**Everything you need to know about working as a Diagnostic Radiographer in the UK.**

**Pathma Balasooriya – Advanced Practitioner Mammographer - UK**

**What will you do? (prospects.co.uk,2020)**

* Receiving referrals from medical practitioners and deciding which type of imaging is appropriate for the request ensuring patients receive a radiation dose as low as reasonably possible.
* Explaining the process to patients, as well as accurately positioning the patient’s body part to be imaged and make sure the radiation levels are safe.
* Providing support and reassurance to patients, taking into account their physical and psychological needs.
* Producing high quality images and evaluating images to diagnose the patient’s medical situation appropriately.
* Performing quality control and quality assurance tests for x ray equipment and viewing monitors regularly so it can be used safely and accurately.
* Assisting Radiologists or trainee doctors with complex radiological interventional studies.
* Supervising, mentoring, and training radiography students and assistants.
* Adhering health and safety at work 1974 guidelines, including ionizing radiation regulations, [IR(ME)R 2000 with the amendment 2018 and IRR 2017] to protect yourself and others.
* Participating statutory and mandatory training regularly, such as

1. Conflict resolution 6. Equality, diversity, and human rights

2. Fire safety 7. Health, safety, and welfare

3. Infection prevention and control 8. Information governance and data security

4. Moving and handling 9. Preventing Radicalization

5. Resuscitation 10. Safeguarding adults & Children

**Skills you'll need to have:**

* Fluent in English
* Computer literacy/IT skills
* Team working
* Excellent interpersonal and communication skills to explain procedures to patients
* A supportive and caring disposition.
* Good observation skills and attention to detail
* Self-motivation and the ability to work under pressure
* Organization and decision-making skills
* The ability to work both as part of a healthcare team and independently
* Confidence in using leading-edge technologies
* A high level of emotional intelligence to manage the emotional and distressing situations you may encounter.
* Using computerized imaging equipment with good hand to eye co-ordination.
* Familiarizing with picture archiving and communication system (PACS) and radiology information system (RIS).

## Working hours:

* Typically work a standard 37.5-hour week, which may include evenings, nights and weekends including bank holidays.
* Part-time work and job sharing are possible, depending on departmental needs. Career breaks are possible, but you must keep up with technical developments during your time out and may need to take further training or study before returning.
* Duty hours can vary across a 24/7 shift pattern: long days, short days, night shifts, on-call.
* Lunch break is 01 hour (maximum), 45 minutes, or 30 minutes, (Depending on departmental needs).

**What to expect:**

* You can work in a range of hospital departments, including the operating theatre, accident and emergency, outpatients and in wards, as well as in mobile units.
* Jobs are available in NHS hospitals, private hospitals, community hospitals, universities, and private clinics throughout the UK.
* Self-employment or freelance work is uncommon. There are some opportunities for agency work.
* The job can be physically and mentally demanding and can involve moving and lifting both patients and equipment, as well as a lot of standing.
* Travel isn't a feature of the role, except for Breast screening, although you may occasionally travel to conferences or training events.

**Career prospects:**

You can work your way through the NHS grading structure in both clinical and management roles. It's possible to specialize in a particular area of diagnostic radiography, with experience such as:

* Breast screening/Mammography
* Computerized Tomography (CT)
* Interventional Radiography
* Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
* Medical Ultrasonography
* Nuclear medicine/SPECT-CT/PET-CT/PET-MRI
* Trauma/Accident and Emergency.

**The role extension:**

As your career progresses, you may become an **advanced practitioner (Band 7)** and take on a higher level of clinical responsibility and management of patients. Diagnostic radiographers can go on to work at **consultant level (Band 8a, 8b or 8c)** where you'll contribute to the strategic development of services.

**Imaging service managers** **(Band 7 or Band 8a, 8b or 8c)** are professionally qualified managers and are responsible for the strategic delivery and planning, along with the day-to-day operational management of all radiology services. There are also opportunities to move into research or into teaching in universities. You can also work in management posts in the NHS, within education or in agencies or charities, looking at issues such as quality assurance or patient care, information, and support services.

**What is Radiographer’s salary per annum? (Agenda for change NHS, 2021/22)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pay Band | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8a | 8b | 8c |
| <1 year experience | £25,655 | £32,306 | £40,057 | £47,126 | £54,764 | £65,664 |
| 2-5 years |  | £34,172 | £42,121 |  |  |  |
| 2-4 years | £27,780 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5+ years |  | £39,027 | £45,839 | £53,219 | £63,862 | £75,874 |
| 4+ years | £31,534 |  |  |  |  |  |

**\*\*\*Please note that these salaries are taxable.**

**NHS overtime payments:**

All NHS staff in pay bands 1–7 are eligible for overtime payments if they work more than 37.5 hours a week. Senior staff in pay bands 8 and 9 are not entitled to overtime payments.

**Standard hourly rate for working on bank holidays:**

1.5 x your standard hourly rate for every hour of overtime worked

2 x your standard hourly rate for working on bank holidays

You can request time off in lieu instead of overtime.

**High-cost area supplements:**

If you work in Greater London or the counties immediately surrounding London (the fringe zone), you'll receive extra pay on top of your basic salary as follows:

**+ 20%  -** if you work in inner London (subject to a minimum payment of £4,608 & a maximum payment of £7,097)

**+ 15% -** if you work in outer London (subject to a minimum payment of £3,898 & a maximum payment of £4,967)

**+ 5**%  - if you work in the fringe zone (subject to a minimum payment of £1,066 & a maximum payment of £1,845)

**Annual pay increments:**

Each Agenda for Change pay band has several points. If you have not reached the maximum point in your pay band, you will progress to the next point each year if your performance is satisfactory and you demonstrate the expected knowledge and skills. Your employer must have a fair appraisal system in place to assess your performance.

