

Healthcare Science Career of the Week



Ultrasonographer

Area of HCS: Allied Health Professions

Pay Scale: £26k - £74k

AMAZING FACT

- You can even do ultrasound on the brain, it's called cranial ultrasound. It's normally done on new-born babies before their skull fuses together (yes babies are born with essentially a hole in their skull!!). If you want to do it on an adult then you need to surgically open their skull!!

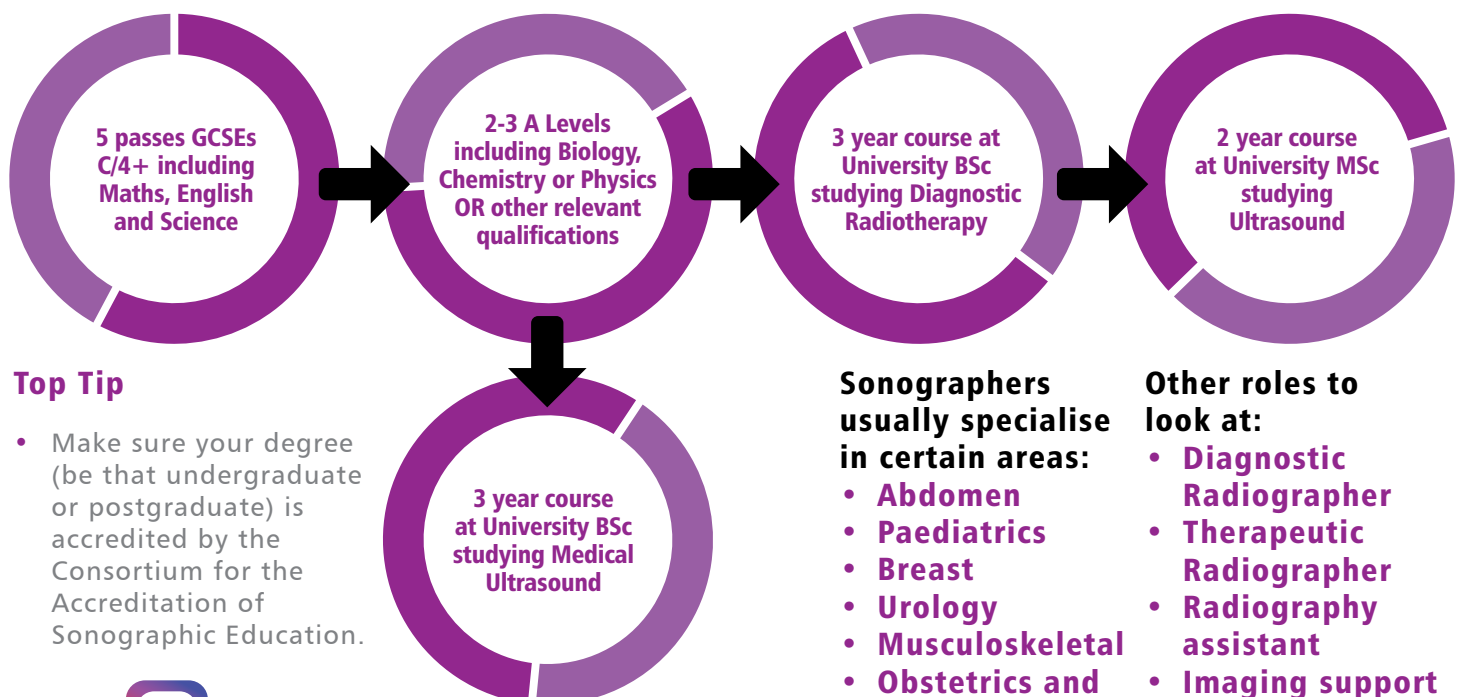
As a sonographer you will use 'ultrasound imaging devices' (that's an ultrasound machine to you and me) to produce diagnostic images, videos, scans and 3D volumes of the human body. You will be responsible for the interpretation of the data you collect, writing reports to send to other doctors and consultants within the health care profession.

Ultrasound used high frequency sound waves to generate very detailed images of inside the body. As it uses sound waves, it means it is safe on all patients and hence the use on pregnant women. The sound waves bounce off organs and return to the device, the connected machine then turns them into images. You can only look at fluid filled or soft-tissue area in the body (not bone or full of air) such as heart, kidneys and liver. Ultrasound is also really useful to look at blood vessels.

AMAZING FACT 2:

- Ultrasound works using sound waves, sound waves that we can hear fall in the frequency 2-20 000 Hz, ultrasound uses frequencies of between 1 and 15 MILLION Hz!! Even dogs, who have super-duper hearing, can only hear up to 60 000 Hz.

What to do to get into this career...



Top Tip

- Make sure your degree (be that undergraduate or postgraduate) is accredited by the Consortium for the Accreditation of Sonographic Education.

Sonographers usually specialise in certain areas:

- Abdomen
- Paediatrics
- Breast
- Urology
- Musculoskeletal
- Obstetrics and gynaecology
- Cranial

Other roles to look at:

- Diagnostic Radiographer
- Therapeutic Radiographer
- Radiography assistant
- Imaging support assistant
- Medical physicist



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There is currently only one of these course offered in the UK and that is at Birmingham City University