Frequently Asked Questions about NHS Scotland Clinical Scientist training 2015 intake.

1. How does clinical scientist training work in NHS Scotland?
Development as a clinical scientist can be either via a supernumerary fixed term pre-registration training appointment, usually 3 years, or via a longer period of experience from within a service or research role in the NHS.

Supernumerary appointments are supported by NHS Education for Scotland across a broad range of scientific disciplines. Typically we recruit between 15 and 20 trainees per year.

All our clinical scientist trainees undergo a viva voce and submit a registration training portfolio for scrutiny by the Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS) or the Academy of Healthcare Science (AHCS) – both UK agencies authorised to sign off training by the Health and Care Professions Council. The ACS and AHCS have a shared approach to determining the best route for the end of training portfolio.

Trainees therefore acquire the skills and experience they need either through service experience or by joining our faster-track supernumerary programme.

2. What scientific disciplines are supported?
In 2014 our postgraduate supernumerary intake included trainees for:

- Medical Physics Training Scheme
- Haematology STP
- Microbiology STP
- Perfusion Clinical Science
- Molecular Pathology
- Genetics STP
- Respiratory Physiology STP
- Biochemistry STP
- Neurophysiology STP
- Cardiac Physiology STP
- GI Physiology STP

Specialties are advertised by NES and our training scheme leads.

3. So how do I find out about training opportunities?
Supernumerary posts are advertised on the Clinical Scientists webpage of the NHS Education for Scotland Healthcare Science website and the NHS Scotland Recruitment Website. We usually start to post opportunities early each New Year. Other posts may also be advertised on the NHS Scotland recruitment website – particularly for non-supernumerary appointments perhaps associated with a research project.

4. How do I apply?
NHS Scotland appointments use a standardised application form, which will be detailed in the links associated with the training opportunity as they are advertised on the NHS Scotland Recruitment Website. There is also specific guidance for applicants on how to complete the online application on our dedicated Clinical Scientists webpage.
5. Why does training in Scotland seem different to NHS England’s Scientist Training Programme (STP)?

Training arrangements for Healthcare Science staff – including those for Clinical Scientists are in transition following the UK-level Modernising Scientific Careers project. This project always envisaged a non-STP pathway known as ‘equivalence’ for scientific trainees.

Scotland has moved to use STP-type training in most areas but has also retained existing training others. Irrespective of training format, our trainees will have similar learning outcomes to STP in NHS England and have identical endpoint UK registration as HCPC Clinical Scientists. The retention of some existing training arrangements is due to economy and access to Scottish academic programmes that also serve a wider (non-NHS) market.

6. What are the admission criteria?

These admission principles apply to all Clinical Scientist trainees beyond those joining STP programmes.

Specifically, candidates joining STP programmes must have a minimum of a 2:1 BSc (Hons) in a cognate area of their chosen theme, or for candidates with a 2:2 then an MSc in a related discipline.

Candidates whose first language is not English are required to provide a language test certificate that meets the HCPC requirements for entry to the register. International applicants have to meet UK Tier 2 visa requirements.

STP trainees are employed by a host organisation that will require criminal conviction checks to be carried out. Normally this will be done by the host Health Board prior to appointment via Protection of Vulnerable Groups Enhanced Checks by Disclosure Scotland.

STP admission information is also available from the National School for Healthcare Science.

7. Does NHS Scotland have a centralised selection process like STP in England for Clinical Scientist training?

No. The process in Scotland is more continuous up to September academic start. We generally commence advertising early in the New Year with a quota of 15-20 appointments for supernumerary grades. Posts are highly competitive with between 30 and over 100 applicants per post.

8. Can I apply for an STP post in other parts of the UK and training in Scotland?

Yes, but we would like trainees to then work in Scotland. Remember, the interview process in Scotland is locally based according to training scheme / specialty – there is no central selection venue or day.

9. Does training as a Clinical Scientist in NHS Scotland limit my ability to work elsewhere in the UK?

No.
10. What would I get paid in NHS Scotland as a Clinical Scientist trainee?
Current pay (2015-16) for a UK Clinical Scientist trainee is Agenda for Change pay band 6, starting at £26,041. It includes a contributory pension to the NHS Scotland scheme that is portable across the UK NHS.

11. What support will I get as a trainee in NHS Scotland?
Trainees are supported by local supervisors, UK professional bodies and a range of short courses available from local NHS Boards. NHS Education for Scotland has instituted a system to track all its postgraduate scientist trainees via an individual National Training Number. As part of this wider cohort we will offer opportunities to develop in leadership and management, together networking with other healthcare science colleagues across Scotland.

12. What are the career prospects after HCPC registration?
Generally very good. We try to tailor our intake via local selection in Scotland to future employment opportunities – most of our supernumerary trainees obtain full-time employment in NHS Scotland.

Healthcare Science in general is the fourth largest clinical group in NHS Scotland and makes a pivotal contribution to the diagnostics and treatment process. There are exciting scientific careers and personal development opportunities to be had.

13. Our dedicated Clinical Scientists web page:

14. Other links referred to in this FAQ
National School for Healthcare Science http://nshcs.org.uk/
Academy for Healthcare Science http://www.ahcs.ac.uk/
Disclosure Scotland http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk
NHS Scotland Recruitment https://jobs.scot.nhs.uk
Health and Care Professions Council http://www.hpc-uk.org/