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Diagnostic radiographer

Radiography is one of the most innovative aspects of healthcare – you’ll use advanced technology to look inside patients’ bodies and understand the root causes of their illness, and consult with colleagues on diagnosis and treatment plans.

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Working life

As a diagnostic radiographer, you’ll use cutting-edge technology to take images of the insides of patients to help understand and diagnose conditions. Based in a hospital, you’ll work with patients and colleagues to design treatment programmes and support patients until their treatment ends. From using a CT scanner to make a 3D image for a surgeon to preparing a patient for an MRI [3] scan – you’ll be using some of the most complex and advanced technology. Diagnostic radiographers are also central to a wider multidisciplinary team, working and consulting with colleagues across various departments.

Real-life story - Paul Wicklen

Diagnostic radiographer

Making the move into diagnostic radiography and imaging is easily the best one I’ve made since signing up for the RAF.

Real-life story - Paul Wicklen [4]

Entry requirements

To become a diagnostic radiographer, you must first successfully complete an approved degree or masters in diagnostic radiography. Degree courses take three or four years full time, or up to six years part time. There are also some postgraduate courses that can take two years. Once you’ve completed your degree, you need to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC [5]) before you can start practising. The other option is to apply for an apprenticeship degree.

Entry requirements for an undergraduate course are typically:

- Five GCSEs (grades A-C [6]), including English language, maths and science
- Two of three A levels, including physics, chemistry or biology/human biology.

Or equivalent qualifications:



- A BTEC, HND or HNC which includes science.
- A relevant T level (health or healthcare science may be accepted).
- A relevant NVQ.
- A science-based access course.
- Equivalent Scottish or Irish qualifications.

Each university sets its own entry requirements, so it's important to check with them directly. In most cases, the results of an interview and other selection processes are taken into account as well as academic qualifications. It's also a good idea to spend some time with a diagnostic radiography team to get some firsthand experience of what the role's really like.

When applying for a degree, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

Annual payments

You could receive £6,000 a year to help fund your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back. Find out more [7].

Degree apprenticeship

A degree apprenticeship is another way to become a diagnostic radiographer. Apprenticeships give you the chance to earn a living while gaining your qualification. Your employer and the government will pay the tuition fees, so apprenticeships aren't eligible for student grants.

Must-have skills

Don't forget – academic qualifications aren't everything. You'll need to be interested in new technologies, be safety-conscious and have excellent observational skills, as well as an ability to interpret data. But this isn't just a role for the technologically-minded. You'll also need to have strong communication skills and be as comfortable discussing treatment plans with patients as you are with your professional peers.

You'll provide a service for most departments within the hospital including accident and emergency.

Training and career development

Once you've qualified, you'll have annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) check-ins, where we'll discuss your career aspirations and plan how we can help you to achieve them, so you're always moving forward. You'll also be encouraged to join The Society of Radiographers where you can take courses, conferences and seminars.

As your career progresses, you could specialise in a particular type of imaging such as computerised tomography scanning or undertake further training to become a sonographer. Or you could specialise in working with children, stroke [8] patients or cancer patients, for example. Research or teaching are other options.

Working for the NHS, you may also find yourself heading your own radiography team, managing budgets, staff and equipment.

Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours with the need to work flexibly over a seven day period. As a diagnostic radiographer, you'll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [9], typically starting on band 5.

You'll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave plus bank holidays.

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**Find your
course to
become a
diagnostic
radiographer**

Region

- Any -

Type of qualification

- Any -

Full or part time

- Any -

Search

Displaying 16 - 20 of 46 matches

Diagnostic Radiography and Medical Imaging

University of Portsmouth

View course [10] Opens in a new window

○ Qualification

Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)

Study mode

Full-time

Duration of the course

3 Years

Leading to a career in

Radiography (diagnostic)

- Contact details

admissions@port.ac.uk [11]

023 9284 5566

- Region

South East

Admissions address

University House

Winston Churchill Avenue

Portsmouth

PO1 2UP

England

Radiography (Diagnostic Imaging)

Keele University

View course [12] Opens in a new window

- Qualification

Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)

Study mode

Full-time

Duration of the course

3 Years

Leading to a career in

Radiography (diagnostic)

- Contact details

sahp.admissions@keele.ac.uk [13]

01782 734551

- Region

West Midlands

Admissions address

Keele University

Keele

ST5 5BG

United Kingdom

Diagnostic Radiography

University of Gloucestershire

View course [14] Opens in a new window

- Qualification

Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)

Study mode

Full-time

Duration of the course

3 Years

Leading to a career in

Radiography (diagnostic)

- Contact details

enquiries@glos.ac.uk [15]

03330 141414

- Region

South West

Admissions address

Park Campus

The Park

Cheltenham

GL50 2RH

United Kingdom

Diagnostic Radiography

University of Salford

View course [16] Opens in a new window

- Qualification

Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)

Study mode

Full-time

Duration of the course

3 Years

Leading to a career in

Radiography (diagnostic)

- Contact details

enquiries@salford.ac.uk [17]

0161 295 4545

- Region

North West

Admissions address

The Crescent

Salford

M5 4WT

United Kingdom

Diagnostic Radiography

Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

View course [18] Opens in a new window

- Qualification

Master of Diagnostic Radiography – MDRad

Study mode

Full-time

Duration of the course

4 Years

Leading to a career in
Radiography (diagnostic)

- Contact details
admissions@qmu.ac.uk [19]
0131 474 0000
- Region
Scotland
- Admissions address
Queen Margaret University
Edinburgh
EH21 6UU
United Kingdom
- Load more Load more results [20]

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Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Register for your guide to becoming a diagnostic radiographer

We'll email you a step-by-step guide to help you on your way to joining us.

Sign up [21]

Other roles that may interest you

- Imaging (ionising) [22]
- Therapeutic radiographer [23]
- Imaging (non-ionising) [24]
- Radiography assistants and imaging support workers [25]

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Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/privacy-and-cookies/#CookieDeclarationChangeConsentChange>
[2] <https://www.youtube.com/NHSCareers> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#MRI>
[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/diagnostic-radiographer/real-life-story-paul-wicklen>
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[8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Stroke> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>

[10] https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/bsc-hons-diagnostic-radiography-and-medical-imaging?utm_campaign=ug_ongoing_uop&utm_medium=profile&utm_source=ucas&utm_content=coursepge
[11] [mailto: admissions@port.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@port.ac.uk)
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[24] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering/imaging-non-ionising> [25] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/radiography-assistants-and-imaging-support-workers>