

Apprenticeships +

Healthcare Science Associate

Apprenticeship Level 4



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Quick Information

New Apprenticeship Standard designed by employers for employers

Sector

Health and Science

Who is it for?

New and existing members of staff

Start date

Yearly Intake - November Starts

Level

Level 4

Duration

Typically 24 months to 27 months

How does it work?

Delivered in the workplace with 8 x 6 week blocks of college based learning over 2 years

Content

Tailored pathways in healthcare science

Assessment

Knowledge, skills and practical assessment throughout the programme

Qualification

L4 Healthcare Science Associate Apprenticeship

Additional qualifications

Pearson BTEC Level 4 Diploma in Healthcare Science

Review

After 3 years

Healthcare Science Associate

The Healthcare Science (HCS) Associate workforce supports the work of HCS Practitioners and Clinical Scientists in performing high quality, safe diagnostic, therapeutic and monitoring technical and scientific procedures from conception to end of life in job roles within hospitals, general practice and other settings in the healthcare sector and across all areas of HCS⁽¹⁾.

They perform a wide range of routine technical and scientific procedures, with minimal supervision, within one of the Divisions in HCS⁽²⁾, following specific protocols and in accordance with health, safety, governance and ethical requirements. The clinical scientific environment determines the context of the HCS Associate work/role.



Key Areas of Study

The apprentice will cover essential knowledge skills and behaviours on their programme, as set out below.

Responsibilities and duties of the role

Associates work within a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) within the limits of their competence, and must seek help and support whenever this is required. They must be aware of the requirements of Good Scientific Practice (GSP), which articulates the standards for the HCS profession and upon which this apprenticeship standard is based⁽³⁾.

Using these professional standards, the HCS Associate must adhere to employers' policies/protocols to ensure safe, person-centred/consistent practice in HCS working environments, including paying close attention to detail, working effectively within a team and acting as a role model for more junior members of staff.

While not exhaustive, activities undertaken by HCS Associates within the specific area/environment of HCS within which they work will include: supporting the development and maintenance of standards/protocols as required; contributing to the safe, effective and efficient functioning of diagnostic/therapeutic services; supporting more junior staff in learning required skills and behaviours of those who work in HCS; quality controlling the technical processing of biological samples and physiological and other diagnostic tests; performing routine investigations and telephoning authorised ⁽⁴⁾ results according to protocols, e.g. in the Life Sciences, full blood counts/microscopy, antibiotic sensitivities/assays, endocrine assessments, immunology assays; in the Physiological Sciences: fitting/removing ambulatory blood pressure monitors and 24-hr ECGs; ophthalmic assessments of the structure and function of the eye; pure tonal audiometry; in the Physical Sciences: nuclear medicine imaging, post processing of images; decontaminating, repairing and maintaining medical devices, e.g. in Clinical Engineering medical device maintenance/calibration (including electro-medical); managing technical data and writing technical reports, e.g. in Clinical Bioinformatics which uses specifically designed methods/software for managing biological data.

Behaviours And Values

You will be compassionate; honest; conscientious and adhere to the standards of GSP which sets out for the standards of behaviour/practice/personal conduct that underpin the delivery of HCS appropriate to the role/work undertaken.

Knowledge & Skills

Professional Practice and Person-centred Care

- never discriminate against patients, carers or colleagues
- maintain the highest standards of person centred care, treating every person with compassion, dignity and respect
- develop partnerships with patients/carers/families
- promote mental health and well being
- convey information to agreed protocols to the public, patients, carers, colleagues, including giving and receiving feedback
- use technology to present information orally
- the requirements of the NHS Constitution/GSP for 'person centred care and support'
- equality and diversity legislation, policies and local ways of working
- probity and honesty in all aspects of your professional practice
- the importance of involving patients/the public in HCS and in making choices about their care
- the principles underpinning the promotion of mental health and well-being
- active listening, observation and the use of appropriate language and feedback
- best practice in giving an oral presentation
- approaches to effective problem solving

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

- critically reflect on your technical/non-technical practice
- work within the limits of your personal competence/keep up-to-date
- support the CPPD ⁽⁶⁾ of junior colleagues and respond constructively to appraisal/feedback
- critical reflection in helping maintain and support the quality and safety of patient care
- good mentoring practice, using underpinning theories of mentoring to support this
- good appraisal and performance review & the skills required to prepare an action plan

Health, Safety and Security

- maintain a safe and healthy working environment
- train junior staff in relevant health, safety/security practices, including infection control and participate in risk assessments
- legislation/policies relating to health and safety at work and your responsibilities
- best practice in infection control practice and local protocols
- risk assessments, including dissemination of findings and implementation of outcomes

Quality

- lead quality management technical audit processes as required
- quality management/improvement/audit and communication skills within the area of practice

Technical Scientific Services

- where appropriate, perform a range of equipment management
- skills, e.g. fault-finding/preventative maintenance/calibration/repair
- participate in drafting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- make reasoned decisions to initiate/continue/modify or cease using techniques/procedures, reflecting SOPs and senior input
- recognise problems and seek technical solutions to them
- analyse/interpret/record/present accurately HCS technical data
- supervise/teach/assess practical skills to junior team members
- underpinning clinical science (e.g. anatomy, physiology, pathology, pharmacology, etc)
- genomics, clinical bioinformatics/personalised medicine
- principles and practice of equipment management
- requirements for drafting of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- critical evaluation of the evidence base that underpins your technical practice
- a range of different data presentation methods appropriate for the audience/circumstances
- practical skills teaching frameworks; assessment methods & assessment of practical skills
- the principles underpinning the practical training of others in techniques and procedures

