

Entry requirements, skills and interests (project manager)

You could work your way up from an administrative role, via a degree or with relevant project management experience from another sector

Entry requirements

There are a variety of entry routes into a career in project management. The following are general entry requirements. For specific entry requirements check the person specification for individual job vacancies.

- [With moderate to high grade GCSEs and/or work experience](#)
- [With A levels/equivalent](#)
- [As a graduate](#)
- [If you already have management experience](#)

With moderate to high grade GCSEs and/or work experience

You can join the NHS at an administrative level and work your way up to into project management, supported by in-house and external training schemes. For most junior positions, you will need four or five 5 GCSEs at Grades A-C ^[1] or equivalent. Employers may also consider applicants with fewer formal qualifications if they can demonstrate they have the right skills, for example, previous clerical experience. There are sometimes opportunities to enter through an [apprenticeship](#) ^[2] in a relevant area of administration.

With A levels/equivalent

If you have two or three A-levels or equivalent vocational qualifications you may be able to start at a higher administrative grade and then into project management. Internal and external training schemes, will assist your progress and enable you to apply your academic skills to work situations. Previous work experience can be an advantage. There are sometimes [higher apprenticeships](#) ^[2] available

As a graduate

If you have a degree or equivalent vocational qualifications you can apply for junior management posts or apply for entry on the [NHS Graduate Management Training Scheme](#) ^[3]

in which you can specialise in general, human resource, [informatics](#) [4], finance or policy and strategy management.

As well as the fast-track graduate scheme, depending on your degree and your employment experience, you may be able to apply directly for junior project management vacancies. Alternatively, you can join an NHS trust or other health-related organisation in an administrative role, gain experience of staff supervision and move on into management with appropriate training and support.

If you already have management experience

We welcome applications from people who have already built up management experience in the private sector or in other public or voluntary organisations. You can often join at a level corresponding to your skills and expertise. Some managers are recruited directly for specific positions.

• Skills, qualities and interests needed

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The skills and qualifications needed vary according to particular project manager role you are considering. These will typically include:

- an ability to influence others to adopt proposals and implement solutions
- an ability to use your own initiative and work as part of a team
- good negotiating skills
- an ability to lead change management and innovation
- effective business acumen
- the ability to stick to deadlines
- good communication skills
- leadership skills
- organisational skills
- a willingness to work with others and respect their views
- confidence with numbers
- confidence with information technology
- the ability to challenge the way things are and find better alternatives
- a commitment to the ideals of quality and fairness in delivering healthcare.

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 NHS values form a key part of the [NHS Constitution](#) [5].

[Find out more about the NHS Constitution](#) [6]

• **Example requirements for specific roles**

Here are some examples of requirements for specific roles in project management:

- primary care development manager
- cancer workforce project manager
- project director

Primary care development manager

Employer would look for applicants with a good understanding of primary care [7], able to demonstrate project management skills and experience of facilitating teams. Strong analytical skills and an ability to prepare and present reports would be essential to this type of role.

Workforce project manager

You would probably be required to:

- be educated to degree level or have equivalent experience
- have experience of working in a clinical, HR management, commissioning, or workforce role;
- have excellent project management skills,
- a knowledge of current issues within the cancer, workforce and the NHS
- to have excellent communication, motivating and influencing skills and an ability to work with a variety of stakeholders from different professional backgrounds.

Project/programme director

The requirements for the role of a project director will really depend on the area and setting they are working in.

The employer would expect the post to be filled by someone with a track record of planning and delivering service change, and with experience of operating at least director level in health.

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/project-manager/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests-project-manager/entry-requirements-skills-and-interests-project-manager>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#GCSEs_at_grades_A-C [2]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes> [3] <http://www.nhsgraduates.co.uk> [4]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Informatics> [5]
https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#NHS_Constitution [6]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution> [7]
https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Primary_care