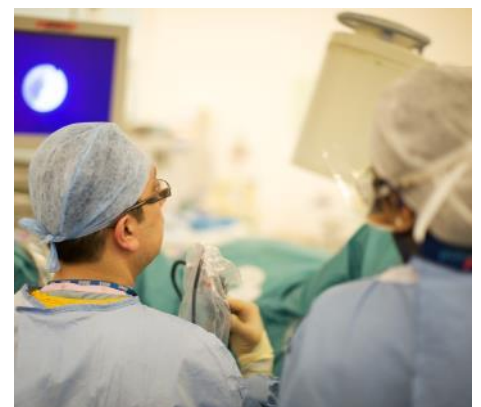


Health Education England Graduate and Student Placement Scheme: Case studies from current graduates and placement students



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Health Education England Graduate and Student Placement Scheme: Case studies from current graduates and placement students

Carys Milbourn (She/Her) **National Diversity and Participation Project Support** **Started at Health Education England (HEE) in September 2020**



A little bit about me and my university studies...

Hi, my name is Carys and I am from Epsom, Surrey. I am currently studying Sociology at the University of Leeds and will return to complete my final year after this placement. I chose to study Sociology because I wanted to understand the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions of social life and I have always questioned how we can live in a more equitable society.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Within my degree, I adopted a focus on social policy which looked at healthcare within the UK and the NHS. Therefore, I was interested in gaining experience within the public sector. When I found the HEE placement scheme it seemed to fit everything I was interested in and passionate about. After researching HEE I found that my own values aligned with the NHS Constitutional values. Therefore, HEE's Graduate and Placement scheme stood out as a role that would be fulfilling. I also liked the variety of roles available, which is not something I had found offered by many other placement schemes.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

I am hoping to gain as much experience and transferrable skills as possible, which I can then apply in my future career. I am also hoping that this year will help me decide what career path I want to take once I have completed my studies. Working within the Diversity, Inclusion and Participation team has also given me an amazing opportunity to see how themes that I have studied within my degree are implemented in policy and practice. Particularly, having insight into HEE's submission to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and the role of staff networks in creating a more inclusive workplace.

What have you been working on in the team?

The National Diversity, Inclusion and Participation team supports the internal staff of HEE and focuses on widening participation externally, ensuring that the health and care workforce is representative of the communities it serves. My role has been within the Diversity and Inclusion side of the team and has been extremely varied so far. My work has ranged from supporting the new Regional Diversity and Inclusion Managers, assisting with survey data for an Equality Diversity and Inclusion review to supporting HEE's staff networks.

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What has been your favourite moment so far?

Throughout HEE's Black History Month webinar series, I pulled together the key themes from the webinar surveys. At the end of Black History Month our Chief Executive, Dr Navina Evans, spoke about these themes in a webinar about action planning and the way forward for HEE. This made me feel extremely proud and excited to be a part of something that is influencing change within the organisation.

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

There are many different roles available within the placement scheme, so definitely keep an open mind to the opportunities available and how you could apply yourself to these. Research HEE and make sure that you align your own values with the NHS constitutional values. If you have any questions about my current role and experience at HEE, feel free to email me carys.milbourn@hee.nhs.uk.

Health Education England Graduate and Student Placement Scheme: Case studies from current graduates and placement students

Beth Mottershaw
Rotation within the Postgraduate
Medical & Dental Education Team
Started at HEE in July 2020



A little about me and my university studies...

I have lived in Colchester my whole life and moved away to Canterbury for University in 2017. I applied to study a combined course of English Language and Psychology, however, dropped to a single honours Psychology course in my second year. I have always wanted to work within the NHS, but not necessarily in a clinical role, so when I found the HEE placement scheme, I knew I had to apply.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Growing up, I always wanted to work in the NHS, particularly as a paediatrician. However, when I realised I wasn't very good with needles, I thought I should probably reconsider my career choice! I still wanted to be involved with healthcare, but I wasn't sure what my options were. When browsing through different graduate schemes in my last year for university, I stumbled across the HEE graduate/placement scheme. I didn't know much about the organisation, so did some research about what HEE actually does. After finding out about the amazing work that HEE as an organisation does and how they work with the NHS, I knew I needed to apply.

What do you hope to get out of your placement?

