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Radiography assistants and imaging support workers

Radiography assistants and imaging support workers are crucial cogs in the diagnosis and treatment of NHS patients.

Working life

As a radiography assistant or imaging support worker, you'll work closely with diagnostic radiographers [1] who use imaging to work out which disease or condition is causing a patient's illness and/or therapeutic radiographers [2] who use doses of x-rays and other ionising radiation to treat medical conditions, such as cancer and tumours.

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Your responsibilities will include:

- processing images
- ordering stocks of consumable items
- helping with procedures such as biopsies
- making sure the working environment is clean and hygienic
- preparing patients for treatment, including lifting patients
- checking the equipment and report faults
- inputting data

Who will I work with?

Radiography assistants and imaging support workers work closely with diagnostic radiographers [1] and therapeutic radiographers [2], medical physicists [5], engineers [6], doctors [7], nurses [8] and other health professionals.

Where will I work?

Most radiography assistants and imaging support workers work in NHS hospitals. They provide a service for most departments within the hospital including accident and emergency, outpatients, operating theatres and wards.



Some radiography assistants and imaging support workers work in private healthcare.

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements for radiography assistants and imaging support workers. Employers expect good numeracy, literacy and IT skills. They may ask for GCSEs or equivalent. Employers may ask for a healthcare qualification, such as BTEC or NVQ.

Employers often ask for relevant work experience. Even where this is not specified, it would be an advantage if you have worked in health or social care, either in paid employment or voluntary work. If you're applying for a role in the NHS, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

Personal characteristics and skills required

Radiography assistants and imaging support workers need to be:

- very safety conscious
- interested in technology
- calm and reassuring
- able to understand and follow instructions exactly
- physically fit as the job involves a lot of standing and lifting

You'll also need

As a radiography assistant or imaging support worker, you could work with therapeutic and diagnostic radiographers.

- good communication skills
- good observation skills
- ability to keep up to date and learn new skills

Training and development

You will receive the training you need to work as a radiography assistant or imaging support worker. This includes:

- an introduction to the department and its systems and procedures

- using the equipment
- health and safety

You may be able to study for the Certificate in Clinical Imaging Support (at level 2 or 3). You may also have the opportunity to do an apprenticeship.

Some radiography assistants and imaging support workers join the Society of Radiographers [9]. The Society runs training events and conferences so radiography assistants and imaging support workers can update their skills and network with others doing similar work.

Pay and conditions

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours and may include a mix of shifts, such as nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. You'll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [10], typically starting on band 2 or 3.

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, which increases the longer you're in service.

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Other roles that may interest you

- Imaging (non-ionising) [11]
- Diagnostic radiographer [12]
- Therapeutic radiographer [13]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [14]

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- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/radiographer-diagnostic>
 [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/radiographer-therapeutic>
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[12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/roles-allied-health-professions/diagnostic-radiographer> [13]

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[14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics>