

BSA Certificate in Impression-taking (over 5 years).

Pre-course information

Scope of Practice

Otoscopy and impression taking should only be undertaken by those whose job description specifically includes it, and where an employer has identified who is liable in the event of any claim for accident or injury etc.

This one-day training course prepares delegates to identify any contraindications for the procedure, and (where appropriate) to carry out impression-taking on individuals over five years of age, accurately and safely. This course does not prepare delegates to carry out impressions where contraindications exist, and/or if there is any doubt about whether the procedure should continue. In such cases referral must be made to a suitably qualified audiological or medical professional.

Overview

The course is largely practical, but will include some theoretical components, including anatomy and physiology of the ear, onward referrals, contraindications, earmould selection and abnormalities of the ear. Two assessed components (theoretical and practical) are included in the course and delegates will be required to pass both elements in order to achieve the certificate. The course will run from 8.00am-5.00pm or 9.00am-6.00pm.

Aims and learning outcomes of course

- To undertake otoscopy and impression-taking safely and according to BSA procedure
- To recognise conditions of the ear and refer accordingly
- To recognise responsibility to adhere to scope of practice and insurance/liability
- To communicate effectively with clients and/or their families/carers, including those with hearing impairment
- To arrange for earmould manufacture and maintain accurate records of procedure.

Pre-reading

British Society of Audiology (2010). Recommended procedure for ear examination.

British Society of Audiology (20013). Recommended procedure for taking an Aural Impression.

[Available at: <http://thebsa.org> and click on publications and procedures]

Frequently asked questions

Am I suitable to undertake the course?

In order to undertake impression-taking you need to be comfortable with touching other peoples' ears, gaining close proximity to patients, good dexterity and eyesight. Some people who are long-sighted or wear bi/varifocal glasses can find otoscopy / depth perception more difficult, so this is something to consider. However, most people with glasses do find their own technique that works for them, so that otoscopy is safe and natural. In all cases, you must be able to act professionally with due care and hygiene. Also see 'scope of practice' above.

Do I need to prepare for the course?

You will be given pre-course homework material to bring with you on the day. You will also be provided with course material handouts and presentations electronically. It would also be a good idea to have your ears checked by an audiologist / GP / ENT consultant prior to the course to ensure that they are free of wax. This is to ensure that, where possible, all delegates can take part in the practical sessions.

Do I need insurance?

Yes, following the course and when you take impressions supervised or unsupervised. Your employer should be able to tell you if you are insured and, if appropriate whether they will pay for your insurance. When working as an independent, or in a non-clinical environment you will need personal and professional liability insurance for taking impressions. The insurance company normally requires a BSA certificate of practice, or other specified qualification prior to taking out your cover. Within the training session itself on the day, you will be covered by TJ Audiology's classroom insurance. Contact Tracy James using the details above for information regarding insurance companies.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed on your practical technique in otoscopy and impression-taking. We understand that this may be the first time you have practiced the technique, so we are not

looking for perfect impressions every time. However, you must be able to carry out the procedure according to BSA guidelines in a manner that is safe, and consistently so. We ask for you to critique your impressions and understand what you would do differently next time. A theoretical assessment will either be carried out on the day, or as homework.

Will I need to take part in the practice sessions?

We like (if possible) for all delegates to take part in the practical sessions, so that you can practice on each other. All delegates will have their ears checked on the day to ensure that their ears are safe for impression-taking. All those undertaking practice will have developed a safe technique on rubber ears, before moving onto real ears. When practicing on real ears, all delegates will be under close supervision.

You will be asked to fill out a consent form for other delegates to practice the technique on you. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, either verbally or in writing. Do let me know if you think you will not be able / do not consent to take part in the practice sessions, so that this can be prepared for.

What if I don't pass the course?

As the courses are small, with lots of one-to-one attention, most delegates are able to pass the course. However, in the event that you don't pass either the theoretical or practical component of the course, you cannot be awarded the certificate. It is at the examiners discretion whether the delegate can undergo another attempt at the practical or theoretical exam. Repeat assessment may result in extra charges.

Once I am awarded the certificate – what happens next?

Competency in impression-taking can only be maintained with continuing practice and review. We recommend that you start out practising with supervision (remote or direct) until you feel confident in carrying out impressions without supervision. At all times you should be aware and adhere to your scope of practice (see above). The BSA recommends that, following the certificate, you should have updates in impression-taking at least every two years.

Are there any other training courses I can do?

There is a BSA certificate available in paediatric impression-taking (under-fives), pure tone audiometry and tympanometry, masking, and industrial audiometry.

TJ Audiology can also provide tailor-made courses. Please contact Tracy James on tjaudiology@outlook.com for more information.