I would love to increase my knowledge about healthcare generally both within HEE and the NHS. I hope to understand the careers available to me in the long term, whilst understanding how healthcare will change in the coming years due to workforce challenges. I work within the Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education Team, so I am regularly in contact with external stakeholders, such as NHS Training Programme Directors, as well as individual working doctors. I also hope to learn more about the challenges doctors face in everyday practice, and how they are supported in their positions.

What have you been working on in the team?

As I stated previously, I work in the Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education Team within the East of England, however, I am doing a rotation between 4 different teams, spending 3 months in each. When I first joined, I spent 3 months in the Assessment team and was involved with Annual Review of Competence Progression. This involved checking in with doctors in a number of medical specialities to track their progress and ensure they are practicing in a safe manner.

I am currently working in the Recruitment team and have recently helped lead the whole recruitment process for the Advanced Clinical Fellowship posts available within local

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hospitals. This involved numerous pieces of work: from the longlisting stage, to conducting interviews, to offering job roles.

Additionally, I have done some separate work with the Professional Support and Wellbeing team which has been eye-opening! The PSW team offer support and guidance to trainee doctors who are struggling during their long training. This support can range from communication support, to exam support or even psychological support. I was able to write a report for the team detailing doctors' experiences using PSW and how they felt it could be improved. The aim of the report was to highlight areas that needed to be improved so future doctors who use the service get the best possible support and experience.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

I have particularly enjoyed working on the recruitment process for the Advanced Clinical Fellowship posts as it was a role where I was able to take on a lot of responsibility. It was very rewarding to see hardworking applicants being offered the job after a very long recruitment process.

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

I would 100% recommend applying! If you have an interest in healthcare, the NHS or anything in between, you should certainly research HEE and the placement scheme. It is a great opportunity to understand all the background work that goes into keeping the NHS alive and supporting our frontline staff.

If you are interested in the scheme, don't let anything stop you applying!

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Joe Lemmens
HR and OD Placement Student
Started at HEE in September 2020



A little bit about me and my university studies...

Hi there! My name is Joe and I am from Liverpool. I have completed two years at Loughborough University studying Geography and Sports Science and will return following my placement at HEE to complete my final year.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Both my parents are frontline NHS workers, so growing up watching the amazing work my family did taught me about the importance of our National Health Service from an early age. I have always been proud of my parents for the work they do and wanted to help people in a similar way. With my skills being in the non-clinical field, I couldn't contribute in the same way as my parents. However, HEE gave me the opportunity to have a positive impact on the NHS by supporting the delivery of excellent care and improving health and social care services.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

First and foremost, I was hoping to gain experience in a professional working environment to develop my professional skills which, despite working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, I have definitely achieved. This is thanks to the feedback and support from my colleagues. As well as this, I was keen to learn more about HEE as an organisation and the roles they have to offer. After some positive meetings with my line manager and other teams within HEE, I look forward to gaining experience in different departments such as Global Health Management. Through doing this, I hope to learn more about my strengths and weaknesses as I face different challenges, so I know which areas I need to develop now and in the future.

What have you been working on in the team?

My role is extremely varied with new projects coming up every week or two! One long term project which I have helped lead has been innovating our monthly newsletter so that we can monitor interaction and make the process of creating a newsletter easier for managers. This has involved numerous presentations to managers and business partners, writing standard operating procedures, web design and much more. Other projects I have been involved in include assisting with the management of the flu campaign and supporting the organisation of induction events for new starters.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

My Line manager sent me a Christmas parcel containing a homemade card, homemade cookies, and lots of treats such as my favourite chocolates. When I thanked her, I asked how she knew all my favourite things. She said she had written it all down from when we

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had discussed such things in coffee catch ups to get to know each other better from when I first joined. This might not be a professional example, but I feel it reflects the effort that my HEE colleagues have gone to in order to support my interpersonal development, which is something I really appreciate.

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

My main piece of advice would be to look at the NHS constitution and values to see if they align with your personal values. If they do, do not hesitate to apply! Be sure to reference these throughout your application, providing examples to show the employer how you would fit in here at HEE. I would also advise that if you have any questions about the role, then get in contact with a member of staff. Please feel free to send me an email (joe.lemmens@hee.nhs.uk) and I can answer any questions you have.

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Lucy Walker Population Health and Prevention Graduate Started at HEE in August 2020



A little bit about me and my university studies...

