

AHP Educator Career Framework

Raising the profile, promoting the importance and realising the potential of Allied Health Professions Educators. A developmental career wide resource for all those engaged in the education and development of Allied Health Professionals and the wider health and care multiprofessional team

Final Report and Framework

April 2023

The Framework

Allied Health Professions Educator Career Framework

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Introduction

The AHP Educator Career Framework is an outcome-based career framework that describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective teacher, learning facilitator, supervisor and role model in AHP education in practice and formal education settings. First and foremost, it promotes the education pillar of AHP professional practice, recognising that education is everyone's responsibility.

There is a plethora of terms used to describe roles undertaken by health care professionals engaged in learning and development, for example, mentor, supervisor, facilitator. In line with the Health Education England Educator Workforce Strategy¹, Multiprofessional framework for advanced practice in England^{2,3} the term Educator is used to describe everyone involved in the learning and development of others, whilst recognising the interconnections between education and supervision.

It is inclusive of all Allied Health Professions, wherever they work and spans all career grades. It has been purposefully designed to facilitate alignment with existing health and care educator career frameworks and for use by all members of multiprofessional teams. AHP Educators play a vital role in sustaining the future and current workforce, the development of this framework is an important first step in establishing a nationally recognised standard for the AHP educator workforce. By establishing a national standard, the experience and expertise of AHP Educators will be recognised and celebrated.

Who is the Framework for

The framework is for

1. Individual AHPs committed to developing themselves as educators.
2. Line managers committed to developing their AHP educator workforce.
3. Organisations wishing to develop as learning organisations.

The framework has been developed for individuals who have a responsibility for the learning and development of others alongside providing health and social care services across a range of workplace settings. First and foremost, it promotes the education pillar of AHP professional practice, recognising that education is everyone's responsibility. Individual AHPs have a professional obligation to support the learning and development of others.

Practice education and practice educators are at the heart of developing the AHP workforce of today and tomorrow. The framework has been designed to be inclusive of all AHPs wherever they are working. It is generic, describing career pathways for individual AHPs wishing to develop their educator knowledge and skills as an integral part of their practice as practitioners, specialist educators and those who wish to pursue a career as an AHP academic.

Line managers can use the framework to support education focused development conversations with individuals and teams investing in education focused Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as a tool for ensuring safe and effective care.

Organisations can use the framework to support the development of their educator workforce and learning environment to a published set of standards. Enhancing the quality of their organisational learning environment, supporting the CPD of their educator workforce and championing education excellence as a fundamental building block to the delivery of safe, effective care.

- 1 Health Education England (2023) Educator Workforce Strategy (will need hyper link when available)
- 2 Health Education England (2017) Multi-professional framework for advanced practice in England. Available from: <https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/multi-professional-framework-for-advanced-clinical-practice-in-england/>
- 3 Harding 2022 Advanced Practice: taking us into the future through supervision and education. Association of Advanced Practice Educators Annual Conference

Recognising education as one of four pillars (Practice, Leadership, Research and Education) of professional practice, this framework is important, timely and needed to promote the importance of education as an integral part of every AHPs professional responsibility. Adopting the principles described in the Advanced Clinical Practice Framework⁴, the inter relationship between education and supervision is implicit within the framework.

Every AHP has an obligation to support the learning and development of others, this framework has been developed to ensure that AHPs responsible for AHP education achieve excellence and effectiveness in their education practice, are inclusive, utilise an evidence-based approach and ensure that AHP education is sustainable across a broad range of education settings. In turn this will support the sustainability of a safe effective AHP workforce for today and tomorrow.

This framework sets out a set of expectations for all AHPs who have responsibility for education, described through six domains, associated capabilities, education, and training standards. It seeks to be inclusive, empowering for all those involved in AHP education irrespective of job role, workplace setting and career stage.

It establishes education as an important pillar of practice as early as possible in all AHP professionals' careers. It establishes a set of principles to promote and recognise the professionalism of AHP education and AHP educators, a structure to promote AHP education career routes and to establish the idea of expert practice in AHP education.

