

Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of NHS careers? Use our compare roles section to get bite-size information on the entry requirements and training, pay and conditions, prospects and skills needed of up to three roles. If there is something that you think you could do, then get more in-depth information on the role.

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Healthcare science assistants and associates [1]

Healthcare science assistants and associates make a difference to patients' lives by supporting assessment and diagnosis of disease and illness. Some will work in laboratories but others will work directly with patients every day.

Training and qualifications required

There are no set entry requirements to become a healthcare science assistant but you're likely to need GCSEs, or equivalent level 2 vocational qualification. For healthcare science associate positions, you're likely to need A levels (including at least one science) or relevant level 3 vocational qualifications in healthcare science and some relevant experience of working in healthcare science. Increasingly, there will be opportunities to enter assistant and associate roles through an apprenticeship, where you may be offered the chance to take qualifications such as the Pearson BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Introduction to Healthcare Science, if you're working as a healthcare science assistant or the Pearson BTEC Level 4 Certificate in Healthcare Science, if you're working as a healthcare science associate.

Expected working hours and salary range

As a healthcare science assistant you will typically start Agenda for Change (AfC) band 2 or 3. As a healthcare science associate, you will usually work at AfC band 4. Healthcare science assistants and associates work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. Some may work shifts, which could involve nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

As a healthcare science assistant or associate, you'll need to be able to follow instructions and procedures, flexible and adaptable, careful and methodical, able to work alone or as part of a team, physically fit for standing, lifting, etc. You'll also need scientific or technical skills, organisational and communication skills.

Prospects

If you start as a healthcare science assistant, with experience and further training, you could apply for positions as a healthcare science associate. With further experience as a healthcare science associate (and

provided you have the academic ability), you could apply for the NHS Practitioner Training Programme by taking an undergraduate BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science.

Related roles

- Cardiographer [2]
- Phlebotomist [3]
- Healthcare assistant [4]
- Clinical bioinformatics health informatics [5]

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Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-science-assistant-and-associate>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/cardiographer> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/phlebotomist>

[4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-support-worker/roles-healthcare-support-worker/healthcare-assistant> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/clinical-bioinformatics/clinical-bioinformatics-health-informatics>