

# Vascular technology

Join the team and  
make a difference

**Working in vascular technology, you will use ultrasound and other non-invasive techniques to assess the blood flow and anatomy of patients with diseases of the arteries and veins. These examinations are often the only investigation carried out before a surgical intervention, making this a role with much responsibility.**

## What will you do?

As a healthcare scientist in vascular technology, you will test patients to assist in the diagnosis of disorders, including transient ischaemic attack (TIA), stroke, aneurysm, deep vein thrombosis and varicose veins.

Most vascular investigations are carried out using ultrasound machines that transmit high-frequency sound waves into a patient's body for interpretation. In addition, you will use other equipment to measure circulation in the brain, limbs and vital organs.

You will also need to prepare patients for examination, explain procedures, review the person's medical records and measure blood pressure. Some patients may be incapacitated, so you will need to demonstrate empathy and patience.

## What entry routes are available?

Entrants into vascular technology must have a relevant science degree. You will undergo training while working in a post as trainee clinical vascular scientist. On completion of your training and passing the accreditation exams you will be eligible to join the Voluntary



Register of Clinical Vascular Scientists. You may also take the post graduate certificate, postgraduate diploma or MSc course in medical ultrasound (vascular).

With GCSEs or an equivalent NVQ and/or previous work experience, it is often possible to start work as a trainee or assistant in healthcare science, combining on-the-job training with study so that you learn as you earn. For more information, see the *Clinical support worker* factsheet.

Some NHS organisations also offer apprenticeships, which involve a two-year training programme that gives you experience of different jobs within healthcare science.

Where will you work?	What skills and qualities will you need?
It is likely that you will be based in a hospital or clinic, although some preventative work and screening takes place in GP surgeries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aptitude for science plus an interest in physiology and medicine</li> </ul>
Investigations are usually carried out in dedicated departments but also on wards (such as coronary care and intensive care).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good verbal and written communication skills</li> </ul>
Treatment is usually carried out in dedicated rooms and wards (such as coronary care and intensive care).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people skills – you will deal with the elderly, and those with disabilities and serious illnesses</li> </ul>
You will work with both in and outpatients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• willingness to undertake high levels of responsibility</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to work in a team – you will regularly collaborate with vascular surgeons and other medical staff</li> </ul>

For more information on the range of opportunities available in healthcare science, please visit [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/qualifications](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/qualifications). This gives more specific details about what qualifications are necessary for each role. You can search for current vacancies and download job descriptions at [www.jobs.nhs.uk](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk)

### How can you develop your career?

This is a career with excellent prospects, and includes openings for research, management and education. Healthcare scientists in vascular technology are expected to continually expand their knowledge. With training, responsibility and experience, you could reach the highest level in the profession, attaining consultant status.

You will also have the chance to take on additional responsibilities and progress within the organisation as part of the Career Framework. For more information about this initiative, please see the *Careers in healthcare science* booklet.

Find out more about what training is open to you and how you can develop your career, at [www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/training](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/training)

### Pay

The national pay system in the NHS is called Agenda for Change (AfC). This applies to all healthcare science staff except the most senior managers. These are examples of roles and the AfC bands at which they may be paid: healthcare science support worker (Band 2); healthcare science assistant (Band 4); healthcare science practitioner (Band 5); healthcare science specialist (Band 6); healthcare science advanced (Band 7); healthcare science consultant (Band 8a-c).

For more information, visit

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/payandbenefits](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/payandbenefits)

**To find out more about careers in this area of healthcare science, please go to**

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/working](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/working)

**For more information on the professional bodies relevant to healthcare science, visit**

[www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/contacts](http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/contacts)