The framework:

- Provides clear reference and links to development of capabilities across career stages, pre-registration AHP student/ learner, support worker, advanced support work, assistant practitioner, early/ mid-career graduate, advanced and consultant practitioner and AHPs in academic roles.
- Highlights the responsibility for education facilitation/coordination, in any role held by a registered AHP and includes reference to specialist educator practice-based roles, for example practice educator, practice supervisor, mentor, practice education facilitator.

4 Health Education England (2017) Multi-professional framework for advanced practice in England. Available from: <https://advanced-practice.hee.nhs.uk/multi-professional-framework-for-advanced-clinical-practice-in-england/>

- Recognises the multiprofessional dimensions of education in workplace settings. The framework has been designed to facilitate synergy with other health and care professional educator frameworks where they exist.
- Is designed to be practical and easy to navigate supporting individual AHPs to map their current experience and expertise and identify developmental opportunities and steps for career development.
- Describes the steps from student/ learner to newly qualified practitioner and the connection to preceptorship in relation to practice based education.

The framework was developed by a set of guiding principles:

- Flexible, non-hierarchical applicable to all workplace settings.
- Enabling of a portfolio career which does not assume linear career progression. Respecting individual career choices.
- Promotes the potential for AHP Educators to embed education into everyday practice and/ or specialise as an AHP educator in practice or academic roles.
- Illustrates career pathways between roles, sectors, and organisations.
- Inclusive of all AHPs who are engaged in education, teaching, supervising and mentoring and support the development of others.
- Inclusive of all AHPs across career grades.
- Overtly inclusive, and promoting diversity in the AHP workforce, emphasising equality of opportunity and addressing education inequalities where they exist.
- Actively supporting career development of all AHPs with protected characteristics.

This AHP Educator Career Framework considers the CPD of AHPs across all career stages as a flexible journey. Progression through the career framework may not be straightforward or linear. Whilst there are some common trajectories in the series of roles that individuals choose to follow, this is not rigidly defined.

The framework is intended to include all AHP career stages, the term educator is used throughout to describe all those involved in the learning and development of others:

- Students/learners of all types including apprentices and those engaged in continuing professional development
- Support Workers/Advanced Support Workers/Assistant Practitioners
- Early Career Graduates/Educators (1-2 years post-graduation)*
- Mid-career Graduate/Educators (3-5 years post-graduation)*
- Senior clinician/Enhanced Practitioner/Advanced Practitioner/Advanced Educator
- Consultant Practitioner
- Early Career Academic (1-3 years in post)*
- Mid Career Academic (3-6 years in post)*
- Senior Academic (6 years plus)*

* Indicative time frames intended for guidance only recognising individual career choices.

This framework was designed to make the education career pathway clearer for AHPs. The framework has been underpinned by six guiding principles.

1. **People first** – Career progression is guided by organisational as well as individual values and expectations.
2. **Equality, diversity, inclusivity, and belonging** – Principles underpinning a commitment to each member of the AHP workforce at all career stages.
3. **Education for all** – Lifelong learning is a fundamental principle. Supporting others and being supported by others throughout a career is essential to individual and team development, advancement of the workforce ensuring safe effective care.
4. **Community-centred** – Co-production is fundamental to AHP practice and as such the principles of co-production and collaborative practice to generate collective insights underpinned by evidence have been used to develop the framework.
5. **Inclusive Learning** – Creating an inclusive learning environment through a multiprofessional team approach, addressing educational inequalities is fundamental to the framework.
6. **Multiprofessional** – Recognising the multiprofessional nature of practice, education and learning contexts a multiprofessional lens has shaped the framework across the multiprofessional health and care community.

Figure 1: The AHP Educator Career Framework Domains and Guiding Principles



It is noted that:

- Each of these domains can help AHPs to grow and develop over time.
- The domains are not intended to be hierarchical. Development can take place across the domains, and none is a pre-requisite to the others.
- Self-directed learning and reflective practice are essential components of the framework. Formal qualifications may also be used to demonstrate capabilities across the domains.
- The guiding principles are the foundations for each domain.

These domains are aligned with the AHP Strategy for England: AHPs Deliver 2022-2027⁵ and the Health Education England Educator Workforce Strategy⁶.

Domain 1: Responsibility and Accountability – to ensure safe and effective education

All members of the AHP community need to be aware of the capabilities required for their role as an educator and ensure that they engage with both formal and informal opportunities to achieve them, to reflect and to identify areas for future development.

