

CAREERS SERVICE

**CAREERS OCCUPATIONAL
INFORMATION UNIT**

Bulletin

LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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- ▶ Career and course options
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Economy
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An Roinn
Geilleagair



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Welcome

This **Life and Health Sciences bulletin**, published by the DfE Careers Occupational Information Unit (COIU), invites you to explore life and health science careers in Northern Ireland.

You'll learn about the career options in this **fast-growing sector**, hearing from a range of people who **work, study and teach** in life and health sciences in Northern Ireland.

The bulletin also contains useful information to help you on your career journey. The guide is split into the following sections. Please click on the topics below to find out more.

Introduction to Life and Health Sciences

Fastest-growing sector in Northern Ireland

The life and health sciences sector is a significant provider of **highly-productive, good jobs across the region.**

It is the fastest-growing of all sectors in Northern Ireland and has been identified as a priority for the local economy.

Source: [DfE Life and Health Sciences Sectoral Action Plan](#)

Areas of strength

One of the strengths of our local life and health sciences sector comes from the presence of **indigenous (homegrown), globally-recognised companies** such as Almac, Norbrook and Randox.

In addition, **multinational companies** such as Stryker, Terumo, Teva, Nelipak Healthcare Packaging, and Sepha have production facilities in Northern Ireland alongside a range of other **innovative, homegrown companies** such as Axial3D, Fusion Antibodies, Diaceutics, Seating Matters, Cirdan, Eakin Healthcare, Trucorp, Re-Vana, Neurovalens, and ARC regulatory. Public sector organisations such as the [Northern Ireland Civil Service](#) also provide many job opportunities locally.

Expanding areas in Life and Health Sciences

Growing areas in our life and health sciences sector include **med-tech and diagnostics; personalised medicine; digital health** and **clinical trials.**

For more detailed information on NI's strengths and areas of specialisation, you can read the [Matrix – Life and Health Sciences Northern Ireland report.](#)

Key Terms:

Med-tech: Medical technology that is used to diagnose and treat patients

Biotech: The combination of biology and technology to create new products, processes or methods

University spinout: This is when research is carried out at a university, and the research is then used to set up a company

Diagnostics: These are the tests and procedures used to diagnose a condition, disease, or disorder

Precision medicine: Healthcare that is tailored to each individual patient based on their unique characteristics and genetics, and other factors such as lifestyle and environment

Therapeutics: The processes and methods used to prevent and treat illnesses and conditions

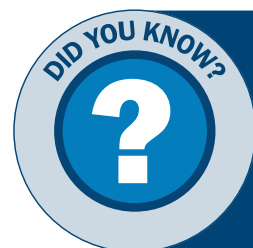
Life and Health Sciences careers

For those interested in pursuing a career in life and health sciences, there are opportunities to work in a variety of organisations and settings, including:

- ▶ **Private companies**
- ▶ **Public sector organisations**
- ▶ **Laboratories**
- ▶ **Contract research organisations (CROs)**
- ▶ **University spinouts, research institutes**
- ▶ **Entrepreneurial roles (e.g. setting up your own company)**

To find out more about entrepreneurial careers, please check out our [Young Person's Guide to Entrepreneurship](#) and our [Adult's Guide to Entrepreneurship](#)

As the **Life and Health Sciences bulletin** will explore, our local schools, Further Education (FE) colleges and universities offer a variety of courses and pathways which provide learners with the skills they need to contribute to the fast-moving life and health sciences sector in Northern Ireland.



There is an increasing demand for people with **multidisciplinary knowledge and skills** (skills and knowledge across more than one field) to join the life and health sciences sector.

For example, **biomedical engineers** combine their knowledge of both engineering and biology to help drive advances in medicine and healthcare; while **regulatory roles** are open to people with knowledge of law, science, and policy.

Another example is the field of **bioinformatics**, which (in basic terms) involves the use of mathematics and computing to analyse biological data.

Life and Health Sciences in Northern Ireland: Some Key Facts and Figures



The Life and Health Sciences sector accounts for more than 2.5% of NI's economy output, generating a Gross Value Add (GVA) in the region of **approximately £1.2 billion**, with more than 170 Life and Health Sciences firms located in Northern Ireland.

Source: [Matrix Northern Ireland Science Industry Panel foresight study – Life and Health Sciences Northern Ireland, April 2024](#)



The Life and Health Science sector **employs 17,000 individuals** (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), November 2025) with other sources estimating this to be up to 19,500 ([Matrix Northern Ireland Science Industry Panel foresight study – Life and Health Sciences Northern Ireland, April 2024](#)).



The public sector employs a significant number of people in life and health sciences, with **approximately 66,000 people** working in local health and social care organisations.

Source: [DfE Life and Health Sciences Sectoral Action Plan](#)



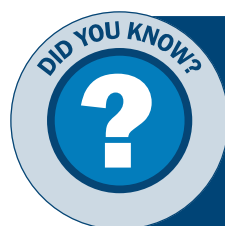
NI's diagnostics sector features **global players** like Almac and Randox, who support the **global pharmaceutical industry** through the development and manufacture of **diagnostic tests and reagents**.



79.7% of jobs in the Life and Health Science Priority Sector are classified as Good Jobs. This is above the Northern Ireland average for all jobs (69.0%)*.

Source: [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(NISRA\) – Good Jobs by Priority Sectors 2025](#)

*For this analysis a 'good job' is defined as a job that meets all three of the following criteria: 1. A permanent contract 2. Is not a zero hour contract 3. Earns at least the Real Living Wage (RLW) (£12.60 for 2025).



The [Health Innovation Research Alliance Northern Ireland \(HIRANI\)](#) was established to strengthen the life and health sciences ecosystem in Northern Ireland and to support innovation in the sector. You can learn more by visiting the [HIRANI website](#).

Reasons to Consider Life and Health Sciences

1

High Demand

Life and health sciences is the **fastest-growing sector** in the Northern Ireland economy, accounting for more than 2.5% of our economic output.

Source: [DfE Life and Health Sciences Sectoral Action Plan](#)

2

Competitive Salaries

In 2025, **87.8% of employee jobs** held by those aged 16–64 in the *Life and Health Science* Priority Sector were paid at or above the Real Living Wage (RLW), compared with 81.7% across Northern Ireland.

Source: [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(NISRA\)](#), 2025

3

Impactful Work

From developing **life-saving therapeutics and diagnostics to tackling climate change**, careers in life and health sciences contribute to real-world solutions and can impact positively on peoples' lives.

4

Diverse Career Paths

With roles in **healthcare, research, business, and technology**, you can tailor your career to suit your interests and strengths.

5

Continuous Learning

Life and health sciences are **constantly evolving**, so there are numerous opportunities for continuous learning, and personal and professional growth.

6

Technology-Driven

A career in life and health sciences can give you the opportunity to develop **technology expertise alongside biology**, including cutting-edge technologies such as **artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and virtual reality**.

This infographic was produced in conjunction with the contributors to the Life and Health Sciences bulletin.



Myth-Busting

✘ Myth: Careers in life and health sciences all involve working behind the scenes in research or laboratory roles.

✔ Reality: Life and health science careers are varied and multifaceted.

For example, you could be working in **healthcare**, a **laboratory** or **clinical setting**, **user design**, **data analytics**, **AI**, **software engineering**, **cyber security**, **regulation**, or bringing a **ground-breaking new product or piece of research** to market.

✘ Myth: Careers in life and health sciences are only for people who are exceptional at science.

✔ Reality: Whilst most life and health science roles unsurprisingly revolve around science and critical thinking, there is also a high demand for people with skills in important areas such as **project management**, **regulation**, **business development** and **marketing** (including social media marketing).

The life and health sciences sector values diverse skills and experiences, and many roles benefit from a **broad range of expertise**.

✘ Myth: It's not possible to move into a career in life and health sciences from other sectors.

✔ Reality: There is a range of non-science skills that are highly transferable to the life and health sciences sector, such as: **creative arts**; **user-centred design** (a design process in which the designer is highly focused on the needs of the end user, at each stage of the design process); **informatics** (in basic terms, this is the science of using and storing data, information, and knowledge); **sales** and marketing.

✘ Myth: You need a PhD to work in life and health sciences.

