

HEALTHCARE SCIENCE ASSOCIATE LEVEL 4 PROGRAMME PLAN - OPHTHALMOLOGY

Duration: 24 months + End-Point Assessment (EPA)



CORE SESSIONS (ALL PATHWAYS)

- Being a Successful Student & Scientist
- Effective Communication
- Legal & Ethical context of working in Healthcare Science
- Health, Safety & Security
- Quality, Audit Research & Development
- Working in A Technical Environment
- Teaching, Training & Assessing Others
- Leadership, Supervision, Mentoring & Teamwork

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme is designed to develop Healthcare Science Associates who can safely and effectively contribute to diagnostic, therapeutic and clinical services.

The apprenticeship is delivered through:

- Monthly remote **core sessions** (shared across all pathways)
- **Specialist pathway teaching** aligned to workplace role
- **Workplace-based clinical practice and competency development**
- **Portfolio-based assessment** via e-portfolio
- **Regular coaching, support and progress reviews**
- **Gateway and End-Point Assessment** in final months

Learning is practical and embedded within the workplace, ensuring direct application to patient care and service delivery.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Assessment is portfolio-based and demonstrates clinical competence and applied knowledge.

Examples include:

- Direct observation of clinical practice
- Reflective accounts of procedures and patient care
- Professional discussions
- Case studies and diagnostic reasoning activities
- Work products (e.g. reports, results interpretation)
- Witness testimonies from clinical colleagues
- Competency assessments
- Knowledge-based assignments

All evidence is uploaded and reviewed within an e-portfolio system.

 **Dynamic Training**



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Total off the Job Hours: 578 over a 24 months duration

OFF-THE-JOB LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Learners complete a minimum of off-the-job training hours across the programme (in line with apprenticeship requirements).

Activities include:

Core Learning

- Attending monthly core sessions
- Completing structured assignments and knowledge tasks

Workplace Clinical Practice

- Performing diagnostic and clinical procedures
- Supporting patient pathways
- Working within multidisciplinary teams
- Applying safe and effective techniques

Specialist Development

- Undertaking pathway-specific procedures
- Building technical competency in specialist equipment
- Shadowing experienced practitioners

Quality and Service Improvement

- Participating in audit activities
- Reviewing clinical processes
- Contributing to service improvements

Research and Professional Learning

- Reviewing policies, procedures and clinical guidelines
- Exploring best practice in healthcare science
- Developing scientific understanding

Reflective Practice and Portfolio Development

- Writing reflective accounts
- Recording clinical competencies
- Gathering feedback from supervisors

Coaching and Progress Reviews

- Regular reviews with skills coaches
- Setting development goals
- Preparing for EPA

PROGRAMME OUTCOME

Apprentices will be able to:

- Perform diagnostic and clinical procedures safely
- Apply scientific knowledge in practice
- Work with autonomy within defined scope
- Contribute to high-quality patient care
- Operate effectively within governance frameworks
- Support service delivery and clinical outcomes

SPECIALIST PATHWAY DELIVERY – OPHTHALMOLOGY

Delivered after core foundations, aligned to workplace role.

Specialist units include:

- Ophthalmic Pharmacology
- Visual Field Assessment
- Imaging the Posterior Segment of the Eye
- Measurement of Visual Acuity
- Anatomy and Physiology (vision science focus)

Optional practical unit (face-to-face):

- Assisting in Visual Evoked Potentials
- Electrophysiological investigations

Specialist teaching is delivered by industry experts and directly linked to real clinical practice.

END-POINT ASSESSMENT (EPA)

The programme concludes with an independent EPA.

Typically includes:

• Observation of Practice

Assessment of clinical competence in the workplace

• Professional Discussion

Exploring knowledge, skills and behaviours

• Portfolio Review

Showcasing evidence of competence and development

Achievement:

Level 4 Healthcare Science Associate Apprenticeship

Grades: Pass / Distinction

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Functional Skills in English and maths are optional for apprentices aged 19+.

Support is provided where required.

PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES

On successful completion, learners may progress to:

- Band 4/5 Healthcare Science Associate roles
- Assistant Practitioner positions
- Level 6 Degree Apprenticeships (e.g. Physiological Sciences, Life Sciences)
- Specialist roles
- Continued professional development and clinical specialisation



 **Dynamic Training**

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