

# Therapeutic radiographer

Therapeutic radiography is an exciting and varied career. It offers you the chance to make a difference, a high degree of flexibility and excellent employment prospects. You'll work with patients every day to help improve their care and their lives.

## Working life

Therapeutic radiographers use doses of x-rays and other ionising radiation to treat medical conditions - mainly cancer and tumours. You will work to high levels of accuracy to help ensure the patient's tumour or cancer receives exactly the right dose of radiation, at the same time as ensuring the surrounding normal tissues receive the lowest possible dose.

*"I've already secured my job at Royal Stoke University Hospital for when I graduate so that's where I will kick start my career!" Lily, a therapeutic radiography student*

*Read Lily's story in full [1]*

Watch this video to see what both therapeutic and diagnostic radiographers do.?

## What you'll do as a therapeutic radiographer

You'll be making a difference every day, working closely with patients and helping them with many different issues as therapeutic radiographer. Some examples of things you might work on include:

- using doses of x-rays and other ionising radiation to treat medical conditions - mainly cancer and tumours
- helping cancer patients along their journey from the initial referral clinic, where they give pre-treatment information, through the planning process, treatment and eventually post-treatment review

The difference you make to your patients' lives is one of the most exciting things about being a therapeutic radiographer. As [2] well as seeing different patients and conditions you'll also have the opportunity to work in a multi-disciplinary team working closely with doctors, nurses, medical physicists and engineers in an oncology team. You may supervise the work of radiography assistants ?

*"Every day I have the opportunity to make a difference to those affected by cancer. Their thank you letters are always lovely to read." Sairanne Wickers, consultant breast radiographer*

## How to become a therapeutic radiographer

To become a therapeutic radiographer you'll need to train and study for an undergraduate degree or postgraduate diploma. Entry requirements vary depending on where you'd like to study. You can find the therapeutic radiography course to suit you using our Course Finder tool [4].

### Want to learn more?

- Find out more about the entry requirements and training needed to be a therapeutic radiographer. [5]

- Pay and conditions

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Radiographers in the NHS work standard hours, which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. You may have to work shifts, including evenings, nights and weekends. You'll start at band 5 of the Agenda for Change pay scale. [6]

- Where the role can lead

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Once qualified, therapeutic radiographers often join the Society of Radiographers [7]. Registered therapeutic radiographers have to keep their skills and knowledge up to date with annual CPD (continuing professional development). The Society of Radiographers runs courses, conferences and seminars where therapeutic radiographers can exchange ideas and update their skills.

You could specialise in a particular type of treatment such as ionising or non-ionising radiation, for example the new area of proton beam therapy [8]. Or you could specialise in treating particular types of cancer or in working with, for example, children. Research or teaching are other options.

You could also move into management, either within radiography services or general management. As head of a local radiography service you would be responsible for a team of staff and for managing a budget.

There may be opportunities to work overseas.

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- Job market and vacancies

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In November 2018, there were 34,286 radiographers (including diagnostic radiographers [9] and therapeutic radiographers) registered with the Health and Care Professions Council [10].

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [11]. Some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations on NHS Choices [12].

If you're applying for a role either directly 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 are applying for a university course funded by the NHS.

Find out more about NHS values. [13]

- Further information

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- Society of Radiographers [14]
- Radiography Careers [15]

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## Other roles that may interest you

- Diagnostic radiographer [16]
- Radiography assistants and imaging support workers [17]
- Radiotherapy physics [18]
- Radiation physics and radiation safety physics [19]

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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/therapeutic-radiographer>

### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/therapeutic-radiographer/real-life-story-lily-aston>

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#PHE>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/therapeutic-radiographer/real-life-story-sairanne-wickers>

[4] [http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field\\_leading\\_to\\_a\\_career\\_in\\_tid=203&field\\_qualification\\_type\\_tid=All&field\\_study\\_mode\\_tid=A](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field_leading_to_a_career_in_tid=203&field_qualification_type_tid=All&field_study_mode_tid=A)

[5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/therapeutic-radiographer/entry-requirements-and-training-therapeutic>

[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>

[7] <http://www.sor.org/>

[8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/news/range-staff-needed-administer-new-cancer-treatment>

[9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/radiographer-diagnostic>

[10] <http://www.hcpc-uk.org>

[11] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>

[12] <http://www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/howthenhsworks/authoritiesandtrusts/Pages/Authoritiesandtrusts.aspx>

[13] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>

[14] <http://www.sor.org>

[15] <http://www.radiographycareers.co.uk>

[16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/diagnostic-radiographer>

[17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/radiography-assistants-and-imaging-support-workers>

[18] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering/radiotherapy-physics>

[19] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/healthcare-science/roles-healthcare-science/physical-sciences-and-biomedical-engineering/radiation-physics-and-radiation-safety-physics>