Clinical Care

- take responsibility for the care you provide and its impact on patients, including safeguarding, if involved in direct patient care
- obtain and document appropriate consent in line with protocols
- protect patient/carers confidentiality and privacy
- deliver high quality technical clinical procedures in the investigation/management of patients
- 'duty of care' and safeguarding
- the support available in difficult situations or when a complaint is made
- the rights of patients with regard to giving informed consent for treatment when required
- confidentiality of consultation/medical records and the limits of the concept of confidentiality

- the key factors influencing dignity/rights/privacy/confidentiality of patients/colleagues
- appropriate technical investigations for relevant clinical conditions

Audit/Service Improvement

- participate in audit and/or service improvement programmes
- communicate the outcome of audit, service improvement
- the governance and ethical framework applied to audit and its contribution to patient care
- the delivery of high quality service outcomes/continuous improvements

Research & Innovation

- undertake appropriate audit/research/innovation activities which support quality improvement in your area of work
- the benefits of research to the critical evaluation of practice
- the principles of developing and introducing innovation into practice

Leadership

- plan/assess the work of a team and individuals within it
- lead where appropriate and work effectively within the HCS team
- the principles of leading teams/individuals based on the healthcare NHS Leadership Model ⁽⁷⁾
- common models, and examples of leadership and team-working

(1) For a list of healthcare science specialisms go to: <http://www.ahcs.ac.uk/about-us/about-healthcare-science/>

(2) Life Sciences, Physiological Sciences, Physical Sciences and Clinical Engineering, Clinical Bioinformatics. The clinical scientific environment within which a HCS Associate works will determine the context of the specific work/role they will undertake.

(3) The Academy for Healthcare Science's (AHCS) Good Scientific Practice (GSP) is at the core of professional HCS practice across the entirety of the HCS workforce and underpins the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for HCS apprenticeships.

(4) Biomedical Scientists, Healthcare Science Practitioners and/or Clinical Scientists usually authorize results.

(5) The AHCS's Professions Standard Authority's (PSA) register is formally recognised and supported by Health Education England for the HCS workforce, but there are other potentially suitable professional registers, e.g. the Science Council (Registered Science Technician).

(6) Continuing Personal and Professional Development

(7) <http://www.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/resources/>

Training, Tutoring and Assessment

The whole programme takes a minimum of 24 months to complete, typically 27 months at which point your apprentice can start their end point assessment, by agreement with you and us. The pace at which the apprentice progresses will be driven by you and the apprentice. We will work closely with you to plan and deliver appropriate support and training.

Your apprentice will mainly learn on the job, but training, and one-to-one tutoring are a key part of the new apprenticeship standards, not just assessment, with more time on tutoring as part of the 20% off-the-job training.

We will carry out joint reviews with you at regular intervals to discuss progress. You can use your normal performance management processes to monitor the progress of the apprentice, provide feedback and guide development. Your apprentice will be expected to keep an online portfolio of evidence to track their learning and development throughout the apprenticeship.

End Point Assessment

– Element 1 - Vocational Competence Observation (VCO)

The apprentice will be assessed within the workplace in areas of: Professional practice, clinical care, communication, health, safety and security, quality and technical scientific services.

– Element 2 - Professional Practice Test (PPT)

The apprentice will be assessed against a range of scenarios assessing their knowledge and understanding of: Professional practice, health, safety and security, clinical care, audit/service improvement, and leadership

– Element 3 - Professional Discussion (PD)

All knowledge and skills areas outlined in the standard are assessed in a professional discussion about the apprentices development and achievement over the duration of the programme.

For more information on the assessment for the Healthcare Science Associate Apprenticeship please see the full assessment plan in the Apprenticeship Standard documentation. We will arrange the End Point Assessment.



Apprentice Entry Requirements

Apprentices require as a minimum, Level 2 in English and mathematics before commencing the course

Professional Recognition

On completion of the apprenticeship individuals will be eligible to join the Academy for HCS's (AHCS) accredited Associate Register at Level 4 ⁽⁵⁾.

More Information

To find out more about the opportunities and financing of apprenticeships and to discuss your particular requirements, please email apprenticeshipsandtraining@sheffcol.ac.uk or call **0114 260 2600** to speak to one of our friendly employer advisors.

Progression Opportunities

Learners who achieve the Level 4 Diploma in Healthcare Science can progress to senior or complex job roles such as Healthcare Science Practitioner and the Level 6 Apprenticeship.

The content of the qualification will provide learners with a solid basis of knowledge, skills and appropriate behaviours to enable them to progress within the NHS Modernising Scientific Careers Framework and enable them to progress to become Healthcare Science Associates. The content of the qualification will allow learners to progress to healthcare science degrees and allow them to become Healthcare Science Practitioners.

Get In Touch

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Why choose The Sheffield College?

As one of the region's largest providers of apprenticeships, The Sheffield College is more than just your local provider; we deliver the dedicated support you need to source, train and get the best out of your apprentice.

We appreciate how difficult and time consuming it can be to recruit suitable staff. That's why we will source, shortlist and prepare candidates before you meet them.

We help you get the best deal by finding the right funding and we handle the paperwork to make the process of arranging an apprenticeship training programme as smooth as possible. Our employer partnership team, apprenticeship tutors and assessment staff are experts, and we invest time and money in training and upskilling them regularly so their knowledge is up-to-date and industry standard.

At The Sheffield College we go above and beyond; we know that every business is different and we help to develop apprentices who will meet the needs of your business.