

HEALTHCARE SCIENCE ASSOCIATE LEVEL 4 PROGRAMME PLAN - PATHOLOGY PATHWAY

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



CORE MASTERCLASS 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 working within Pathology services, supporting laboratory-based diagnostic testing and patient care. Pathology services play a critical role in healthcare, providing diagnostic and monitoring information for the majority of patient pathways. Healthcare Science Associates contribute to laboratory operations, ensuring tests are carried out accurately, safely and efficiently.

This programme supports learners to develop both the technical and theoretical knowledge required to work within pathology laboratories, while building confidence to progress into more autonomous roles.

The apprenticeship is delivered through:

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

Learning is applied directly within the workplace to support diagnostic accuracy, laboratory efficiency and patient outcomes.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Assessment is portfolio-based and includes a range of workplace evidence demonstrating laboratory competence and applied knowledge.

Examples include:

- Direct observation of laboratory practice
- Reflective accounts of diagnostic and technical activities
- Professional discussions
- Case studies and research-based tasks
- Work products (e.g. quality records, annotated documentation)
- Witness testimonies from colleagues or supervisors
- Competency-based assessments
- Knowledge questions or written assignments

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



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

OFF-THE-JOB LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Learners complete off-the-job training in line with apprenticeship requirements.

Activities include:

Core Learning

- Attending core sessions
- Completing knowledge-based assignments

Workplace Laboratory Practice

- Performing quality control on analysers
- Supporting diagnostic testing processes
- Handling and processing patient samples
- Working within laboratory safety procedures

Specialist Development

- Developing laboratory techniques and skills
- Understanding diagnostic test principles
- Building confidence in data interpretation

Quality and Service Improvement

- Participating in audit activities
- Reviewing laboratory processes
- Supporting improvements in service delivery

Research and Professional Learning

- Researching diagnostic tests and scientific principles
- Reviewing guidelines and best practice
- Developing underpinning scientific knowledge

Reflective Practice and Portfolio Development

- Writing reflective accounts
- Recording competencies and evidence
- Gathering feedback from supervisors

Coaching and Progress Reviews

- Regular reviews with coaches
- Setting development goals
- Preparing for End-Point Assessment

PROGRAMME OUTCOME

Apprentices will be able to:

- Support laboratory diagnostic processes safely and effectively
- Apply scientific knowledge in pathology practice
- Handle and process patient samples accurately
- Maintain quality and safety standards in laboratory environments
- Work effectively within multidisciplinary teams
- Contribute to diagnostic accuracy and patient care
- Operate within governance and professional frameworks

SPECIALIST PATHWAY DELIVERY – PATHOLOGY

Delivered following the core units and aligned to workplace role.

Specialist units include:

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Introduction to Maths, Statistics and Physics in Healthcare Science
- General Laboratory Practice

Learners develop the knowledge and skills required to support diagnostic testing across pathology disciplines, including specimen handling, testing procedures and quality processes.

This includes working within laboratory environments to ensure accurate results and maintaining high standards of safety and quality.

Specialist teaching is delivered by industry experts and directly linked to real workplace application.

END-POINT ASSESSMENT (EPA)

The apprenticeship concludes with an independent End-Point Assessment.

The assessment typically includes:

• Observation of Practice

Assessment of laboratory competence

• Professional Discussion

Exploring knowledge, skills and behaviours

• Portfolio Review

Showcasing evidence of competence and development

Achievement:

Level 4 Healthcare Science Associate Apprenticeship

Grades available: Pass or 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 Healthcare Science Associate / Assistant Practitioner roles in pathology
- Level 6 Biomedical Scientist Degree Apprenticeships
- Specialist laboratory roles within pathology disciplines
- Further development within diagnostic and healthcare science careers



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