- Registered practitioner retains overall responsibility for pre-registration student and/or apprentice development.
- Takes part in peer observed teaching and other education development activities on a regular basis.
- Participates in regular peer review of facilitated education practice.
- Completes comprehensive session plans for facilitated education activities including assessment of learning outcomes.
- Adheres to the principles of inclusivity, anti-racism, and co-production.
- Keeps appropriate records and evaluates impact of facilitated education promoting continual improvement.

5 NHS England (2022). The Allied Health Professions (AHPs) strategy for England – AHPs Deliver. Available from: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/the-allied-health-professions-ahps-strategy-for-england/>

6 Health Education England (2023) Educator Workforce Strategy (ADD hyper link when available)

Domain 2: Diverse and Inclusive leadership – to overcome barriers and provide solutions for the provision of inclusive education.

Inclusive education leadership that respects the diversity of learners is at the core of educator practice. A commitment to developing equitable learning environments and addressing inequalities is fundamental to facilitate and deliver education at all levels. Allyship, participation and anti-discriminatory practice are central to leadership practice.

- Contributes to creating an inclusive learning environment using an evidence-based approach, and is welcoming to innovation.
- Demonstrates a shared responsibility for creating an inclusive learning environment with a specific focus on learner and educator wellbeing.
- Leads a team approach to creating an inclusive learning environment.
- Develops and promotes a diverse and inclusive learning environment, that values and supports staff and students, across the wider organisation and professions.
- Assesses learners' individual needs and preferences.
- Characteristics (creativity, humility, and a commitment to diversity) of inclusive leadership are emphasise

Domain 3: Community and co-production – empowerment of all voices to be change makers and agents & to ensure that actions are non-discriminatory.

Co-creating learning opportunities and ensuring that the voices of learners and the end users of any service are empowered and heard enables educators to design, deliver and shape inclusive education provision. AHP educators in all learning environments should collaborate to evaluate and co-produce course design and content for both practice-based learning and further education/university-based learning. Innovation should be encouraged. New education developments should be critically evaluated for effectiveness, safety, and sustainability.

- Provides appropriate feedback on learning.
- Co-produces guidance and preparation of educational resources (physical and digital).

- Analyses and responds to learner feedback for continual improvement.
- Designs and delivers materials/experiences that facilitate learning for all and are culturally relevant.
- Evaluates and reflects on effectiveness of the learning experience, responding and adapting as necessary.

Domain 4: Formal knowledge and skills – to deliver evidence based/sector informed education.

Educators develop knowledge and skills during their practice through both formal and informal opportunities. They complete appropriate education and training and where appropriate accreditation and/or formal qualifications to enable them to fulfil an educator role and regularly engage with CPD in relation to their educator responsibilities to maintain and build on capabilities.

- Completes (practice) educator training in accordance with job description/professional body guidance.
- Participates in regular CPD relating to education role in accordance with job description/professional body guidance.
- Mentors, supervises, and teaches learners, support staff and other professionals.
- Develops evidence-based learning materials (physical and digital).
- Co-produces, evaluates and updates course content/curriculum and incorporates new, evidence-based developments in educational practice in line with appropriate professional standards.
- Promotes and contributes to education and training of clinical and/or academic staff, learners and other groups.
- Active participation and engagement in communities of education practice and knowledge exchange.

Domain 5: Digital and sustainability – to ensure that education provision is forward facing with a focus on innovation and the environment.

Digital technology is essential to create educational opportunities for a diverse AHP workforce. The educator workforce needs to embed future technologies whilst also considering environmental sustainability.

AHP educators should maintain and develop their digital skills (managing information, sharing data, using digital skills in delivery of care). They should welcome innovation and critically evaluate new developments in clinical or educational practice prior to wider adoption into practice.

- Completes digital and sustainability training as per role/job description and professional body guidance.
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge and skills required to deliver and receive education as per role/job description and professional body guidance.
- Evaluates effectiveness, safety and sustainability of new education developments or innovations.
- Incorporates new, evidence-based developments into educational practice.

Domain 6: Research, Innovation & Quality Improvement – to ensure education provision is evidence based and impactful.

