



Department  
for Education

# Progression Pathways in Health and Social Care

## Higher Education

**Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)** play a crucial role in supporting careers in health and social care by providing learners with the knowledge, skills, and practical experience needed to excel in this essential sector. Here's how HTQs make a difference:

**Industry relevant skills:** HTQs are designed in collaboration with employers, ensuring that learners develop the competencies aligned with occupational standards. This means graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of health and social care roles from day one.

**Pathways to career progression:** HTQs offer clear pathways into a variety of careers. They also provide a stepping stone for further qualifications, including higher-level apprenticeships and degrees.

**Practical learning:** By combining theoretical knowledge with practical training, HTQs ensure that learners gain the experience needed to deliver compassionate, effective care. This balance of learning builds confidence and competence, essential for success in roles that directly impact people's lives.

**Recognition and credibility:** As government-backed qualifications, HTQs are widely recognised by employers and educational institutions. This credibility enhances learners' employability and opens doors to a wide range of opportunities in the health and social care sector.

**Meeting sector demand:** With a growing demand for skilled professionals in health and social care, HTQs help bridge the skills gap by equipping learners with the expertise needed. This not only benefits the workforce but also ensures high-quality care for those who need it most.



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progression pathways in  
Health and Science  
(including social care)  
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## Higher Education

Studying a **degree** in health and social care can open up many opportunities, providing the knowledge, skills, and qualifications needed to thrive in this rewarding sector offering:



**Comprehensive knowledge and expertise:** A degree offers an in-depth understanding of key concepts such as healthcare practices, social policies, psychology, and ethics. This foundation is essential for delivering high-quality care and making informed decisions.

**Enhanced career opportunities:** Many roles in health and social care—such as social worker, nurse, occupational therapist, and healthcare manager—require a degree-level qualification. Studying at this level opens the door to advanced roles with greater responsibility, career progression, and higher earning potential.

**Critical thinking and problem-solving skills:** Degrees encourage critical thinking, research, and analytical skills. These abilities are essential in health and social care, where professionals often need to assess complex situations, solve problems, and make decisions that impact people's well-being.

**Practical experience and industry connections:** Many degrees include work placements and practical modules that provide hands-on experience in real-world settings.

**Pathways to specialisation and further study:** A degree is often the first step toward specialised roles or further study, such as postgraduate qualifications in areas like public health, social work, or advanced clinical practice. This opens up opportunities for leadership, research, and specialised care.

## Apprenticeships & Skilled work



**Higher and Degree Apprenticeships** are a training option that could be the next step after completing a level 3 qualification, allowing individuals to attain a Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ), or undergraduate degree. These apprenticeships function similarly to other apprenticeships, with 80% of time spent on-the-job training, while the remaining 20% is dedicated to training in Higher Education, or a registered training provider.

### Skilled work

Technical qualifications provide clear pathways to employment because they are based on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) outlined in employer-designed occupational standards. These standards are directly applicable to specific job roles. Technical qualifications often highlight practical, hands-on training, which is essential for acquiring the technical skills needed for particular occupations.