I graduated in 2020 from the University of York with a degree in Philosophy & Politics. Throughout my degree there was a strong focus on health inequalities and the ethical distribution of healthcare resources, and it was this that first piqued my interest in working for an NHS body like HEE.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Since I had a life-long interest in public sector work, and a strong interest in the ethics of healthcare from my degree, a non-clinical NHS setting seemed perfect for me. At HEE, I can see the concepts I learned at University in action. For instance, a lot of my work centres around understanding and addressing health inequality.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

I hope to back up my degree with some hands-on experience, and to gain lots of transferable skills such as: project management, workplace communication, and literacy in new software. These are skills that will be valuable to every employer, so I'll have countless directions I could take my career by the end of my placement.

What have you been working on in the team?

My main focus in the Population Health and Prevention national team has been on the workforce development side of things. I am leading on a project to develop a new Population Health learning resource to promote population health competencies across the entire health and social care workforce, as well as supporting the development of a team-wide communications strategy and the delivery of our Population Health Fellowship.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

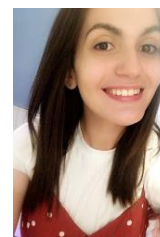
It is hard to pick just one, but some of my favourite moments have been in our informal team catch-ups, where we all sit down with a cup of tea and talk about anything and everything. These meetings have really helped integrate me into the team and have reinforced to me just how lovely my colleagues are!

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

If you share the NHS' values and have a passion for making our healthcare workforce the best it can be, you should definitely apply for a placement. Be prepared for a busy and fast-paced working environment, but one that is equally rewarding. Within weeks, you will have gained countless new things to add to your CV, so it is definitely worth it!

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Jazmine Higgins Policy and Programme Communications Placement Student Started at HEE in July 2020



A little bit about me and my university studies...

Hi, I'm from Kent and I moved to Leeds in 2018 to study Psychology at the University of Leeds. I have completed the first two years of my course and will be returning to University to complete my final year after my placement with Health Education England (HEE). I currently work in the national Policy and Programme Communications team, which is also based in Leeds.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Whilst at university, I became interested in communications as I was the Communications Officer for a student-led widening participation group. I originally started looking for psychology-related placements but came across HEE's placement scheme and I was drawn to it. I realised that I resonated with the values of the NHS and HEE. Furthermore, undertaking a communications role within an NHS arms-length body would allow me to be able to fulfil my primary goal of helping people. Whilst working for HEE was not an obvious choice for me as I am studying psychology at university, I discovered that the role offered the opportunity to gain valuable experience working within a high impact setting and would enable me to challenge myself to make a difference to the lives of others.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

I am hoping to make the most of every opportunity given to me to make a positive impact on the students, trainees and professionals that we support to ensure that patient care is of the highest possible quality. I want to get as much experience as possible working with a range of programmes as this is my first role within an office setting (albeit a virtual setting). I hope to develop skills such as using a range of Microsoft packages, using online platforms, analysing social media statistics, writing for business, and confidently liaising with suppliers and partners.

What have you been working on in the team?

I work as part of the Programme and Policy Communications team. My role is to support communications projects from a range of priority programmes including Nursing & Midwifery, Primary Care, Quality and Medical Education Reform. I support my colleagues in a multitude of ways including writing social media copy, designing quote cards and scheduling a range of social media posts, analysing social media statistics, updating webpage content, liaising with suppliers and partners to get collateral created and writing up case studies.

I have been involved with several big projects already including Allied Health Professional (AHP) Day, which involved running a social media takeover day. Other projects include

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launching a social recruitment campaign to promote senior roles via social media and providing communications support for an animation which will be used to promote the Global Radiologist's Programme.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

It is hard to pin down one moment as there have been many highlights whilst working with my incredible team. However, if I had to pick one, it would be working on the AHP day campaign which celebrated all of the amazing efforts of AHPs. The AHPs that I worked with were an enthusiastic group of individuals who were keen to provide content that I could use to produce a jam-packed schedule of posts throughout the day. I liaised with a range of individuals over several weeks to ensure we had representation of all 14 Allied Health Professions. On the day, I monitored our social media to share and engage with the #PeopleLikeMe campaign that we had promoted. It was incredible to see the huge levels of engagement that the posts received and to be a part of an exciting day.

What advice would you give to students or graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

If the job advert has caught your eye and your values align with the NHS constitutional values – don't hesitate to apply! HEE is a dynamic organisation and roles are varied, but one common denominator shared by each one is that we all work to ensure that students, trainees and the NHS workforce have the support they need to provide high-quality patient care. HEE can provide a wealth of opportunities that will help you with your career progression; taking time to research the organisation and explain why you would be an excellent choice of candidate with examples is worth it.