Educational innovation is vital to ensure that learners are equipped to work within the workforce of the future, and research and quality improvement processes are fundamental. Strengthening the evidence base to inform education practice, enhance learner support, ensuring education programme content aligns with advances and innovations, to drive education quality and meet the needs of future students, staff, and service users. Educators should critically evaluate their own educational practice and where appropriate practice. Ensuring that new developments are within their scope of practice as educators, for inclusion in the educational curricula.

- Participates in educational audit/evaluation and/or Quality Improvement (QI) projects or research.
- Develops or leads educational audit and/or QI projects or research.
- Critically evaluates new developments in scope of practice for inclusion in education curricula and/or syllabus.
- Critically evaluates outcomes of learning and/or teaching practice of self and others.
- Adapts learning and/or teaching practice in response to evaluation.

Domain 1 Accountability and Responsibility

	Registered practitioner retains overall responsibility for their development	Takes part in observed teaching and other education activities on a regular basis	Participates in regular peer review of facilitated education practice	Completes comprehensive session plans for facilitated education activities	Adheres to the principles of inclusivity, anti-racism and co-production	Keeps appropriate records and evaluates impact of facilitated education
Student/learner						
Apprentice						
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/Assistant Practitioner						
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator						
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator						
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator						
Consultant practitioner						
Early Career Academic						
Mid-Career Academic						
Senior Academic						

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

Domain 2 Diverse and Inclusive Education Leadership

	Contributes to creating an inclusive learning environment using an evidenced based approach welcoming innovation	Demonstrates a shared responsibility for creating an inclusive learning environment with a specific focus on learner and educator well being	Leads a team approach to creating an inclusive learning environment	Develops & promotes a diverse & inclusive learning environment, that values & supports staff & students, across wider organisation & professions	Assesses learners' individual needs and preferences	Characteristics (creativity, humility, and a commitment to diversity) of inclusive leadership are emphasised
Student/learner						
Apprentice						
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/Assistant Practitioner						
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator						
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator						
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator						
Consultant practitioner						
Early Career Academic						
Mid-Career Academic						
Senior Academic						

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

Domain 3 Community and Co-production

	Provides appropriate feedback on learning	Co-produces guidance & preparation of educational resources(physical & digital)	Analyses & responds to learner feedback for continual improvement	Co-produces, evaluates & updates curriculum/ course content in line with appropriate professional standards	Designs & delivers materials/ experiences that facilitate learning for all and are culturally relevant	Evaluates & reflects on effectiveness of the learning experience, responding & adapting as necessary
Student/learner						
Apprentice						
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/Assistant Practitioner						
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator						
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator						
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator						
Consultant practitioner						
Early Career Academic						
Mid-Career Academic						
Senior Academic						

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

Domain 4 Formal Knowledge and Skills

	Participates in preparation for learning opportunities	Completes (practice) educator training in accordance with job description/professional body guidance	Participates in regular CPD relating to education role in accordance with job description/professional body guidance	Mentors, supervises, and teaches learners, support staff & other professionals	Develops relevant learning materials (physical & digital)	Promotes & contributes to education & training of clinical &/ or academic staff, learners & other groups	Co-produces, evaluates & updates course content/ curriculum and incorporates new, evidence-based developments in educational practice in line with appropriate professional standards	Active participation & engagement in communities of education practice & knowledge exchange
Student/learner								
Apprentice								
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/ Assistant Practitioner								
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator								
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator								
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/ Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator								
Consultant practitioner								
Early Career Academic								
Mid-Career Academic								
Senior Academic								

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

Domain 5 Digital and Sustainability

	Completes digital & sustainability training as per role/job description & professional body guidance	Maintains up-to-date knowledge & skills required to deliver & receive education as per role/job description & professional body guidance	Evaluates effectiveness, safety and sustainability of new education developments or innovations	Incorporates new, evidence-based developments into educational practice
Student/learner				
Apprentice				
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/Assistant Practitioner				
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator				
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator				
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator				
Consultant practitioner				
Early Career Academic				
Mid-Career Academic				
Senior Academic				