✔ Reality: Many roles only require a **bachelor's degree**, such as lab technician, regulatory affairs, and data analysis roles.

There is also a **variety of other entry routes available**, such as A-Levels, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, and higher level apprenticeships.

Please see the entry routes section of this bulletin for further information.

✘ Myth: Jobs are only available in big pharmaceutical companies.

✔ Reality: Northern Ireland has a **thriving life and health sciences sector**, including biotech start-ups, food science, diagnostics, and medical technology firms.



Transferable Skills and Qualities

Please note: you are not expected to have all of these skills and qualities before starting your career. You can develop them as you work through your qualifications and training and start to gain some experience in a Life and Health Sciences role.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS



Analytical Thinking

Interpreting complex data to make informed decisions



Problem-Solving

Applying scientific knowledge to real-world challenges



Teamwork

Collaborating with multidisciplinary teams in labs, hospitals, and industry



Attention to Detail

Precision is crucial in lab work, diagnostics, and regulatory roles



Communication Skills

Explaining scientific concepts to different audiences



Adaptability

The life and health sciences sector evolves quickly, requiring continuous learning and innovation



IT and Digital Skills

Digital skills are highly transferable to areas of work such as data analysis in clinical trials; AI and machine learning in diagnostics; cyber security to protect sensitive patient data



Project and Time Management

Coordinating tasks, deadlines, and resources efficiently



Scientific and Clinical Knowledge

A solid grounding in biology, chemistry, or health sciences helps with understanding the principles behind healthcare and life sciences innovation



Research and Analytical Skills

Being able to critically assess evidence, test new ideas, and apply findings is crucial for innovation

TRANSFERABLE QUALITIES



Curious



Passionate about helping others



Inquisitive



Open-minded



Resilient



Eager to learn and committed to continuous learning



Objective



Ethically responsible



Persistent



Logical



Strong integrity



Empathetic

The graphic on this page was created with help from the contributors to this guide. It gives a quick overview of important skills and qualities for working in this industry. It's not a complete list, but a helpful starting point.

Life and Health Science Career Snapshots

This section of the bulletin contains interesting insights into the life and health sciences sector in Northern Ireland from a range of different perspectives: you'll hear from **students and graduates** across our local **FE colleges and universities**, as well as **entrepreneurs, local businesses, and other organisations carrying out important work in the sector.**



Name: Monika

Course: Level 3 Applied Science

FE College: Southern Regional College (SRC)

This course has sparked my joy for learning all over, having a steady balance for practical and written work. It has inspired me to continue in SRC onto Level 5 Applied Science.



Please tell us a bit about your current course

Currently I am studying in the Southern Regional College for a Level 3 Applied Science Extended Diploma. Initially I tried A-Levels but found it hard and simply not my style of learning. This course has sparked my joy for learning all over, having a steady balance for practical and written work. I have learned life-long skills. It has inspired me to continue in SRC onto Level 5 Applied Science.

Do you plan on entering a career in the life sciences in the future?

Since I was a child, I have dreamed of studying outer space. The sky was the never the limit for me, so Astrophysics was my original plan. But growing and maturing has made me realise that humans need more help than space itself. I look forward to building a career in Pharmaceuticals and Analysis. I look forward to helping people. The course I am on has helped me realise that we need to help one another before anything else and this course has opened my eyes to the reality of saving a life.

Advice for others considering following a similar study/career path

Whatever it is you want to do in life and you have the passion for, you know you can achieve it, do not give it up. Do not give up your dream, fight for it and hold on to it, because there's nothing sweeter than achieving something you worked hard for.

Further Education (FE) snapshots



Name: Cassie

Course: Level 4 HNC in Applied Sciences (Biology)

FE College: SERC (Bangor campus)

I would like to study for a degree in biomedical science, and then continue with further study. Although I'm still considering my future career, I would possibly like to work as a hospital laboratory biomedical scientist.



What course are you currently studying?

I'm studying for an HNC in Applied Sciences (Biology) at SERC's (South Eastern Regional College's) Bangor campus.

Is there anything that you particularly enjoy or find beneficial about the course?

I enjoy the increase in laboratory work and laboratory experience compared to A-level.

Do you plan on continuing your studies after completing this course?

Yes, I plan to attend university after completing this course.

What are your goals for the future?

I would like to study for a degree in biomedical science, and then continue with further study. Although I'm still considering my future career, I would possibly like to work as a hospital laboratory biomedical scientist.

Finally, do you have any words of advice for anyone considering pursuing a similar career path?

It's hard work, but completely worth the results and experiences that are gained. There's no need to rush in as there are always alternative routes, so no permanent decisions need to be made. Take your time considering your options.

Further Education (FE) snapshots



Name: Ruth

Course: Level 5 Foundation Degree
Higher Level Apprenticeship in
Chemical Science

FE College: SRC

My proudest career achievement to date is winning a gold medal at the UK National WorldSkills final in the Laboratory Technician category. My future career goal is to work as an analytical chemist, as this is the role I am currently training for in Almac.

Please tell us a bit about your current course.

I am currently studying the Level 5 Foundation Degree Higher Level Apprenticeship in Chemical Science. Before starting my foundation degree, I studied A-Levels in Chemistry; Biology; and Nutrition and Food Science.

Is there anything that you particularly enjoy or find beneficial about the course?

I enjoy gaining experience and working as part of a team in Almac, and being able to be part of the work that they do at such a young age.

Do you plan on continuing your studies after completing this course?

Yes, after completing this course, I plan to continue on and study the Level 6 qualification in Applied Pharmaceutical Science so I can obtain my bachelor's degree.

What are your goals for the future?

My future career goal is to work as an analytical chemist, as this is the role I am currently training for in Almac. I am looking forward to obtaining my bachelor's degree and gaining more experience and knowledge while studying. I'm also looking forward to training with Squad UK to possibly compete at WorldSkills Shanghai 2026.

What is your proudest career achievement to date?

My proudest career achievement to date is winning a gold medal at the UK National World Skills final in the Laboratory Technician category.

Finally, do you have any words of advice for anyone considering pursuing a similar career path?

My advice is to complete work experience in pharmaceutical companies, as this will help you in your interview to talk about why you want the job as well as giving you a way to make a good impression prior to your interview.

The Open University – Graduate Snapshot



Jenny Hope

Forensic Science Laboratory Manager,
Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS)

Open University alumni
BSc (Hons) Health Sciences

During my studies, the OU informed me of a placement opportunity with Randox, to which I applied and where I continued to work for almost seven years in research and development.

This opportunity allowed me to explore what kind of science-based careers are on offer, and it also cemented my choice in studying science. Now I am a manager of a forensic science lab in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).



What was your previous job, and why did you choose to study for a degree in Health Sciences?

I had previously been working for the Home Office as a custody officer, and it was during this time that I decided to study for a degree in Health Sciences. **I had always loved science, specifically biology**, so when I researched The Open University and found out that they offered a course in Health Sciences, I was delighted.

How do you feel studying a Health Sciences degree with The Open University has helped you to progress in your career?

Without my degree in Health Sciences, I would not have been eligible for the several promotions I have achieved: **I started as a placement student and worked my way up to Lead Technical Scientist in my previous position, and now lab manager in my current role.**

My degree gave me a more **complex understanding of science and how it impacts the real world and medical environments**. The online labs allowed me to gain a deeper knowledge of how instrumentation and equipment works, which gave me a foot up during my placement as I was starting with some knowledge as opposed to none.

Studying with the OU specifically allowed me to work and study simultaneously, which meant I could gain **real-life experience and see my degree in practice**.

Without this, I would not have been able to gain the experience that has allowed me to **thrive in a scientific environment**.

The Open University - Graduate Snapshot (continued)

Can you tell us a bit more about your work placement at Randox, which was part of your OU degree?

During my studies, the OU informed me of a **placement opportunity with Randox**, to which I applied and where **I continued to work for almost seven years in research and development**. This opportunity allowed me to explore what kind of **science-based careers** are on offer, and it also cemented my choice in studying science.

The **OU's Careers and Employability Service** provided excellent support, with many check-ins along the way to ensure I was gaining appropriate experience and getting the support I needed while studying.

What does your day-to-day role entail as manager of a forensic science lab in the NICS?

