

## NHS FINANCE UNDERGRADUATE WORK PLACEMENTS

COME AND EXPERIENCE ONE OF THE LARGEST, MOST INNOVATIVE AND COMPLEX NETWORK OF ORGANISATIONS IN THE WORLD

**One-year placements located at various NHS Organisations throughout the East Midlands (Leicester, Northampton, Derby, Lincoln, Nottingham, Loughborough)**

*Please note that the exact locations of placements are still to be confirmed and not all locations above maybe offering a placement – we will however send your application to your preferred locations where possible.*

### About the Placements

Have you ever wondered how much an operation costs, how the NHS finds the money to build a new hospital, why we have waiting lists, or how much it costs to keep an ambulance on the road? If your answer is yes, then the NHS Finance Function may be an option for you.

There are over 40 NHS Organisations in the East Midlands and several of them offer one year Finance Placements for undergraduates studying finance related degrees. This diverse range of NHS Organisations includes Hospitals, Mental Health Trusts, Community Healthcare Providers, Health Education, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Area Teams and Commissioning Support Units.

A year in NHS finance gives you an opportunity to put what you are learning at university into practice, in a real life situation where your work contributes to patient care.

The NHS has a large annual budget and the NHS Finance Function must be expert in the financial planning, analysis, management and control of those funds to ensure the efficient use of public money. You could be part of a team that has a vital role to play in supporting the delivery of world class healthcare.

We are seeking undergraduates to join us who:

- Have good communication skills
- Can work as a member of a team
- Are good at planning and organising
- Demonstrate an interest in figures and financial calculations
- Can assimilate complex information
- Have ambition and are highly motivated
- Enjoy a challenge and are keen to take on responsibilities

Placements will be for 12 months, commencing summer 2018. There is a salary of around £15k per annum, depending on location.

You will get on-going support from your line manager and colleagues, and opportunities for training and development throughout the year. Experience gained throughout the placement can contribute towards future CIPFA, CIMA, ACCA or ICAEW practical experience requirements. After the placement you will be in a strong position to apply for a place on the NHS Graduate Scheme, or to apply directly for finance related jobs in the NHS.



### How to Apply

**For further information and to apply go to: <https://www.nhsworkplacements.com/nhscareershome>**

The closing date for applications is Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018

**What do we look for in an application?**

- Make sure your application is fully completed, neat and accurate. Remember we are looking for people with an eye for detail.
- We are keen to recruit people with a long term interest in the NHS and an interest in qualifying as an accountant.
- Tell us about your work experience and IT skills (especially spreadsheets).
- Your application should be well written, with the NHS in mind. Show that you've done some research – you can find out more about the NHS in general at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) and more about NHS Finance at [www.skillsdevelopmentnetwork.com](http://www.skillsdevelopmentnetwork.com).
- Remember that you have got lots of competition, but you probably also have a lot to offer the NHS.

## Case Study

Placements vary from one organisation to another, but to get a flavour of what your year might involve check out Claire's experience below. She was based in another part of the country, but this is still a great example of how things might work during an NHS Finance Placement.

### **My year in the NHS**

*Claire is a graduate of Huddersfield University, and spent her undergraduate placement year at Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust.*

Before the start of my placement I felt excited and could not wait to get started because this was the first time I have had a full time job working in an office environment. I also felt slightly apprehensive because I was going into the 'unknown' and I was worried that I would not be able to do any of the tasks that were set. These thoughts were soon diminished when I sat down with my supervisor and went through my plan of action for the year and I then went on to have a great year.

During my year I was very fortunate to be able to work around the finance function at Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust. I worked in Management Accounts, Charitable Funds, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable and Cash Management.

I started my year working in Management Accounts as part of the Operations and Facilities Division then later on the Surgical Division. As part of working in these divisions I was given many tasks which I soon made my own. My typical duties consisted of completing the reconciliations, budget movements, printing and formatting of reports, breakdown analysis work of cost centre codes, enter new posts onto the payroll system, construct my own journals in order to input accruals and prepayments as necessary and attend meetings with budget holders to explain their budgets and go through any queries and amendments. I also attended sub directorate management meetings every month. I really enjoyed working in management accounts and as I got more experienced in the divisions I was given more responsibility for my own work and even given my own cost centre to look after.



While working in the surgical division I was also given the opportunity to observe some Orthopaedic and Day Surgery operations which was an 'experience of a lifetime'. I would definitely recommend this for anyone to do if you have a chance, as it enabled me to see the NHS from a different angle. I also had the opportunity to shadow a general manager for a day just to see what another role is like in the NHS.

After approximately nine months of working in Management Accounts I then spent the rest of my placement within the Financial Services department. I was placed in Charitable Funds which looked after about 300 trust funds. I was given the task of managing and authorising approval forms making sure the claims from trust funds were correctly processed.

While working in Charitable Funds I also worked for Accounts Receivable and Payable and for a week I undertook the position of the cashier for the trust.

Throughout my year I received loads of support and my other colleagues were happy to help me and were pleased to answer any questions I had relating to my tasks and general background knowledge of the NHS. I had a supervisor who was very easy to talk to and we had a routine meeting every two weeks which enabled me to voice any concerns I had or enabled me to say what I had enjoyed. There were two events specifically designed for placement students which were good because we could all exchange our own experiences and it was nice to know I was not the only student going through the experience and I have even made some good friends out of these sessions.

At the end of my placement I felt like I had settled easily into working in a finance function, I have gained so much experience in communication and IT skills which I would not have gained in a lecture theatre at university. I really enjoyed my placement because having worked in many departments it has increased my practical knowledge of a dynamic finance function and has given me thoughts on the NHS which I had not considered before; I even completed a project at university based on the NHS.

A placement is good at this stage because it can determine whether you are going along the correct career path. I was made welcome by all the staff and I was quickly made part of the team. I made each task my own and I really enjoyed being treated as a member of staff and not just a student.

Thanks to the experience I gained from my placement year I have now graduated with a First Class Honours degree in Management and Accountancy and I have returned to the NHS as a Senior Finance Officer working for NHS Kirklees within their management accounts and I am soon to sit my first batch of CIMA managerial exams thanks to the support of the NHS.

Therefore, I would definitely recommend other students to undertake a placement year in the NHS as it does give a good base knowledge into a dynamic finance function and does definitely benefit you beyond University.

***Claire is now a qualified accountant working for NHS England***