

Histopathology (healthcare scientist)

Histopathology comes from the Greek word 'histos' meaning tissue.

If you work in histopathology, you'll be involved in the microscopic examination of tissue samples.



You'll receive, dissect and prepare tissues for examination and diagnosis

Working life

You'll receive, dissect and prepare tissues for examination and diagnosis to reveal the structure of tissues and cells. This enables clinicians to see what the likely course and outcome of a disease such as cancer will be.

You'll work in a laboratory setting as a clinical scientist, where you'll use traditional chemical stains, immunological procedures and, increasingly, new molecular specialist techniques, to help distinguish

healthy tissue from abnormal tissue, cells and infective agents.

Who will I work with?

You'll discuss the results you find with other healthcare science staff [1] and medically qualified histopathologists (doctors) [2].

Want to learn more?

- Find out more about the entry requirements, skills and interests required to enter a career in histopathology [3]
- Find out more about the training you'll receive for a career in histopathology [4]

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Pay and conditions

Most jobs in the NHS are covered by the Agenda for Change (AfC) [5] pay scales. This pay system covers all staff except doctors, dentists and the most senior managers. As a clinical scientist in histopathology, you could be earning between AfC [6] bands 6-9, depending on your role and level of responsibility. Trainee clinical scientists train at band 6 level, and qualified clinical scientists are generally appointed at band 7. With experience and further qualifications, you could apply for posts up to band 9.

NHS staff will usually work a standard 37.5 hours per week. They may work a shift pattern.

Terms and conditions of service can vary for employers outside the NHS.

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Where the role can lead

With further training or experience or both, you may be able to develop your career further and apply for vacancies in areas such as further specialisation, management, research, or teaching.

Healthcare science staff often work at the forefront of research and innovation, so that patients are continually receiving the very best healthcare. For example, in histopathology, healthcare science staff are involved in researching causes and treatments of different types of cancer.

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Job market and vacancies

Job market

In November 2018, there were 6,123 clinical scientists registered with the Health and Care Professions Council

[7].

The NHS Scientist Training Programme (STP) [8] attracts many more applicants than there are places and so there is considerable competition for places.

Finding and applying for jobs

When you're looking for vacancies check vacancies carefully to be sure you can meet the requirements of the person specification before applying and to find out what the application process is.

For the NHS STP [9] is an annual recruitment cycle. Applications usually open in early January for the intake in the following autumn and should be made through the National School of Healthcare Science website [10], where you can also find information about the programme and the recruitment process.

- Job vacancies in organisations delivering NHS healthcare can be found on the NHS Jobs website [11]
- Vacancies in local government can be found on the Local Government Jobs website [12] and the Jobs Go Public website [13]

Find out more about general applications and interviews [14].

Volunteering is an excellent way of gaining experience (especially if you don't have enough for a specific paid job you're interested in) and also seeing whether you're suited to a particular type of work. It's also a great way to boost your confidence and you can give something back to the community.

Find out more about volunteering and gaining experience [15].

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Further information

For further information about working and training as a clinical scientist in histopathology, contact:

- Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS) [16]
- Health and Care Professions Council [17]
- Royal College of Pathologists [18]
- Institute of Biomedical Science [19]
- National School of Healthcare Science [10]

Other roles that may interest you

- Biomedical science [20]
 - Histocompatibility and immunogenetics [21]
 - Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [22]
 - Cellular sciences [23]
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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/life-sciences> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/pathology/histopathology-doctor>
[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/life-sciences/histopathology-healthcare-scientist/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/life-sciences/histopathology-healthcare-scientist/training-development-and-registration>
[5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC> [7] <http://www.hcpc-uk.org>
[8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/not-studying-health-related-degree/nhs-scientist-training-programme> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#STP>
[10] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/> [11] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk> [12] <http://www.lgjobs.com/>
[13] <http://www.jobsgopublic.com/> [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/offering-career-support/training-and-teaching-resources-young-people/application> [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/gaining-experience> [16] <http://www.ahcs.ac.uk> [17] <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/> [18] <http://www.rcpath.org> [19] <http://www.ibms.org.uk> [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/biomedical-science> [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/histocompatibility-and-immunogenetics>
[22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics> [23] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/cellular-sciences>