I am part of the analytical services team in forensic science, and I manage the fires lab. I have also gained experience in other areas such as toxicology during my training.

I manage the instrumentation for the analytical services team, which involves **testing, maintenance and calibrations, and optimisation of methods**. I am also involved in a lot of research and development work with new projects, looking at new, innovative ways, and optimisation of current testing methods for forensic evidence.

Each day is different and brings a new challenge, which is what I love most about my role!

In relation to your current role, is there a particular achievement or project that you have worked on that you are most proud of?

I have not been in my current role for too long (under one year); however, **I am proud that I contribute to the justice system every day.**

What top tips would you give to someone interested in pursuing a degree and career within life and health sciences?

My top tip would be to make sure that life and health sciences is a subject that you enjoy; it is much easier to learn about a subject when it is something you are genuinely interested in! Another tip would be to **apply for a placement if you get the opportunity**, as it is an invaluable experience that will give you an idea of what a career in science is like.

Queen's University Belfast - Graduate Snapshot



Aidan O'Neill

Account Manager at
Springer Health+

QUB alumni
MSc Animal Behaviour & Welfare

I was drawn to the content development aspect and wanted to maintain the scientific relevance of my degree. Therefore, I researched roles that encompassed both elements, and that's when I discovered med comms. ”

What motivated you to make a career change (from lab work into the area of medical communications)?

I had contemplated leaving the lab for a long time, but was uncertain about my next direction. During my master's programme, I was drawn to the **content development aspect** and wanted to maintain the **scientific relevance of my degree**. Therefore, **I researched roles that encompassed both elements, and that's when I discovered med comms**. It was the career change I had been seeking. Joining the industry, it's nice to see many like-minded individuals who left the lab for similar reasons.

How would you describe your typical day at work?

My role is **highly varied**, spanning **project delivery, client management, faculty engagement and compliance** across multiple therapeutic areas. Since joining the team, I've progressed from Project Coordinator in 2023 to Account Manager, supported by structured training and clear progression plans.

I now manage projects end-to-end - from initial scoping and planning to delivery and close-out—and act as a central coordinator across medical writing, editorial, design, compliance, finance and external vendors. I lead internal and client calls, provide progress updates, outline next steps and prioritise daily actions.

Working closely with global experts, I support **publications, advisory boards, symposia** and **steering committee meetings**. This includes managing healthcare professional (HCP) onboarding (biographies, disclosures, contracts and compliance checks) and preparing invitations, agendas, briefing materials and pre-reads.

I oversee slide, poster and digital material development, carrying out quality checks and ensuring timely delivery. I manage project budgets, forecasting and invoicing, building strong financial accountability.

My role also includes supporting both virtual and on-site meetings, with recent attendance at events in Amsterdam and Berlin, while colleagues have supported on-site events across the US, South Africa and Asia.

Do you have any words of advice for anyone out there who is considering pursuing a similar career path?

- ▶ **Always consider your next steps**
- balancing studies and other responsibilities can feel overwhelming, but having a clear goal is invaluable.
- ▶ **Make full use of university resources and start applying while still studying**
—many roles are shared internally before going to market, and organisations are often willing to wait until graduation for the right candidate.
- ▶ If you don't secure a role immediately, **ask for feedback** and use it to develop your skills. Leverage university resources to support you in preparing yourself for your desired role.
- ▶ Remember that **medical communications extends far beyond project management and writing**. There are opportunities across client services, marketing, design, editorial and more, supported by teams across the UK and globally.

Key Terms:

Med comms: Short for “medical communications”, this involves presenting important scientific and medical information to a variety of audiences.

Ulster University – Student Snapshot



Caoimhin Boyle

BSc (Hons) Biology student,
Ulster University

The modules that I have studied so far have allowed me to gain greater insight into **Microbiology, Immunology and Genetics** amongst other things, and this is knowledge which I will be able to transfer to my postgraduate qualification and take with me into the world of work.



Please tell us a bit about your studies at Ulster University.

How do you think they will feed into your career in life and health sciences?

My future career aspiration is to study **Graduate Entry Medicine at Ulster University**, and Biology has provided me with a fantastic foundation for that.

The modules that I have studied so far have allowed me to gain greater insight into **Microbiology, Immunology and Genetics** amongst other things, and this is knowledge which I will be able to transfer to my postgraduate qualification and take with me into the world of work.

Additionally, Ulster University builds on transferable skills throughout your time here by providing practical sessions/demonstrations and a wide variety of extra-curriculars such as the PASS Program where you can mentor your fellow students who are in the years below you.

Describe life and health sciences in five words

1. **Evolutionary** – Our course is ever-evolving, with a module in final year called “Current Biology” which is focused on the latest groundbreaking achievements in the realm of life and health sciences.
2. **Interdisciplinary** – Working alongside a wide variety of disciplines such as Microbiologists, Ecologists and Geneticists (to name a few) to create a wider overview and understanding of life and health sciences.
3. **Practical** – In almost every module there is a practical element, allowing us to see the applications of what we study.
4. **Adaptive** – Due to the broad nature of our work, as individuals we must be willing to adapt to a new perspective on our field of study when beginning a new module.
5. **Employable** – Given the transferable skills that we learn, and their practical applications which we are also trained to carry out, life sciences graduates are highly employable.

Do you have any words of advice for others who are considering pursuing a career in life and health sciences?

If pursuing a career in life and health sciences is what you are passionate about, then go for it! It has been one of the most rewarding experiences for me professionally, and I look forward to what comes next.

What are your planned next steps, and your future study and career goals?

My planned next steps are to complete my Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) and proceed to Graduate Entry Medicine at Ulster University where I will train to become a **Junior Doctor within the National Health Service (NHS)**.

Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots



Professor Helen McCarthy

Chair of **Nanomedicine, School of Pharmacy, Queen's University Belfast**

Chief Scientific and Technology Advisor **for Northern Ireland**

CEO of [XapHe](#).

Helen's career story so far

From an early age, Helen much preferred the outdoors to indoors, and plants and animals to humans. In fact, in many ways, that is still the case. She studied Applied Ecological Sciences at university, and after graduating with first-class BSc Honours, she embarked on a PhD.

After volunteering in a molecular biology lab to gain new skills in DNA & Cellular Biology, Helen started a new path in her research career, securing a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship. She was then appointed to a Lecturer position in Experimental Therapeutics at Queen's University's School of Pharmacy in 2006.

Since then, Helen has successfully supervised over 40 PhD students to completion and mentored more than 15 Postdoctoral Fellows, all of whom continue to work across science. Helen is also a named inventor on over 40 patents, and has published over 160 full research papers, 25 invited reviews and 10 book chapters.

Helen spun out* her first company, pHion Therapeutics, in 2017. Under Helen's leadership, the company won both INVENT and the All-Ireland Seedcorn Awards in the same year, designing pharmaceutical formulation laboratories within Catalyst Science Park. She spun out her second company (XapHe) in 2024. XapHe is built on a technology for the targeted delivery of mRNA therapeutics, a first for Northern Ireland.

In June 2024, she was appointed to the role of Northern Ireland's first Chief Scientific and Technology Advisor. As CSTA, Helen provides scientific advice to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, is an independent scientific voice, represents NI in the CSA (Chief Scientific Advisers) network and advocates for science and technology across government policy-making.

Supporting women and interdisciplinary thinking**

Alongside these high-profile projects, Helen is committed to **supporting women** and to championing **interdisciplinary thinking****.

She has established the **'Women in STEAM' network** (i.e. STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] + Arts and Humanities), as she believes that scientific and technological innovations are only possible with a human-centred approach.

Advice to others interested in a career in life and health sciences

Helen's advice to anyone interested in Life and Health Sciences is: **look upwards and outwards, and do not be restricted or defined by one area or specialism**. The wider skills you learn as a scientist – **to write, communicate and think critically** – can be applied to any area of science and technology.

Helen's advice to anyone interested in Life and Health Sciences is: **look upwards and outwards, and do not be restricted or defined by one area or specialism. The wider skills you learn as a scientist – to write, communicate and think critically – can be applied to any area of science and technology.**

Key Terms:

University spinout: this is when **research is carried** out at a university, and the research is then used to set up a company.

