy of Healthcare Science (AHCS)

1. Outcome

At the Academy of Healthcare Science (AHCS)'s latest [annual check](#), the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) issued one Condition of accreditation for Standards Four and Eight. This report sets out our assessment of the actions taken by the AHCS to satisfy the Condition.

We found that the AHCS had satisfied the Condition and therefore that Standards Four and Eight continued to be met.

2. Background

We assess registers against our *Standards for Accredited Registers* ('the Standards')¹. Where an Accredited Register has not met a Standard, we can issue Conditions. A Condition sets out the requirements and the timeframe that an Accredited Register must meet to maintain its accreditation.

At the AHCS's latest annual check, completed in June 2023, we issued one Condition:

Condition One: The AHCS should ensure that there is sufficient clarity about the education and training requirements for the LSI register to provide assurance to the public and other stakeholders that registrants on the LSI register are meeting the standards. This should include information on the AHCS' role in setting the standards and the processes the AHCS has in place for ensuring that registrants meet them. The AHCS should ensure that the different Tiers on the LSI register, including Tier X are clearly explained.

This Condition was to be completed by 4 October 2023.

This report discusses the actions that the AHCS took to address the Condition, as well as our decision about whether the Condition is satisfied.

We reviewed the following evidence:

- a) AHCS's reported actions about what it had done to meet Condition One.
- b) The information presented on the AHCS's website.

3. Concerns leading to the Condition

The Accreditation Panel considered the AHCS' ongoing response to third-party feedback that we received in December 2021 which raised concerns about the Life Science Industry (LSI) register. The concerns included the transparency of information provided about the education and training requirements, a perceived lack of quality assurance mechanisms for ensuring that registrants meet the required standards and a lack of clarity about the different tiers on the register.

¹ [Standards for Accredited Registers 2023 \(professionalstandards.org.uk\)](https://professionalstandards.org.uk)

At last year's annual check, in response to the third-party feedback the AHCS stated that it would form an Education and Standards Committee, develop an accreditation framework, review how Tier X is communicated and make clear the route of entry to the LSI register for non-medical industry accredited members. This year the AHCS reported on its progress highlighting the formation of the LSI Standards Committee which reports to the AHCS Regulation Board and the Education, Standards and training Committee (ESTC) who are responsible for the education and training standards. The AHCS also highlighted that it is working with organisations and Trade Associations to develop a direct route to the register.

The Accreditation Panel considered the information provided by the AHCS and reviewed the information provided on the AHCS's website about the LSI register. We found that the information presented on the LSI register could be confusing to a lay person. Information about the education and training requirements and how they fit with the standards for registration and the role of the AHCS in setting these standards could be made clearer. We also found further confusion around the term 'Tier X' and what this means. Although the AHCS noted that applicant numbers are dropping for this tier, it is still being used. The Accreditation Panel highlighted the importance of providing clear information to the public and other stakeholders about its requirements for the LSI register.

Further details can be found in the published report.²

4. Assessment of Condition One

The AHCS provided its response to the Condition by the deadline of 4 October 2023.

We reviewed the updated information on the AHCS's website, noting that it had provided more information about the different tiers and what is required for each.

There is also further information presented in [Guidance - The Academy For Healthcare Science](#) on training and registration requirements for the LSI register. This includes the *Education and Training Matrix* (Oct 2023) which sets out training required and links this back to the *Standards or Proficiency*. The *Tiers: Summary of Requirements* (Oct 2023) provides further information on the registration requirements for each tier. This includes information about the role, what immunisations are recommended, the training requirements and any criminal records check requirements. *The Registration User Guide* (Oct 2023) provides information on the registration process including what registrant's need to do to demonstrate the training they have completed and whether Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are needed. It also provides information about re-registration requirements and the information that registrants are expected to provide to maintain their registration.

The AHCS reported that the term 'Tier X' was introduced when the LSI Credentialing register was launched as part of the transition arrangements for those who were already on the Medical Industry Accredited (MIA) system and

² [targeted-review-academy-of-healthcare-science-june-2023.pdf \(professionalstandards.org.uk\)](#)

who were partway to satisfying the registration requirements. This was expected to be in place for approximately six months, however the Covid-19 pandemic meant that MIA members had to put their transition to the register on hold, meaning that Tier X was in place for a lot longer than anticipated. The AHCS stated that it will be replacing this term with the phrase pre-registration which is more consistent with the other parts of the register. A note has been added to the 'About the LSI register' webpage which states:

'Hitherto, applicants going through the registration process have been designated as 'Tier X'. In order to avoid confusion with Tiers 1, 2 and 3 which apply to successful applicants, this term will no longer appear and 'pre-registration' will be used instead. This will also ensure consistency with the approach taken for other AHCS registers.'

The AHCS reported that it will be carrying out further work to update its website, and that this work has is due to be completed in November 2023.

5. Conclusion

The AHCS made changes to its website which make the requirements for the different Tiers on the LSI Credentialling register clearer. The *Education and Training Matrix* and *The Tier summary of Requirements* help to provide clarity to registrants and employers about what is required for the different tiers. *The Registration User Guide* provides details of what evidence applicants and renewing registrants are required to submit. We therefore found that the Condition had been satisfied and as a result Standards Four and Eight continued to be met.

We noted that the AHCS has committed to making further changes as part of its work to update its website and that these will be reviewed as part of the AHCS' full assessment which is due in March 2024.