

BSA Certificate Hearing Surveillance

Pre-course information

A BSA certificate is awarded to those who attend the 2-day BSA accredited training course and who pass both the practical and written assessment on the course. No previous training is required, although those attending the course should be employed or due to be employed to carry out audiometry in their field with some access to direct and/or remote supervision.

Scope of Practice

Audiometry 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 two-day training course prepares delegates to carry out air conduction audiometry according to BSA procedure. It does not prepare delegates to carry out diagnostic tests or masking, and where a hearing loss exists, local protocols should be in place to refer the individual.

Otoscopy shall be carried out by the delegate to decide whether 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.

The course is based on the HSE guidelines for hearing surveillance in industry and includes HSE referral criteria for noise induced hearing loss, hearing protection, noise management and standards required to run a hearing surveillance programme.

Overview

The course is largely practical, but will include some theoretical components, including anatomy and physiology of the ear, otoscopy, contraindications and onward referrals, physics of sound, calibration, interpretation of results and record-keeping. 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 9.00am-5pm.

Aims and learning outcomes of course

- Perform otoscopy reliably and according to BSA recommended procedure
- Identify contraindications for testing
- Reliably undertake audiometry and record results according to BSA recommended procedures

- Carry out Stage A checks and understand the requirements for calibration of equipment
- Operate a sound level meter and measure ambient noise levels
- Interpret results and refer according to HSE action level requirements
- Advise on the safe use and maintenance of hearing protection
- Observe confidentiality procedures and appropriate record-keeping
- Communicate results and findings to other professionals

Pre-reading / Homework prior to course

Maltby, M. (2005). *Occupational Audiometry: Monitoring and Protecting Hearing at Work*. Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

Health & Safety Authority (2007). *Guidelines on Hearing Checks and Audiometry Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, Control of Noise at Work*

BSA (2012) *Recommended Procedure on Industrial Audiometry*

BSA (2010) *Recommended procedure on Ear Examination*

Action on hearing loss – Communication Tactics Leaflet

Supplemental Resources

Health & Safety Executive (2005). *Controlling noise at work. The Control of Noise at Work. Regulations 2005 – Guidance on Regulations*.

BSA (2017). *Recommended Procedure: Surveillance Audiometry*

BSA (2011). *Recommended Procedure: Pure tone air-conduction and bone-conduction threshold audiometry with and without masking*

Frequently asked questions

Am I suitable to undertake the course?

In order to undertake audiometry you need to be comfortable with touching other peoples' ears, gaining close proximity to patients, have 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. You need to ensure you are able to review the notes in the evening in order to consolidate your learning. The course is in-depth and will provide you with a lot of new information. This will also help you to pass your written assessment on the final day.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed on your ability to carry out otoscopy, and audiometry according to BSA practice. You will also be assessed with a written exam of 20 multiple choice questions based on the theory content of the course. Delegates must pass both elements of the course in order to achieve the certificate. The pass mark is 70%. If you do not pass the multiple choice questions then you will be given some written homework.

Will I need to take part in the practise sessions?

We like (if possible) for all delegates to take part in the practical sessions, so that you can practise on each other. All delegates will have their ears checked on the day to ensure that their ears are safe for audiometry. When practicing on the course, all delegates will be under close supervision.

You will be asked to fill out a consent form for other delegates to practise 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 practise 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 audiometry can only be maintained with continuing practise and review. We recommend that you start out practising with supervision (remote or direct) until you and/or your supervisor agree you are able to carry out audiometry without (or with remote) supervision. At all times you should be aware and adhere to your scope of practice (see above). The BSA recommends you review your skills on a course every 2-3 year.

Are there any other training courses I can do?

There is a BSA certificate available in paediatric impression-taking (under-five years), impression-taking in adults (over 5 years). Courses in audiometry and tympanometry (3 days) and masking (1 day) is also available.

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