****drawing on knowledge and expertise from at least two disciplines or sectors**



Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots



Hugh Morgan and Ciaran Doherty

Co-Founders, [Antigenesis Biologics](#)

In this feature, Hugh Morgan talks to us about the life sciences company he co-founded with Ciaran Doherty in 2024: **Antigenesis Biologics**.

Hugh explains what inspired he and Ciaran to form the company and why they feel so passionate about their work. Hugh also shares some helpful words of advice for anyone who is considering a career in the sector.

Antigenesis Biologics: Redefining Veterinary Therapeutics

We co-founded Antigenesis Biologics in 2024 to address a major gap in animal healthcare. After years of working in human therapeutic development, we realised that many of the breakthroughs we were contributing to could be adapted to improve the lives of companion animals. That insight, combined with our personal experiences navigating serious illnesses in our own pets, became the foundation of Antigenesis.

Our company focuses on developing **next-generation antibody therapeutics for dogs, targeting cancer, autoimmune disorders and hormonal diseases**. We use advanced computational approaches, including AI and machine learning, to design highly-targeted biologics that are more precise and effective. By combining deep scientific expertise with agile development models, we aim to bring human-grade innovation to an underserved sector.

Ciaran and I both have **first-class degrees and PhDs in structural biology and biochemistry**, along with an unhealthy curiosity for all things science.

What we do is a core part of who we are. Those who know us will appreciate how deeply we care about solving scientific challenges. It is something that drives us every day. **We genuinely feel like the luckiest people in the world because we get to do what we love**. We did not choose a career in life sciences; it chose us.

We bring complementary strengths to the company. I lead on **strategy, partnerships and scientific direction**, drawing on years of experience taking antibody projects from discovery to manufacturing. Ciaran focuses on **therapeutic design and innovation**, with deep expertise in protein engineering and translational research.

Our advice to anyone considering a career in life sciences is to never be afraid to take an unconventional path. Whether you are driven by curiosity, compassion or the urge to fix what is broken, this sector needs bold thinkers, good collaborators and people who care.



Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots



Ryan Colhoun is **Product Director and Co-Owner** of **TruCorp Ltd**, a leading manufacturer of anatomically accurate medical skill training manikins. In addition, Ryan is the **Managing Director and Co-Owner** of **Tritos Medical Ltd**, a pioneering start-up, developing smart app solutions tailored to clinical environments.

My advice to anyone considering a career in this sector is to find your “Why”. Whether it’s a passion for helping patients, a love of discovery, or an interest in improving public health, knowing why you want to work in this field will keep you motivated through challenges.



What attracted you to a career in life and health sciences?

As a child, I was always fascinated by how things worked and constantly asked “why?”, probably to the dismay of my parents!! My **inquisitive nature** led me to view the world differently. Growing up, **I was inspired by medical documentaries and programmes** about how things are made, which guided me toward seeking a career that combined engineering with medicine. This naturally led me to study Biomedical Engineering at Ulster University. The idea of creating something that could potentially help or even save someone’s life has always felt incredibly rewarding to me.

What do you find most enjoyable about your role?

One of the things I value most is the freedom to lead a development team and shape the vision of TruCorp, with the flexibility to **explore ideas in a positive and collaborative way**. Our products vary greatly in both complexity and skill requirements, which keeps the work exciting. On any given day, I might be testing a haemorrhage control trainer or working on software iterations for our smart product range. This wide variety ensures that no two days are ever the same and makes the job continually engaging.

Please describe our life and health sciences sector in five words.

‘**Open to a new challenge**’. The resilience and diversity of all the life science companies here is phenomenal, ranging from **pharmaceutical** to **manufacturing physical products** into the **medical training sector** like we do. We love a challenge, and to paraphrase Einstein: “in the midst of crisis or challenge, lies great opportunity”.

Are there any myths surrounding life and health sciences that you would like to debunk?

✗ Myth: “It’s only for doctors and scientists in lab coats.”
✓ Reality: In reality, the sector is much broader. Alongside **doctors, nurses, and scientists**, there are **engineers, software developers, project managers, quality specialists, business strategists, and educators**. Roles range from **hands-on patient care** to **designing medical devices, managing clinical trials, or even developing health apps**.

What would you say is your proudest achievement so far in terms of your study and career journey?

I’m very proud of my career journey, as what we do at TruCorp is truly unique. Coming from a humble background to co-owning a multi-million-pound business that exports to over 60 countries has been a significant achievement at the highest level. While there is still much to learn and more growing to do, I believe we have the right resources and skills within the company to achieve this.

Do you have any future career goals or aspirations in mind?

My future career goal is to **continue progressing in the Medtech industry**, further developing my **knowledge** and **skillset** to contribute to innovative healthcare solutions.

Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots

Stuart Nelson

Product Designer at [Eakin Healthcare](#) Research & Development (R&D).

I thoroughly enjoy my role. In the future, I hope to continue to develop my knowledge and experience within the R&D team, developing new and innovative products which will improve people's lives. ”

How did you get into your current role?

I studied at Queen's University Belfast, graduating with First Class Honours in **Biological Sciences with Professional Studies**. During my placement year, I worked at Alexion Pharmaceuticals in Dublin, an experience that **stood me in good stead for post-university life** and gave me my **first experience in a healthcare manufacturing environment**. I joined Eakin Healthcare in 2021 on their first graduate programme.

Please tell us a bit about your role as a product designer

My role involves the **design and development of new products for Eakin Healthcare**, taking user insights, developing concepts, proving designs and working through to market launch.

I find my role hugely rewarding, seeing how my work can **positively impact on the lives of people who use our products**.

What skills are important for working in product development?

When I first joined Eakin Healthcare, I spent eighteen months rotating through the various roles in **R&D, Commercial and Operations**.

I gained **invaluable skills and knowledge** which have been of huge benefit in my current role. Skills such as **cross-functional working, project management** and **problem-solving** are key to working in product development.

What one piece of advice would you give to someone considering a career in R&D?

I learned a lot during my placement year, and so I would **highly recommend a placement** to any student, if the option is available.



Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots

Founded in 2010, Lisburn-based company **Cirdan Ltd** is a global digital health company providing informatics and imaging solutions that speed up and enhance the diagnosis of patients.

Cirdan Ltd

Cirdan Ltd specialise in **laboratory information systems**, focused on helping pathology laboratories meet their digital health needs.

Cirdan has its headquarters in Lisburn, with offices in Canada and Australia, and provide 24/7, 365-day global support, improving operations in over eighty laboratories across six continents.

Cirdan offers a complete **end-to-end laboratory solution** through the development of hardware and software tools, including their core products ULTRA Enterprise LIS and CoreLite. Their work spans the entire clinical workflow, integrating **artificial intelligence**, **machine learning**, **advanced data analytics**, and **user-focused design**.

Cirdan's products are used across **clinical**, **preclinical**, **veterinary**, **environmental**, and **drug discovery laboratories**, as well as **educational settings**, using expertise in **AI**, **data analytics**, **UX** (User Experience), **clinical workflows**, and **digital pathology**.

Hugh Cormican, CEO of Cirdan

Hugh Cormican is the CEO of Cirdan and leads the strategic direction ensuring staff can access the resources needed to **progress their career goals**.

He highlighted the **technically-skilled and talented workforce in Northern Ireland**.

Cirdan invests locally by supporting students across all universities and further education institutions in Northern Ireland. Through **Higher Level Apprenticeships** and **university placement programmes**, the company helps **develop future talent** and provides **valuable industry experience** to the next generation of healthcare and technology professionals.

Cirdan also invests locally by supporting students across all universities and further education institutions in Northern Ireland.

Through Higher Level Apprenticeships and university placement programmes, the company helps develop future talent and provides valuable industry experience to the next generation of healthcare and technology professionals.



Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots



Sinead Watson is the **Chief Regulatory Officer at Neurovalens**, a Belfast-based medical device company specialising in non-invasive neurostimulation technology* for the treatment of various neurological disorders. Sinead leads the clinical team at Neurovalens and is responsible for overseeing all research activities and regulatory submissions.

“My advice for anyone aspiring to work in this sector is to reach out to potential employers, build relationships early, and find a mentor or role model who can guide you and offer valuable advice. Also, don’t limit yourself: great opportunities can come from areas you might not have initially considered”.

Please tell us a bit about your study and career journey so far.