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

Domain 6 Research and Quality Improvement

	Participates in educational/ clinical audit/ evaluation and/ or QI projects or research	Develops or leads educational/ clinical audit and/ or QI projects or research	Critically evaluates new developments in scope of practice for inclusion in education curricula and/ or syllabus	Critically evaluates outcomes of learning and/ or teaching practice of self and others	Adapts learning and/ or teaching practice in response to evaluation
Student/learner					
Apprentice					
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/Assistant Practitioner					
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator					
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator					
Senior clinician/ Enhanced/Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator					
Consultant practitioner					
Early Career Academic					
Mid-Career Academic					
Senior Academic					

KEY Colour shaded blocks denotes which elements are applicable to each career stage

4. Academic Qualification Framework

This academic qualification framework sets out a future ambition for the accreditation of AHP educators wherever they work. Recognising that this is radically different to current practices and ambitious, it describes a future where all AHP educators are accredited educators and required to undertake formal accredited programmes and or academic qualifications.

Advance HE UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)⁷ is a nationally recognised framework which promotes professionalism in learning and teaching in higher education.

The four categories of Fellowship are awarded based on evidence of individual personal professional practice which meets the requirements of one of the four Descriptors of the UKPSF. The UKPSF has been developed as a standards framework for the higher education sector that sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours demonstrated by those teaching and/or supporting higher education learning.

Formal accreditation will enhance the profile of AHPs engaged in education, promote national standards of excellence and most importantly recognise a career route for AHP educators. It is recognised that, should this be accepted, careful consideration would need to be given for implementation, and full recognition of the experience and expertise of existing AHP educators would need to be recognised in any formal accreditation process.

Academic Accreditation & Qualification Framework	Advance HE UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)			
	Associate Fellow (AFHEA)	Fellow (FHEA)	Senior Fellow (SFHEA)	Principal Fellow (PFHEA)
Student/learner				
Apprentice				
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/ Assistant Practitioner				
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator				
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator				
Senior clinician/Enhanced/ Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator				
Consultant practitioner				
Lead Practice Educator/Practice Learning Facilitator Head of Education				
Early Career Academic				
Mid-Career Academic				
Senior Academic				

7 UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)

	Locally provided Practice Educator programme www.e-lfh.org.uk Practice Educator course		Academic Qualifications		
Academic Accreditation & Qualification Framework	Coaching skills	Education focused CPD (credit or non-credit bearing)	Foundation Degree (Level 5) Module or CPD practice educator course (credit or non-credit bearing)	Degree (Level 6) Mentorship/Educator qualification at Level 6 or above (credit or non-credit bearing)	Masters (Level 7) Post Graduate Certificate in Education
Student/learner					
Apprentice					
Support Worker/ Advanced Support worker/ Assistant Practitioner					
Early Career Graduate Early Career Educator					
Mid Career Graduate Mid Career Educator					
Senior clinician/Enhanced/ Advanced Practitioner Advanced Educator					
Consultant practitioner					
Lead Practice Educator/Practice Learning Facilitator Head of Education					
Early Career Academic					
Mid-Career Academic					
Senior Academic					

Recommendations

The Allied Health Professions Educator Career Framework provides a pivotal opportunity to both raise the profile of and realise the potential of AHP education and educators within the context of multiprofessional health and care work and learning. The publication of the Health Education England's (2023) Educator Workforce Strategy for England⁸ coincides with the publication of this framework which aligns with priority 3 in the educator workforce strategy to introduce career frameworks for educators of all professions.

This framework has been co created by a community of AHPs and allies, is evidenced based, inclusive and designed to support AHP educators at all career stages, wherever they are working. It has been designed with six underpinning principles in an deliberate attempt to enable this framework to align with other health and care education career frameworks that currently exist and those in development. It is hoped that other health and care professional groups in the process of developing their own educator career framework will draw upon this framework to influence their thinking in the way that the project team drew upon existing frameworks to shape this one.

Equality, diversity, and inclusivity are central principle to the framework. As well as providing a focus on addressing education inequalities which may exist between learners it is intended to help individuals, line managers and organisation to consciously support educator wellbeing. Championing equal opportunities for educator continuing professional development, including protected learning time for educators themselves.

During the development and consultation phases(phase 1 &2, 2022) , several AHP Faculties, regional networks, individual organisations and individual AHPs have expressed a interest in working together to test the framework out in practice.

Recommendation 1

To identify diverse pilot sites to test out use of the framework during the spring and summer of 2023.

