

BAPO Career Framework 2009

This framework is an enhancement of the current framework agreed at conference 2001. The aim of this document is to update and clarify the framework in light of the new Skills for Health Career Framework 2008.

BAPO recognises the following levels of Practice within the field of Prosthetics and Orthotics;

Consultant Practitioner
Advanced Practitioner
Senior Practitioner
Orthotist, Prosthetist
Assistant

Skills for Health

Each of these roles is detailed in the Skills for Health Career Framework and includes all Allied Health Professionals working in all areas. These include the NHS, private and voluntary sectors irrespective of employment status i.e. directly employed, locum or contracted.

This framework allows an individual to progress through the levels from Assistant to Consultant, dependent on individual skills development through training, education and practice and on the availability of a post at the desired level. Departmental skill mix can be represented by a pyramid shape with fewer more advanced positions underpinned by a broader base of lower positions. BAPO strongly encourages the correct use of role titles and will challenge inappropriate usage. All advertisements handled by BAPO for Prosthetists or Orthotists where a grading is specified will be assessed against this document. BAPO reserves the right to refuse advertisements which in its view are inappropriately titled. Additionally BAPO will recognise these titles in relation to clinical care and managerial or technical responsibility. For example, it is expected that the term 'Consultant' or 'Specialist' should have an equivalent role specification in relation to responsibility, autonomy, strategic overview and educational requirements as an NHS clinician working within this title. If this role is non clinical, it is expected that this should be identified on any advertising and that the specification should be of equivalent specification to the clinical role.

The Skills for Health framework is graded over 9 levels with Assistant grades identified from level 1 to Consultant Practitioner at level 8. Level 9 identifies grades such as Regional or National Director of service. These roles are individually negotiated and are outside the main scope of this document. Normally, graduate Prosthetist and Orthotist would be expected to enter at level 5.

The various levels encompass eight key skill elements relating to the role descriptions for each level. This document aims to assimilate these elements with the BAPO career Framework. The eight key elements are;

- Knowledge, skills, Training and Experience
- Supervision
- Professional and vocational Competence
- Analytical/clinical skills and Patient care
- Organisational skills and Autonomy / Freedom to Act

- Planning policy and service development
- Financial, Administration, physical and human resources
- Research and development.

The BAPO Career Framework

This framework was based on the original Skills for Health framework with emphasis on the education and responsibilities of Prosthetists and Orthotists. The current structure (pre July 2008) is as follows;

Level 8 Consultant Practitioner

A very high level of clinical expertise & or responsibility for planning of services. There is specific DH guidance on the criteria that must be met before consultant roles can be set up.

Level 7 Advanced Practitioner

Must have developed a very high standard of skills and theoretical knowledge, the holder must be empowered to make high level clinical decisions and often manages own caseload.

Level 6 Senior/Specialist Practitioner Has a higher degree of autonomy and responsibility than practitioners in the clinical environment.

Level 5 Practitioner Normally, registered practitioners in their first & second post registration jobs.

Level 4 Assistant Practitioner

Normally studying for foundation degree, BTEC Higher, HND or professional degree some of their remit would be to deliver protocol based clinical care that had previously been the remit of registered professionals, under the direction and supervision of a registered practitioner

Level 3 Senior Healthcare Assistants / Technicians

A higher level of responsibility than support worker, probably studying for or have attained NVQ level 3

Level 2 Healthcare Assistants / Technicians Probably studying for or attained NVQ 2

Level 1 Entry Level Trainee requires no previous knowledge or experience of healthcare

Agenda for Change

Prosthetists, Orthotists and Assistants who work directly for the National Health Service are paid under the Agenda for Change (AfC) banding system. There is no direct link to the Career structure level and it is based on the job description for the post they hold within the Key Skills Framework. The AfC is also banded from 1 to 9 with 9 being the highest grading. It is possible to hold a Career banding 7 but be paid a band 6 under AfC if the job description is not considered to be within the higher pay band. This can lead to confusion but as a general guide the Career level does mirror the AfC banding. For example.

Assistant Practitioners at career level 4 are paid on AfC 3 to 4

Orthotist, Prosthetist at career level 5 is paid on AfC level 5 to 6

Senior Practitioner at career level 6 is paid on AfC level 6 to 7

Advanced Practitioner of Department manager at career level 7 is paid on AfC level 7 to 8

Consultant Practitioner at career level 8 is paid on AfC level 8

The AfC bandings have various points on the pay scale e.g. banding 5 goes from spine point 17 to 25 with a different salary for each point, banding 4 goes from 16 to 18. In this way the bandings overlap and it is possible to be paid more on a lower banding than a higher one dependent on experience and responsibility. It is expected that a person would move up to the next point on the banding each year providing they meet their personal goals for the year and this is decided at an appraisal meeting with their line manager. It is not possible to move from one banding to the next unless there is a post available at that higher banding.

Band 8 is split into 8a, 8b, and 8c each with its own set of points.

Most positions within the NHS are described by a career level name such as Senior Orthotist and a AfC banding.