Completed my PhD in Public Health Nutrition at Queen’s University Belfast (QUB) in 2013. Following that, I spent nine years at QUB working as a Research Fellow, leading and contributing to a range of projects across global health, nutrition, and dental health.

I reached a point in my career where I was ready for a new challenge. I realised I didn’t want to continue further along the traditional academic path, so I decided to explore research opportunities within industry.

I first heard about Neurovalens at a careers event and was impressed by their technology and the meaningful impact it has on people’s lives, as well as the company’s rapid growth and leadership in neurostimulation. When an opportunity arose, I applied and I have now been with Neurovalens for three years.

What attracted you to a career in life and health sciences?

From an early age, I was always drawn to the life sciences, especially the ways in which lifestyle and behaviour can improve health, prevent disease, and influence long-term health outcomes and life expectancy. **That interest developed throughout my education** and ultimately guided me toward a career in life and health sciences.

What do you find most enjoyable about your role?

I really enjoy the **variety**. No two days are the same. It’s a **fast-paced, dynamic environment** that brings new challenges and learning opportunities every day. I’m also fortunate to work with such a talented and supportive team. Most of all, it’s very fulfilling to know that the work we’re doing has the potential to improve patients’ lives.

Please describe our life and health sciences sector in five words.

Innovative; impactful; collaborative; evolving; globally focused.

What would you say is your proudest academic or career achievement so far?

One of my proudest achievements was **completing my PhD**. A standout career moment, meanwhile, was **leading our all-women clinical team** to secure our first FDA approval for our Modius sleep device to treat chronic insomnia. This was a major milestone for Neurovalens.

Do you have any future career goals or aspirations in mind?

My future career goal is to **continue progressing in the Medtech (medical technology) industry**, further developing my **knowledge** and **skillset** to contribute to innovative healthcare solutions.

***In basic terms, “non-invasive neurostimulation technology” is a way of gently stimulating the nervous system that doesn’t involve surgery or the piercing of skin.**

Life and Health Sciences Career Snapshots

Olivia Hayes

Formulation Scientist at [Eakin Healthcare](#)

To succeed in this field, I believe qualities such as ambition and curiosity are vital. Strong problem-solving skills, teamwork, and adaptability are equally important, as this sector is constantly evolving

What drew you towards a career in life and health sciences?

I was drawn to life and health sciences because the sector offers so many opportunities and many different career paths. What excites me about my role is that it combines variety with purpose — **every day is different, and the work we do makes a difference to people's lives.**

What does your current role with Eakin Healthcare entail?

In my current role as a formulation scientist, I work on **developing and improving medical products** to ensure they are safe, effective and reliable for patients. This involves **testing different formulations, solving practical challenges and collaborating with colleagues from different fields.**

What route did you take into your current role?

My journey into life and health sciences began by completing A levels in Chemistry and Biology, which then led me to studying Biochemistry at Queen's University Belfast. During my degree, I completed a placement year at Almac as an **analytical chemist**. I gained hands-on experience carrying out *stability timepoint testing* (in basic terms, this involves monitoring a product, usually a drug, to find out how its quality changes over a period of time). I found my placement year to be invaluable in building both my **technical and transferrable skills.**

What skills and attributes do you think are important for a career in life and health sciences?

To succeed in this field, I believe that qualities such as **ambition** and **curiosity** are vital. Strong **problem-solving skills, teamwork, and adaptability** are equally important, as this sector is constantly evolving. Above all, a **passion for continuous learning** and a desire to **make a positive difference** in others' lives will drive success in this sector.

What is your advice for anyone considering a career in the sector?

My advice to anyone considering this sector is, if possible, **get industry experience.** The knowledge I gained during my placement year was invaluable in building my skillset and helping me decide what route to pursue after graduation.

Life and Health Sciences career snapshot



Kate Duffy

Clinical Data Specialist at **Celerion**

“I especially enjoy working in a small team - when issues or data queries arise, we collaborate efficiently to find the right solution, which makes the job more enjoyable.”

How would you briefly describe the core responsibilities of your role

A typical week involves reviewing trial data for completeness and accuracy, entering high-quality case report form (CRF) data*, and working with teams involved in study setup, conduct, and data cleaning. Because drug studies can last from a week to a month, staying organised is essential.

How did you find your current role?

I first heard about the company from a friend who had graduated earlier. After spotting vacancies on LinkedIn, I applied for two roles and received an offer two weeks before graduation—meaning I finished university with a job secured. Although I hadn't initially planned to work in clinical trials or data, I wanted to broaden my skills and try something new within a large organisation. My time at Celerion has shown me the wider career opportunities available in biological sciences beyond traditional lab-based roles.

What first sparked your interest in this subject?

I always knew I wanted to study biology, as it was my favourite subject in school. I really enjoyed my BSc in Biological Sciences at QUB - the wide range of modules let me tailor the course to my interests and find my niche. My proudest moment was my final-year research project. It was unlike any assignment I'd done before - challenging but rewarding, especially because I could choose a topic that genuinely inspired me.

What advice would you give to those who would like to build a career in this sector?

I'd tell my first-year self to take each day at university as it comes and not let thoughts about exams or graduating worry me too much. It really does fly by, so try to enjoy each day and give it your all.

Which key factors have played the greatest role in your career success?

I completed a year-long placement between my 2nd and 3rd year—my most fulfilling and development-focused year. I worked at Causeway Sensors, a biotechnology research and development (R&D) company, as a biological scientist helping to design and test a tool for measuring antibodies. I also analysed bioreactor samples to assess antibody production and wrote standard operating procedures (SOPs) for different lab procedures.

Being thrown into the working world taught me a lot about my studies, interests and professional attitude, though having that dedicated careers team who were always there to provide advice was really reassuring.

* Case report form (CRF) data is coded, nonpersonal information about each clinical study participant that helps researchers check if a treatment is safe, effective, and consistently recorded across all study sites.

Advice to those Considering a Career in Life and Health Sciences

General advice

Find your 'Why'.

Whether it's a passion for helping patients, a love of discovery, or an interest in improving public health, **knowing why you want to work in this field** will keep you motivated through challenges.

Stay curious and keep learning.

This is a sector where knowledge evolves rapidly – from new medical technologies to breakthroughs in genetics and AI. A mindset of lifelong learning will carry you further than any single qualification.

Research the range of **study, training and career** opportunities and pathways available.

Undertake **work experience** and talk to people **working in roles or areas of life and health sciences** that interest you.

Develop key skills. Many employers value **problem-solving, analytical skills, teamwork, and communication** as much as technical expertise.

Life and health sciences is a **fast-moving and ever-evolving sector**. It's important to be willing to embrace **continuous learning** and be **adaptable to change**.

Speak to a **careers adviser** to help you make a plan tailored to your own individual circumstances and education/skills background.

Advice to school/college students and apprentices

If you are considering a career in this sector, aim to **retain as many of your STEM subjects at GCSE as possible**, and look carefully at what further education and higher education courses will provide you with the skills and qualifications you need for your chosen career path.

Research **local companies** and reach out to enquire about **work experience opportunities**.

Explore all your options. Attend **careers events, open days, online webinars and information sessions**.

Look at the **life and health science courses available** and see where your interests lie.

Speak to people working in the sector and **be as informed as possible** to ensure you make the right choice for you.

Advice to those Considering a Career in Life and Health Sciences

Advice to higher education students/ graduates

Gain experience. Internships, research projects, or volunteering in healthcare or lab settings can boost your employability.

Research employers. Many companies working in science prefer to use their own company website to recruit, which means that many opportunities won't make it to online job boards or websites such as LinkedIn.

Network. Connect with professionals via networking platforms such as LinkedIn, attend industry events, and engage with organisations like the **Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)** and **BioIndustry Association (BIA)**.

Consider alternative routes. For example, roles in regulatory affairs, medical sales, med comms, or bioinformatics can be potential options for those not interested in lab-based careers.

Advice to career changers

Changing careers is a big decision – so make sure that your decisions are informed. Try to carry out **information interviews with people working in the life and health sciences**: you will find people typically are happy to talk about what they do and how they do it – the good and the parts they are less keen on, which is normal in any job.

Consider how you could use your **existing transferable skills and qualities** in a career in the life and health sciences sector, such as creativity, problem-solving, attention to detail, teamwork, and communication.