**Annual leave entitlement:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Years NHS service** | **Entitlement in days (annual leave + bank holidays)** | **Weekly contracted hours** |
| On appointment | 27 + 8 | 37.5 |
| After 5 years | 29 + 8 | 37.5 |
| After 10 years | 33 + 8 | 37.5 |

**To qualify for higher bands, you would need to have:**

* General Radiographer will pay at Band 6, with specialist areas such as MRI, CT, Mammography, Nuclear Medicine and Cath Lab.
* Advanced Practitioner will pay at Band 7, with relevant post-graduate certificate/degree with experience for the specialist areas such as Interventional Studies of Breast, Ultrasonography, Reporting, Research, Education/Teaching, Management and Leadership.
* Consultant Practitioner will pay at Band 8, with master’s degrees in relevant specialist area.

E.g., Consultant Mammographer will pay at Band 8c, after completing the modules of Reporting of Breast Imaging, Interventional studies of breast, Ultrasonography of breast, Clinical examination of Breast, research, and dissertation leading to master’s level.

**What qualifications does a radiographer need?**

To practice as a registered radiographer in the UK, you will need to have:

* Diploma or BSc in Diagnostic Radiography, or equivalent degree recognized by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
* Be registered with the HCPC.
* Have a relevant post-graduate degree in specialist areas, such as medical ultrasound or Mammography.

**How do you obtain HCPC registration: (HCPC, 2018)**

Go through below link for more information, for the international application process.

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/getting-on-the-register/international-applications/>

**Scrutiny fee for the HCPC application: £ 539.65 (around Rs. 1,50000.00)**

all applicants applying through the international route should confirm their proficiency with the English language. The ability to communicate effectively in English is crucial to working as a health professional in the UK.

You can declare that English is your first language, meaning you don't have to provide certification. This must only be done if it is the main or only language that you use on a day-to-day basis. Having studied English or undertaken higher education that was taught in English is not sufficient to claim that English is your first language. You may be asked for further evidence if you claim that English is your first language, and you are not from a majority English-speaking country.

Applicants whose first language is not English and who are required to provide a language test certificate as evidence of there proficiency must provide:

**IELTS (General) - 7 with no element below 6.5 (minimum score)**

Elements are Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking

This certificate is valid for 2 years from the date of issue.

You can use this same certificate when you apply for UK visa, if you could find a job within 2 years of the language certification with the HCPC registration.

**How do you apply for a Diagnostic Radiographer job in the UK?**

Go through below links to find out jobs and must apply online.

**https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/search\_vacancy/**

**https://www.healthjobsuk.com/**

**Before applying for a Job:**

* Go through Job description and person specification which shows how good a match you are.
* Check for job type, working pattern, pay scheme, pay band, staff group, speciality, and the closing date of the application.
* Read the values of Trust
* Prepare the list of duties and responsibilities which should match to the expecting job description.
* Name 2 referees. First one should be your Line manager/superintendent Radiographer /Radiographer in charge. Second one should be one of your senior colleagues or a Radiologist. You should provide your referees’ **official e mail addresses**, but not the private one.
* Provide good supporting information
  1. This section is your opportunity to sell yourself therefore make sure you use it to your advantage. You can include any information here that has not been covered elsewhere on the form. Demonstrate why you would be suitable and how you meet the person specification. You need to convince the recruiter that you have the required skills, knowledge, and experience and that they should be inviting you for an interview.
  2. You can include, among other things, details about:
* your duties and responsibilities.
* your skills, knowledge and/or experience which is relevant to the post.
* identify any employment gaps.
* voluntary work you have accomplished.
* research, publication and/or presentation experience.
* Complete all the parts of the form without grammatical errors and submit it.
* Frequently check your email account and make sure to response AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
* If you are shortlisted for an interview, please request for a remote interview, (through Zoom or Skype).

If you have any queries for filling the applications for HCPC registration or/and for applying jobs or if you are shortlisted for interviews, please feel free to contact me through [rvpbalasooriya@gmail.com](mailto:rvpbalasooriya@gmail.com)

**Advantages of living in the UK:**

* Improvement in a financial situation hence, to have a better life.
* To provide a stress-free quality education for your children.
* Free education facilities up to university level.
* NHS means health care is mostly free, except dentistry and optometry. However, elderly, and low-income residents can get free dental treatment.
* Reasonable cost of living
* To live within a less polluted and mosquito free environment.
* Opportunity to get permanent residence (PR), a year henceforth can get British citizenship.
* If you are offered a job and if you are married, your spouse and children under 18 years of old also can enter the UK as your dependants on dependent visa. If you are not married, your partner also can enter the UK as your dependent. Dependency visa holders can work in any job, at any skill level without any restrictions.
* Amazing historic sites and cities within a day trip distance of major cities.
* UK is at the forefront of arts, culture, and sports events, such as football, rugby, tennis, horse racing, cricket, boat races, badminton, athletics, swimming. hockey, golf ,darts etc.
* Cheap and easy access to Scotland, Irland and Europe for holidays.
* Farm fresh foods are readily available.
* Able to work in NHS up to the age of 68 and entitle to have NHS pension and state pension.
* Social security benefits and many more.

**References:**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/diagnostic-radiographer>

<https://www.rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/nhs-conditions-of-employment>

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/registration/getting-on-the-register/international-applications/>