Example Career levels

These examples illustrate the BAPO career framework and its relationship to Skills For Health and Agenda For Change. **The Agenda for Change levels given for these examples are meant as a reflection of current practice. BAPO does not wish to dictate in any way the pay of people working in these roles.**

Consultant Practitioner

Banding; BAPO level 8
SfH level 8
AfC level 8 to 9

This is the highest level of clinical practice and requires highly developed specialist knowledge to critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise new and complex ideas that are at the most advanced frontier of a work area. Knowledge will have been developed over a long period or with in-depth specialist experience and competence. They will extend or redefine existing knowledge and /or professional practice within an area or at the interface between work areas. A Consultant practitioner will have responsibility for a whole service or services covering more than one profession. They will direct strategic changes and may also direct and influence commissioning. They will conceive, design, and implement research projects that lead to new knowledge and new procedural solutions. Educationally they will design and direct teaching programs and support Advanced practitioners. They will publish their work in peer reviewed journals and present in national or international conferences.

Advanced Practitioner

Banding; BAPO level 7
SfH level 7
AfC level 7 to 8

Advanced practitioners have developed their practice from senior level to be at the forefront of their area of work. They have a highly specialised knowledge underpinned by a broad-based experience and competence. This knowledge forms the basis for originality in developing and/or applying ideas. They will apply a research based diagnosis to problems by integrating knowledge from new or interdisciplinary work areas and make judgments with incomplete or limited information.

Practitioners at this level will be responsible for the direction of practices within their area of work. They will guide changes of practice which may impact on areas beyond their own area of work. They will have a responsibility for training and teaching senior practitioners as well as other health care professionals. They may also develop research or development programs.

Many Advanced Practitioners will be responsible for managing departments and hold budgets.

Senior / Specialist Practitioner

Banding; BAPO level 6
SfH level 6
AfC level 6 to 7

This is a Prosthetist or Orthotist who has a mastery of their area of work. They are often team leaders, able to guide Orthotists or Prosthetists using a detailed theoretical and practical knowledge. They will use a critical understanding of theories and principles to solve complex problems. Practitioners at this level will often have managerial as well as clinical responsibilities including budgetary control within an area of practice. Research or development may be a large part of the practitioner's role.

Prosthetist / Orthotist

Banding: BAPO level 5
SfH level 5
AfC level 5 to 6

This person is in their first or second year after qualifying from University with a degree in Prosthetics and Orthotics. They have obtained their registration with the Health Professions Council and be working for a company in private practice, or directly for the NHS. Whichever working environment the person practices in they are required to fulfill their obligations under the HPC registration. If they see NHS patients they will be expected to work within their banding level.

A Practitioner at this level has a broad theoretical and practical knowledge and is aware of the limitation of their knowledge. They see patients in a clinical setting managing their work independently but are able to consult with a senior practitioner if required. They are able to evaluate their own practice and identify any developments. Some practitioners at this level will also be supervising and managing the performance of others on lower SfH levels. Their analytical skills enable them to collect all relevant information and make judgments regarding Orthotic or Prosthetic prescription based on their interpretation of the available data.

Other duties and responsibilities include service development, office management and research. Practitioners may develop procedures or propose changes to working practices within their own area. They should contribute to administration and management of work area or department. Research could take the form of

evaluations of equipment or techniques and procedures or could be in the form of audits or clinical trials.

Assistant Practitioner / Technician Managers or Senior Technicians.

Banding: BAPO level 4
SfH level 4
AfC level 3 to 5

This person is working under the supervision of a Prosthetist or Orthotist and has a wide range of practical and theoretical knowledge. They see patients and provide them with a limited range of Prostheses or Orthoses under strict protocols. They should be studying for a foundation degree or have an NVQ 4 in a relevant area.

Assistants and technicians at this level have more responsibility for patient care than assistants at a lower level. They use their clinical and technical abilities to work in a self-directed way but within their scope of practice. They are able to undertake some clinical tests and technical procedures and use their specific practical and theoretical knowledge to make choices between limited options.

They may be responsible for maintaining highly complex equipment and take some responsibility in training others. An active participation in clinical trials or research could be taken within the area of their own work.

Healthcare Assistants / Technicians

Banding: BAPO level 2 to 3
SfH level 2 to 3
AfC level 2 to 3

This is the level of support worker. Clinical Assistants at this level will not be making any clinical decisions but would be aiding the smooth running of the department and catering for the physical and emotional needs of the patient.

| Level 3 Technicians have obtained a level 3 NVQ in a relevant area and be able to use their knowledge to process specifications and materials to make Prostheses or Orthoses. They use a range of specific skills and key competences to carry out tasks where actions are governed by defined routines and processes.

They work in a relatively stable environment under supervision where only few factors change. The difference between level 2 and 3 is in the level of supervision required and the complexity of the tasks being undertaken. Assistants and

| Technicians at level 2 would be expected to have obtained or be studying for an NVQ 2.

Entry level Trainee

Banding; BAPO level 1
SfH level 1
AfC level 1

This person has a basic general knowledge in language, literacy, numeracy and information technology and is able to carry out routine tasks. They process routine work procedures gained through short induction or on the job training, working under direct supervision and showing awareness of procedures for solving problems. They maintain the work of the department by performing limited technical, administrative or scientific tasks in a narrow area. They may handle patient notes.

References

Skills for Health

www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/page/career-frameworks

Agenda for change

www.nhsemployers.org/agendaforchange

Links

British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists

www.bapo.com

British health care trade association

www.bhta.net