Depending on your existing qualifications/career goals, your study options might include FE courses; an Access programme (offered by FE colleges); undergraduate or postgraduate courses (offered by local universities). These may be offered on a **full or part-time basis**.

Carry out some research into DfE programmes such as **Skill Up**. If you're 18 years or older with the right to work, a range of free accredited courses are available through the Skill Up programme.

Entry Routes

There are a range of entry routes available in Northern Ireland for those who would like to pursue a career in **life and health sciences**. This section provides an overview of course provision at our local Further Education (FE) colleges and universities.

The [Careers Service](#) has produced [A Guide to Career Entry Routes](#) – a concise resource offering an overview of entry routes available locally, and the progression between different levels of qualification, from Entry Level through to Level 8.

The guide covers traditional classroom-based education provision, such as A Levels; vocationally-related qualifications/vocational education and training, such as apprenticeships; as well as training programmes, such as those funded by DfE.

Please note that the qualifications and course information listed in this section of the bulletin are not exhaustive. It is advisable to carefully research entry criteria for any courses or career paths you are considering, and to contact local schools, FE colleges, and universities for further info.



Further Education (FE) Colleges

DEIRDRE MURRAY

Life Sciences Curriculum Hub
Manager for FE

“There are a wide range of courses available across our local FE colleges that are relevant to careers in Life and Health Sciences. Courses are available from Level 2 - Level 5 and include Traineeships, Apprenticeships, BTEC Level 3 courses, Higher Level Apprenticeships, HNCs, HNDs and Foundation Degrees.

If you are interested in applying for any of the courses, I would encourage you to contact your local FE college to discuss course availability, entry requirements, and progression routes, and to address any other questions you may have”

Level 2 (FE courses, Traineeships and Level 2 Apprenticeships)

Level 2 Science courses provide you with broad-based knowledge across all three sciences – biology, chemistry and physics.

Through the curriculum there is a focus on laboratory health and safety and the development of general laboratory skills across all science areas.

Level 3 (FE courses and Level 3 Apprenticeships)

Level 3 Science courses build upon the foundational knowledge gained at Level 2 and can allow you to build a broader foundational knowledge or specialise in areas such as biomedical science or forensic science.

There is a strong focus on the further development of practical skills.

The Access Diploma in Adult Learning (Science) provides a broad education for adults (19+) who have few or no appropriate qualifications to enter Higher Education science courses.

Level 4 and Level 5 (HNCs, HLAs, HNDs and Foundation Degrees)

Level 4 and Level 5 courses allow you to focus on specific areas of interest such as analytical science, biomedical science and biological science.

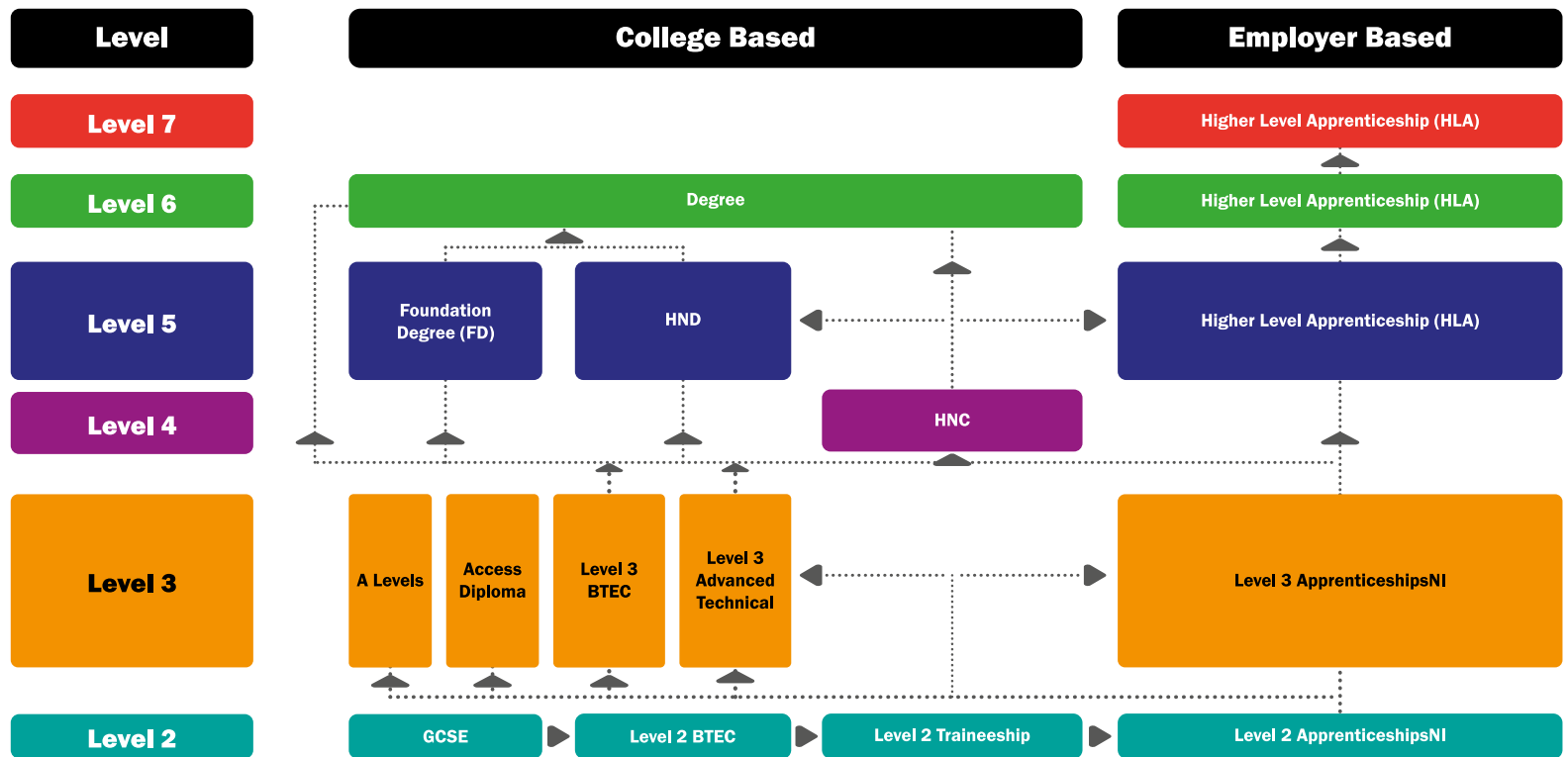
Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLAs) are work-based programmes which enable you to earn while you learn and gain a higher-level qualification such as a foundation degree.

Foundation degrees, HNCs and HNDs are delivered both full-time and part-time, and prepare you for employment in the science industry combining laboratory-based training, field work and theoretical knowledge.

