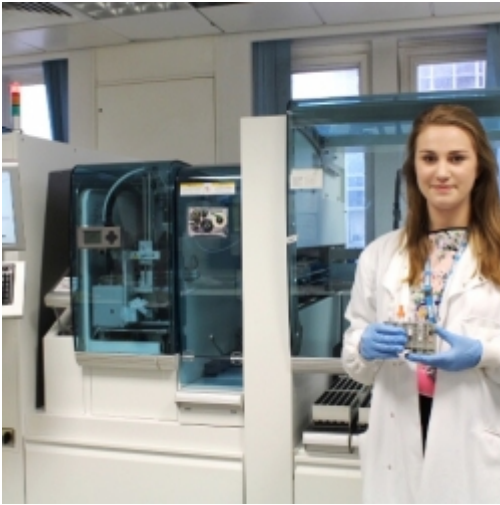


Real-life story - Charlotte Harborow

Charlotte came across the NHS Scientist Training Programme (STP [1]) whilst searching for jobs at university.



Charlotte Harborow Trainee clinical scientist

Employer or university Royal Liverpool University Hospital

Salary range £25k-£35k

How I got into the role

Whilst studying at university, I knew that working in the private sector was not for me. So I searched online for scientist training jobs and came across a page about the NHS Scientist Training Programme (STP [1]). The course fitted in all the aspects of my university degree that I loved and more; I could gain practical and analytical skills and would even be able to have some patient contact which was ideal for me.

What I do

As soon as I started, I 'hit the ground running' and haven't stopped since!

My typical day in Clinical Biochemistry usually starts at around 8.30am with a morning meeting where we discuss any abnormal results that the overnight on-call doctors have been phoned about. It is a great learning experience for me and I get to hear about a range of abnormalities and how colleagues plan to deal with them.

Working while training means I can also raise real-life cases with my training officer and gain more of an understanding of the course.

My next task is to complete a quality assurance [2] report for one of the analytes- a specific substance we measure in a sample - we measure many of them in an automated laboratory. I check that our performance is good and compare our results to other laboratories.

Before lunch I visit patients with one of the registrar doctors to see those who were discussed in the morning meeting. I work closely with the doctor, advising on suitable tests to aid in diagnosis and monitor the treatment given to the patient.

After lunch I continue analysing data from my work on an audit project; I've been looking at how temperature affects the stability of potassium in a sample. The results of the audit will be presented to the department so that changes can be made to improve the service that we provide to patients. It's great to see your work improving patient care and is the most rewarding aspect of the job.

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The best bits and challenges

I get to attend careers days at local schools and have even returned to my old university to speak about careers in healthcare science. It is something that I am really passionate about as I get to teach people about a role that they might not have heard of - I didn't know about the role until I Googled it!

Although I am training on the job, I also have to study for my MSc exams so I often find myself squeezing in revision during lunch times.

Life outside work

I try to help as often as I can at my local scout group which involves everything from running games to showing the kids how to cook on an open fire!

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/clinical-biochemistry/charlotte-harborow-real-life-story>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#STP>

[2] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Quality_assurance