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Entry requirements, skills and interests (cardiac sciences)

You can enter a career in cardiac sciences with a variety of educational qualifications from GCSEs to a relevant honours degree.

Entry points and requirements

There are four entry points into cardiac sciences:

- with GCSEs or equivalent level-2 qualifications
- with A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualifications
- with a relevant degree
- as an experienced clinical scientist

With GCSEs or equivalent level-2 qualifications

With GCSEs or equivalent qualifications at level 2, you could enter at healthcare science associate or assistant level. There are sometimes apprenticeships in healthcare science. Find out more about apprenticeships [1].

Cardiographers [2] do not usually require formal entry requirements, but it is essential to check each job vacancy for details

With A-levels or equivalent level-3 qualifications

You will need two or three A-levels* including science subjects and a good spread of GCSEs at A-C grades to enter as a healthcare science practitioner through the NHS Practitioner Training Programme (PTP) [3] by completing an accredited BSc degree in healthcare science (cardiac physiology [4]). (*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). Use our course finder [5] to get a list of universities running accredited BSc (Hons) healthcare science (cardiac physiology [4]) degree courses.

With a relevant degree

You can apply for a place specialising in cardiac science, on the graduate-entry NHS Scientist Training Programme [6]. Specifically, 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 [7] 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 [8]. For STP [8] positions in the physiological sciences (which include cardiac sciences), the most commonly accepted degrees will be in physiology [4], pure or applied physics, engineering, biology or human biology.

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.

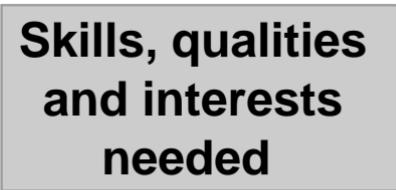
You need to be sure that you've reviewed the job description and person specification for the training (on the National School of Healthcare Science's website [9]), and the information on this page. You then need to be sure to match the skills and knowledge required to the content of your degree and the specialism you wish to apply for.

For full details of entry requirements for the STP [8], including qualifications, scientific skills, transferable skills and physical requirements, please see the person specification on the National School of Healthcare Science's website [10].

As an experienced clinical scientist

With experience as a registered clinical scientist, you could apply for Higher Specialist Scientist Training (HSST) [11].

Find out more about the training you'll receive and registration for a career in cardiac science [12].

- **Skills, qualities
and interests
needed**

To work in cardiac sciences you'll need:

- excellent interpersonal skills as you'll often work with patients who are unwilling or unable to co-operate and so excellent communication skills and a calm and confident but sympathetic approach are required to achieve an appropriate outcome for the patient
- to be able to explain each test to patients and answer questions
- an interest in science and technology, a good academic background and an ability to update and test your knowledge against experience
- to be comfortable using modern technology and complex equipment
- to be able to pay great attention to detail to produce highly accurate work even when under pressure
- 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 [13].

Find out more about the NHS Constitution [14].

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

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/cardiographer-0>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-healthcare-science>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Physiology>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/looking-course>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/graduate-training-opportunities/nhs-scientist-training-programme>
- [7] <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#STP>
- [9] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/>
- [10] <http://www.nshcs.hee.nhs.uk/join-programme/nhs-scientist-training-programme/important-documents>
- [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/working-health/nhs-higher-specialist-scientific-training>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/physiological-sciences/cardiac-sciences/training-development-and-registration-cardiac>
- [13] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution
- [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>