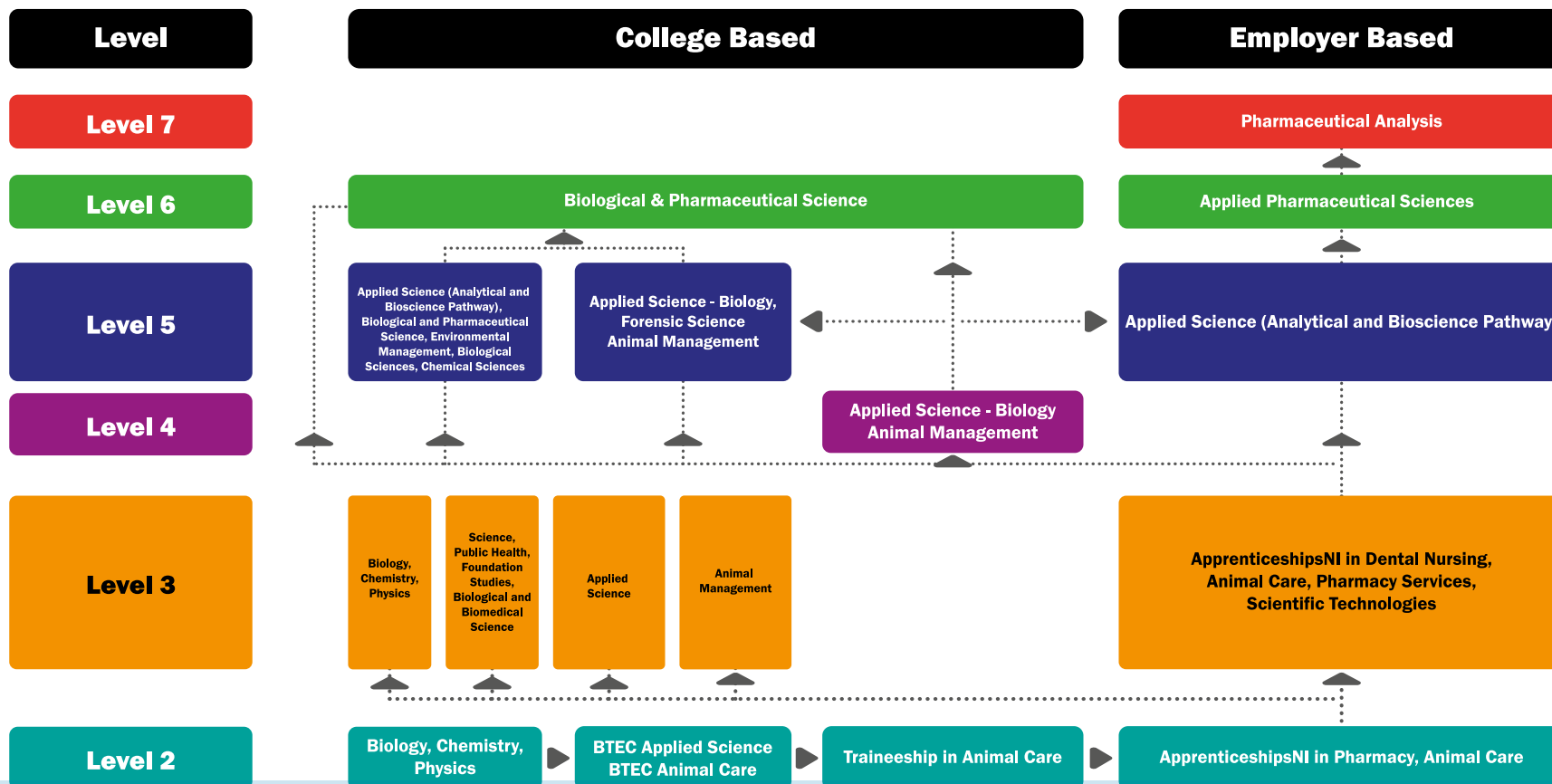
Please contact your local [FE college](#) to discuss course availability, entry requirements, and progression routes, etc. In addition, the infographic overleaf highlights the range of life and health science qualifications available at our local FE colleges, and the progression routes through the course levels.

Life and Health Science Sector Qualification Pathways - FE Colleges

The mapping tools on this page and overlay highlight the Life Sciences programmes available in local FE colleges and show progression routes through the levels. ▶



Life and Health Science Sector Qualification Pathways - FE Colleges



University Courses

Queen's University Belfast (QUB) – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

QUB offers a range of science programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, which are linked to life and health sciences.

Over the course of a degree programme, students may discover particular scientific areas of interest. A year of work experience may also help develop career preferences, and completion of final year projects may give students a feel for research and whether this is something they are interested in pursuing at MSc or PhD level.

Undergraduate

The following undergraduate programmes are offered:

School of Pharmacy

- ▶ BSc (Hons) Pharmaceutical Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Pharmaceutical Biotechnology

School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering

- ▶ BSc (Hons) Chemistry
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Medicinal Chemistry

School of Biological Sciences

- ▶ BSc Agricultural Science
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Biochemistry
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Biological Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Marine Biology
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Microbiology
- ▶ BSc Veterinary Bioscience
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Zoology

School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

- ▶ BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Human Biology

You can also search for these courses on the [QUB website](#).

Integrated Masters: School of Biological Sciences

- ▶ MSci Biochemistry
- ▶ MSci Biological Sciences
- ▶ MSci Marine Biology
- ▶ MSci Microbiology
- ▶ MSci Veterinary Bioscience
- ▶ MSci Zoology

School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering

- ▶ MChem (Hons) Chemistry
- ▶ MChem (Hons) Medicinal Chemistry

You can also search for these courses on the [QUB website](#).

For detailed information on the full range of courses available at QUB relevant to life and health sciences, please visit [QUB – Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences](#).

University Courses

Queen's University Belfast (QUB) – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

Postgraduate

The following postgraduate programmes are offered:

Masters:

School of Pharmacy

- ▶ MSc in Biopharmaceutical Engineering
- ▶ MSc Industrial Pharmaceutics
- ▶ MSc in Pharmaceutical Analysis

School of Biological Sciences

- ▶ MSc Animal Behaviour and Welfare
- ▶ MSc Molecular Biology and Biotechnology
- ▶ MSc Ecological Management and Conservation Biology
- ▶ MSc Leadership for Sustainable Rural Development
- ▶ MSc Leadership for Sustainable Development
- ▶ MSc One Health Parasitology and Pathogen Biology

School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

- ▶ MSc Bioinformatics and Computational Genomics
- ▶ MSc Biomedical and Clinical Research
- ▶ MSc Cancer Medicine
- ▶ MSc Public Health

You can also search for these courses on the [QUB website](#).

Research Areas:

School of Pharmacy:

- ▶ Graduates from the School of Pharmacy often progress into careers in pharmaceutical industries, regulatory affairs, and clinical research. Opportunities for PhD research in drug development, nanomedicine, and pharmacokinetics are also available.

School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering:

- ▶ Chemistry is key to unlocking innovations that enhance our daily lives and shape our future. Chemists create life-saving drugs, advanced materials, and technologies that improve our quality of life. Medicinal chemists develop medicine, boosting life expectancy with infections, cancer, and heart disease treatments. They excel in molecular design, drug synthesis, and biological drug functions.

School of Biological Sciences:

- ▶ Graduates pursue careers in biotechnology, environmental management, genetics, biomedical research, and conservation. The school offers research opportunities in genetics, microbiology, ecology, and molecular biology.

School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

- ▶ Graduates enter careers in medical research, public health, and clinical trials. Research areas include cancer studies, cardiovascular disease, and immunology.

For further information on postgraduate research degrees at QUB, please visit: [QUB – A-Z of Research Opportunities](#)

For detailed information on the full range of courses available at QUB relevant to life and health sciences, please visit [QUB – Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences](#).

University Courses

The Open University – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

The Open University (OU) offers a range of qualifications in the area of life and health sciences. Students can develop their investigative, data handling and communication skills, as well as the time management, self-motivation and remote collaboration skills that OU students gain from distance learning.

The OU's open-entry policy means that you are welcome to study, no previous qualifications necessary, whatever your ambitions, abilities or disabilities, culture, location or background.

Undergraduate

The following undergraduate programmes are offered:

- ▶ BSc (Hons) Biomedical Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Health Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Biology
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences (Biology)
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Natural Sciences (Chemistry)
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Healthcare and Health Science
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Combined STEM

Postgraduate

The following postgraduate programme is offered:

- ▶ MSc in Mental Health Science

Other Relevant Courses:

Examples of free [OpenLearn](#) modules to explore in the life and health sciences:

- ▶ Infection and Immunity
- ▶ Blood and the respiratory system
- ▶ The Science of Alcohol
- ▶ Forensic science and fingerprints
- ▶ Vaccination
- ▶ Meiosis and Mitosis
- ▶ What is the genome made of?

For detailed information on the full range of relevant courses available at The Open University, including Degree, Diploma, Certificate, and Module options, please visit [The Open University – Life, Health and Chemical Sciences](#).



University Courses

Ulster University – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

Ulster University offers a range of programmes, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, which are linked to life and health sciences.

Over the course of a degree programme, students may discover particular scientific areas of interest. A year of work experience may also help develop career preferences, and completion of final year projects may give students a feel for research and whether this is something they are interested in pursuing at MSc or PhD level.