Outputs to include 'How to use' Guides accompanied by illustrative vignettes.

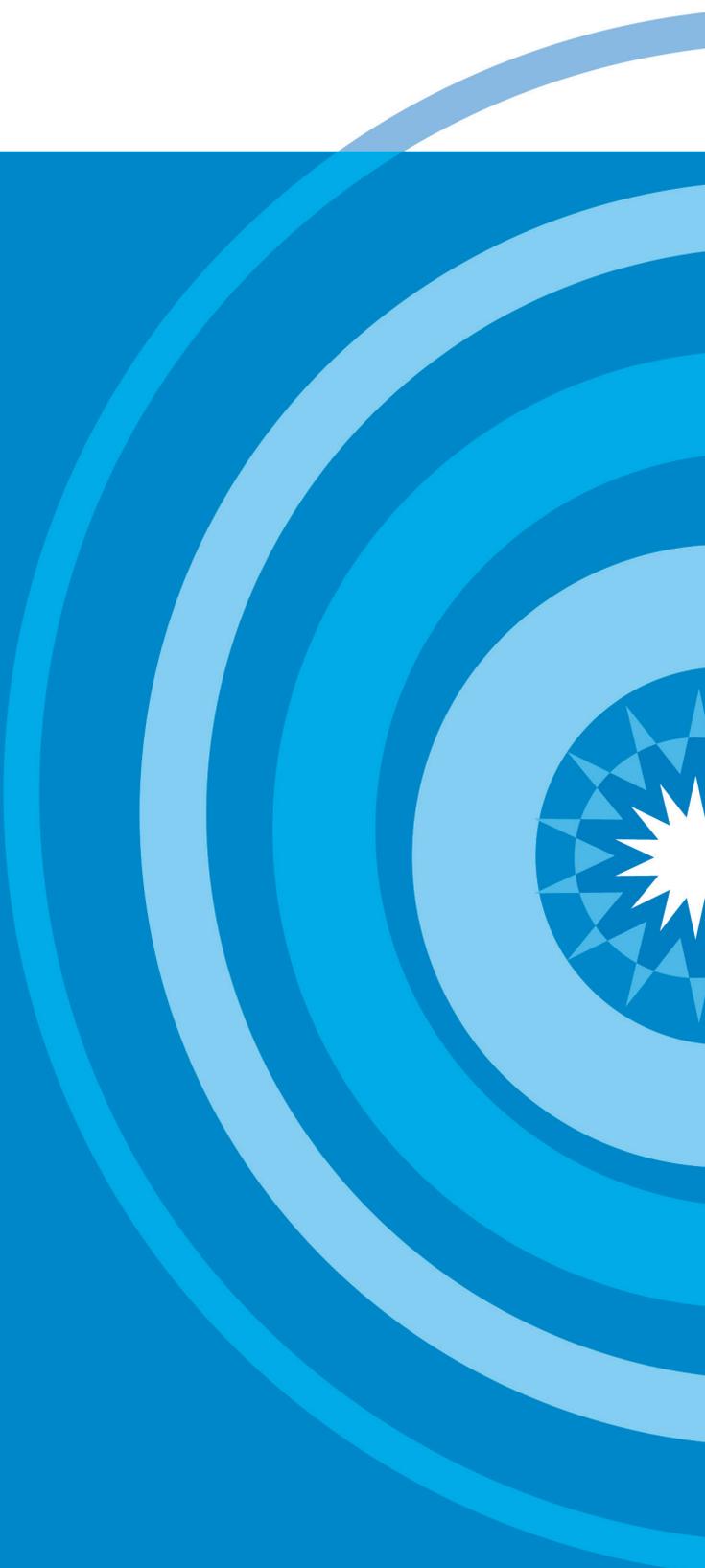
Stakeholder engagement and consultation was overwhelmingly positive, there was a consensus view that the framework was needed, and individuals and organisational representatives welcomed the development. The one area which attracted the most debate and therefore requires further exploration was the proposal to establish a national accreditation scheme for AHP educators.

Recommendation 2

To consult wider and explore on the potential for a national accreditation scheme.

Any further consultation/ exploration should aligned with the implementation of the Health Education England Educator Workforce Strategy(2023

⁸ Health Education England (2023) Educator Workforce Strategy for England (hyper link when available)



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