

Entry requirements, skills and interests (blood sciences)

You can enter a career in blood sciences with GCSEs, through the undergraduate NHS Practitioner Training Programme or after a degree through the NHS Scientist Training Programme.

Entry requirements

There are currently three entry points into this area of work:

- GCSEs or equivalent level-2 qualification
- A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualification
- A relevant degree

GCSEs or equivalent level-2 qualification

With GCSEs or equivalent qualifications at levels 2 or 3 you could enter at healthcare science associate or assistant level (for example as a phlebotomist ^[1]). There may be apprenticeships ^[2] in healthcare science in your area.

A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualification

With two or three A2 or A-levels including science subjects (and a range of GCSEs at A-C grade, including maths and English), you can apply for the NHS Practitioner Training Programme (PTP) ^[3] by taking an accredited BSc degree in healthcare science (blood sciences). Alternative or equivalent qualifications may be accepted by some universities, but you are advised to check with each university (or visit their website) before making an application. You can search for courses using our course finder ^[4].

A relevant degree

You can apply for a place on the graduate-entry NHS Scientist Training Programme ^[5]. You must have a 1st or 2.1 either in an undergraduate honours degree or an integrated master's degree in a pure or applied science subject relevant to the specialism for which you are applying.

If you have a 2.2 honours degree or better in any subject, you will also be considered if you have a higher degree* that is relevant to the specialism for which you are applying.

(*Higher degree as defined on page 17 of The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies [6] Please note this does not include postgraduate diplomas or postgraduate certificates.)

Because of the extensive variation in degrees available it isn't possible to provide a definitive list of relevant degrees for entry to the [STP](#) [7]. You need to be sure that you've reviewed the job description and person specification for the training (on the National School of Healthcare Science's website [8]), and the information on this page. You then need to be sure to match the skills and knowledge required to the content of your degree and the specialism you wish to apply for. For [STP](#) [7] positions in the life sciences (which include blood sciences), the most commonly accepted degrees will be in biomedical sciences, biology, microbiology, [genetics](#) [9] or biochemistry.

For all candidates, evidence of research experience (e.g. in the form of a higher degree or equivalent evidence of scientific and academic capability) is considered desirable.

For full details of entry requirements for the [STP](#) [7], including qualifications, scientific skills, transferable skills and physical requirements, please see the person specification on the National School of Healthcare Science's website [10].

Find out more about the training you'll receive and registration for a career in blood sciences [11].

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**Skills, qualities
and interests
needed**

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To work in the blood sciences you will need:

- an interest in science and technology, a good academic background and an ability to update and test your knowledge against experience
- good communication skills and be able to liaise with the healthcare team and also advise and reassure patients
- to be comfortable using modern technology and complex equipment
- meticulous attention to detail and produce highly accurate work even when under pressure
- good interpersonal skills as you may have direct contact with patients and you must respect their privacy, be sympathetic and have a friendly and professional attitude towards them

- to be able to work as part of a team.

If you work in a role with responsibility for resources (such as staff, budgets or equipment) you'll need excellent leadership skills and be able to use your initiative within the remit of your job role.

If you're applying for a healthcare science role or training position either in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work. The same will be true if you're applying for a university course funded by the NHS.

The NHS values form a key part of the [NHS Constitution](#) [12].

Find out more about the NHS Constitution [13].

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/life-sciences/blood-sciences/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests-blood-sciences>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/phlebotomist>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-healthcare-science>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/graduate-training-opportunities/nhs-scientist-training-programme>
- [6] <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#STP>
- [8] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Genetics>
- [10] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/join-programme/nhs-scientist-training-programme/important-documents>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/life-sciences/blood-sciences/training-development-and-registration>
- [12] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution
- [13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>