



STUDENT BRIEF

DESIGN A RECRUITMENT STRATEGY FOR HEALTHCARE SCIENCE CAREERS

NHS England

Summary

NHS England is responsible for ensuring the delivery of healthcare services across England, and we're facing a critical challenge: a growing shortage of healthcare science professionals, particularly in fields like radiography and pathology. Your task is to design a recruitment and outreach strategy to engage 16–24-year-olds, encouraging them to consider careers in healthcare science. We're looking for a well-researched, actionable proposal that addresses the current barriers, highlights effective ways to promote apprenticeships and T-Levels, and provides practical recommendations that NHS Trusts could implement locally.

KEY WORDS

healthcare science, workforce shortages, apprenticeships, T-Levels, outreach strategy, radiography, pathology, recruitment, NHS Trusts, education pathways

INDUSTRY

Healthcare & Medicine

FOCUS

- Barriers preventing young people from pursuing healthcare science careers
- Effective outreach methods to engage 16–24-year-olds
- Promoting T-Levels and apprenticeships as viable career pathways
- Addressing workforce shortages in radiography and pathology
- Scalable, cost-effective strategies for NHS Trusts



Brief

I'm part of the team at NHS England responsible for workforce development, and right now, one of our biggest concerns is the increasing gap in healthcare science





roles. These roles are essential to the NHS, underpinning the vast majority of clinical decisions, yet we're struggling to recruit enough young people into fields like radiography and pathology. To make things more challenging, many young people aren't even aware that these careers exist or don't see them as viable options.

The UK Government has been pushing vocational pathways such as T-Levels and apprenticeships to address this, but uptake in healthcare science hasn't been as strong as we need. We've got a dual problem: not enough awareness among young people, and not enough clarity about how they can actually step into these careers. Add to that the fact that the NHS workforce is stretched thin, and it's clear we need to tackle this head-on.

Your job is to help us figure out how to engage young people (16–24) and make healthcare science careers a real, attractive option for them. Start by digging into why young people might not be considering these roles. Is it a lack of awareness? Misconceptions about the work? Something else entirely? Then think about how we can break through that – what methods work to reach this age group? Social media campaigns? School partnerships? Career fairs? Have a look at what's worked in other industries or what we might not be doing enough of.

I'd like you to also consider how we promote apprenticeships and T-Levels. These are great pathways into healthcare science careers, but if they're not being taken up, what's stopping young people from seeing them as worthwhile? How could we position these routes better?

Whatever you propose, it needs to be realistic. NHS Trusts across the country vary in size and resources, so any strategy should be cost-effective and scalable. A solid piece of work will show you've thought about the practicalities, backed up your ideas with relevant data, and considered how to tailor the approach to different local contexts. I'll be sceptical of anything that feels overly expensive, too complicated, or detached from the reality of how NHS Trusts operate.

By the end of this, I'd like a clear, detailed strategy – either as a report or a presentation – that breaks down the problem, explains your recommendations, and makes a strong case for why your approach would work. Use public sources like NHS workforce data, government T-Level statistics, or case studies from other industries to back up your analysis.