Undergraduate

The following undergraduate programmes are offered:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| ▶ Biology | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Biomedical Science | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Biomedical Science, Applied (Pathology) | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Cardiac Physiology | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Dietetics | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Environmental Science | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Environmental Science with Education | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Food and Nutrition | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Geography | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Geography with Education | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Human Nutrition | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Marine Science | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Nursing (Adult) | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Nursing (Mental Health) | BSc (Hons) |



University Courses (continued)

Undergraduate

The following undergraduate programmes are offered:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| ▶ Occupational Therapy | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Optometry | MOptom |
| ▶ Outdoor Adventure | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Paramedic Science | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Personalised Medicine | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Pharmaceutical Bioscience | MSci Hons |
| ▶ Pharmacy | MPharm |
| ▶ Physiotherapy | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Podiatry | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Psychology | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Radiotherapy and Oncology | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Respiratory and Sleep Physiology | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Speech and Language Therapy | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Sports Coaching and Performance | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Sport and Exercise Nutrition | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Sport and Exercise Sciences | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Sport Studies | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Sport, Physical Activity and Health | BSc (Hons) |
| ▶ Veterinary Nursing | BSc (Hons) |

You can also search for these courses on the [Ulster University website](#).



University Courses (continued)

Ulster University – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

Postgraduate

The following postgraduate programmes are offered:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| ▶ Biomedical Science | MSc |
| ▶ Biotechnology Research | MSc |
| ▶ Cataract and Refractive Surgery (Theory) | PGDip |
| ▶ Dietetics | MSc |
| ▶ Food and Nutrition | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Food Regulatory Affairs | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Human Nutrition | MSc |
| ▶ The Theory of Independent Prescribing for Optometrists | PGCert |
| ▶ Veterinary Public Health | PGCert |
| ▶ Veterinary Public Health (Food Regulatory Affairs) | PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Environmental Management | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Environmental Management with Geographic Information Systems | PGDip/PGCert/MSc |



University Courses (continued)

Ulster University – Course options relevant to Life and Health Sciences

Postgraduate

The following postgraduate programmes are offered:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| ▶ Environmental Toxicology and Pollution Monitoring | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Geographic Information Systems | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems | PGCert/PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Personalised Medicine | MSc |
| ▶ Sport and Exercise Medicine | PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Sport and Exercise Nutrition | PGDip/MSc |
| ▶ Sport and Exercise Psychology | MSc |
| ▶ Sports Coaching and Performance | MSc |
| ▶ Strength and Conditioning | MSc |
| ▶ Advanced Pharmacy Practice | MSc |
| ▶ Pharmaceutical Sciences | PGDip/MSc |

You can also search for these courses on the [Ulster University website](#).

For detailed information on the full range of courses available at Ulster University relevant to life and health sciences, please visit [Ulster University – Faculty of Life and Health Sciences](#).

Life and Health Sciences Graduate Destinations

Life and Health Science graduates in Northern Ireland pursue a diverse range of career paths and specialisations, including: **Pharmaceuticals and Biotech; Healthcare; Public Sector; Environmental & Food Science; Research & Academia**, as well as **Non-Lab Roles** such as patent law, data science, sales and marketing.

The infographic on this page highlights just some of the many destinations that are open to Life and Health Science graduates in Northern Ireland.

<div data-bbox="150 687 763 774">  <h3>Local Employers</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="150 790 763 1334"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Almac Group ▶ Randox Laboratories ▶ Norbrook Laboratories ▶ TriMedika ▶ Sonrai ▶ HSCNI ▶ Health & Social Care Trust Laboratories ▶ Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service ▶ Northern Ireland Water ▶ The Environment Agency ▶ Moy Park ▶ Ulster Wildlife Trust ▶ Teva ▶ NHS ▶ Public Health Agency ▶ Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute ▶ Queen's University Belfast ▶ Ulster University ▶ Independent research institutes ▶ Fusion Antibodies ▶ SiSaf Ltd ▶ Almac Discovery ▶ Cirdan ▶ Neurovalens ▶ Axial3D ▶ ARC Regulatory ▶ Nelipak ▶ Terumo ▶ Axis Biosciences ▶ Eakin Healthcare ▶ Naturelle ▶ Diaceutics ▶ Seating Matters ▶ The Open University ▶ Stryker ▶ Sepha ▶ Trucorp ▶ Re-Vana ▶ Northern Ireland Civil Service </div>	<div data-bbox="808 687 1422 774">  <h3>Life and Health Science Careers</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="808 790 1422 1334"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bioinformatics Analyst ▶ Medicinal Chemist ▶ Process Development Chemist ▶ Analytical Chemist ▶ Clinical Testing Scientist ▶ Formulation Development Scientist ▶ Microbiologist ▶ Molecular Biologist ▶ Formulations Chemist ▶ Laboratory Analyst ▶ Research and Development Professional ▶ Biomedical Scientist ▶ Food Scientist ▶ Marine Biologist ▶ Zoologist ▶ Industrial Pharmacist ▶ Forensic Scientist ▶ Clinical Research Associate ▶ Biotechnologist ▶ Pharmaceutical Scientist ▶ Toxicologist ▶ Epidemiologist ▶ Geneticist ▶ Medical Communications (Med comms) Officer ▶ Biomedical Engineer ▶ Computational Biologist </div>	<div data-bbox="1467 687 2085 774">  <h3>Other Careers</h3> </div> <div data-bbox="1467 790 2085 1334"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Project Management ▶ Supply Chain and Logistics ▶ Quality Assurance ▶ Business Development ▶ Finance ▶ Sales ▶ Marketing (including social media marketing) ▶ HR ▶ Regulatory Affairs ▶ Compliance ▶ Teaching and Lecturing ▶ Data Science ▶ Science Communication and Journalism ▶ Medical Sales ▶ Patent Examination ▶ Healthcare Consultancy ▶ Environmental Health ▶ Data Analysis ▶ Policy </div>
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Please note: this infographic is intended to offer an indicative snapshot, rather than an exhaustive list, of some Life and Health Sciences destinations that local undergraduates and postgraduates, from across a range of academic disciplines at our local FE colleges and universities, have moved into. It was produced in conjunction with the contributors to this bulletin. Please also note that some of the career pathways featured may require additional or postgraduate study.

CAREERS SERVICE

CAREERS OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION UNIT Bulletin

Useful Websites

Relevant NI Websites

[Careers Service](#) – see Careers A-Z for profiles on careers

[Apprenticeships](#)

[Matrix](#)

[Health Innovation Research Alliance Northern Ireland \(HIRANI\)](#)

[Invest NI](#)

[Invest NI – City and Growth Deals](#)

[Agri-food and Biosciences Institute NI](#)

[HSCNI - Jobs](#)

[The Open University](#)

[Queen's University Belfast \(QUB\)](#)

[Ulster University](#)

[NI Science Festival](#)

[Further Education NI](#)

Other Websites

[UCAS](#) - Explore degree programmes and careers

[ABPI](#) (Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry)

[Health Careers](#) – NHS

[Step into the NHS](#) - Includes “Map Your Career” quiz

[Royal Society of Chemistry](#) - Careers support

[Royal Society of Biology](#)

[New Scientist](#)

[Neon Futures](#)

[Biochemical Society](#) – Education/ Careers

[British Ecological Society](#) – Developing your Career

[Royal Pharmaceutical Society](#)

[British Pharmacological Society](#)

[Institute of Food Science and Technology](#)

[Institute of Engineering and Technology](#)

[Institute of Physics and Engineering in Medicine](#)

[Earthworks-jobs.com](#)

[British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums](#) (BIAZA)

[Institution of Mechanical Engineers](#) -

Biomedical Engineering Division -

ImechE - Biomedical Engineering

Division (BMed) is the largest group of professional biomedical engineers in the UK

[Engineers Ireland](#) - The Biomedical engineering division is a group for Engineers Ireland members working in the Med Tech sector

Contact the Careers Service

The Department for the Economy's Careers Service provides free, professional and impartial careers advice and guidance to help you make informed choices about your future career.

If you would like to discuss your options, please contact the [Careers Service](#).

You may also wish to use the careers tools available on the [NI Direct Careers page](#) to help you research your career options.

The COIU team welcomes your feedback on the content of this bulletin to help inform future publications.

If you have any comments, please e-mail the mailbox: COIU@economy-ni.gov.uk.

The websites listed in this section are suggestions to help you explore your career options further. The Department for the Economy is not responsible for the content of external websites. The information in this bulletin is correct at the time of publication, but it may change over time.