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Emily Hall
Project Manager Graduate
Started at HEE in July 2020



A little about me and my university studies...

I grew up and always lived in Staffordshire before moving to Lancaster University in 2017 where I studied Sociology. During my time at university, I discovered that I wanted to work in the healthcare sector, so I did a short placement for my final year research project with a Public Health team at a local authority. One of the members of the team recommended that I apply for the HEE placement and that is how I ended up here!

Why did you choose to join HEE?

I knew that I wanted to pursue a career which involved improving healthcare services, but I was not sure how to get started. The HEE placement seemed like the perfect opportunity that I had been hoping for; I was not familiar with HEE before this, but upon researching the organisation and HEE's work, values and aims, I discovered that this all aligned with what I wanted to do in healthcare. The range of placements on offer was also great, as I felt there were a couple of departments in particular that I would love to be a part of.

What do you hope to get out of your placement?

Ideally, I would like to gain the experience to begin a lifelong career in healthcare. But to scale that back a bit, the opportunities that I have already had to work on projects to improve healthcare services in innovative ways have been amazing.

I work for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) as part of their People Strategy Team, so the colleagues I work with are mostly from NHS Trusts, South Central Ambulance service or NHS England, but I do still have a strong connection to HEE. So, another great thing that I hope to continue experiencing in the placement is working across the system and improving our shared working to make a difference in addressing workforce challenges.

What have you been working on in the team?

As a Project Manager for the team, my role is to help ensure the effective delivery of the projects I support and lead, which are part of the five workforce programmes within the BOB ICS People Strategy.

I am currently supporting BOB's COVID Vaccinations Workforce Lead with the communications and information going out to people who have stepped forward to support the COVID vaccination centres. My role in the project is to ensure that everyone has a smooth transition between expressing their interest to beginning our recruitment and onboarding process.

I am also leading on managing our database of all the former NHS staff who signed up for the Bring Back Staff scheme during the first wave of COVID to join the vaccination

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programme. As I write this, we are currently in the midst of everything, so it is an incredibly busy time. Even so it is a joy to be able to make a contribution to overcoming this challenge.

I am also the Project Manager for two projects for our Recruitment and Resourcing Programme – the Career Pathways pilot in Oxfordshire and the BOB Workforce Branding.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

It is hard to pick a particular moment, so I will say when I was asked to lead on the Recruitment and Resourcing projects for the team. It reaffirmed how I have felt throughout the placement; that I am a member of the team who has important responsibility, rather than being defined as a graduate on a placement.

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

If you are interested in a role where you make a difference to the delivery of our health and social care services, I would really recommend applying. Spend time writing out a strong application that demonstrate how your values and experiences relate to the NHS and HEE's values and aims. For the interview and assessment centre, do not be afraid of letting your personality shine through.

The placement is open to all graduates and placement students, so do not let concerns about whether you have enough experience, or the 'right degree', stop you from putting in an application.

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Ryan Fraser
HR & OD Graduate at Don Valley House
Started at HEE in July 2020



A little bit about me and my university studies...

I am 23 years old and from Scotland. I completed my undergrad in Legal Studies and Psychology at the University of Aberdeen. I had the intentions of becoming a lawyer, but quickly realised this wasn't for me; I realised I was more passionate about a career in health and wellbeing. I am still deciding what role I would like to play in healthcare, but HEE has been a great way to begin exploring the opportunities for non-clinical healthcare careers. Even though my degree does not directly relate to my role at HEE, it is surprising how many times you find yourself using a piece of knowledge from university to complete a task or even just to use in conversation.

Why did you choose to join HEE?

Knowing that I wanted to go into healthcare, I searched around for ways to gain experience as I really wanted to avoid going back to university. Luckily, I found the HEE scheme - one of the only healthcare-based programmes I could find. They offered a wide range of programmes and I thought the ideal position for me would be doing HR or public health work. HEE's inclusivity and the organisation's aims to be the best place to work naturally drew me to it. They also have a clear value-based culture which drives the work they do, and so with all this in mind, it seemed like the ideal organisation to join. The graduate scheme has been a great steppingstone into the world of healthcare so far and I am looking forward to the opportunities it presents in the future.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

At the beginning of the placement, I was excited to learn the ins and outs of HR as I was interested in exploring this as a future career path. I think everyone has preconceptions of HR, as I did, but I am quickly finding there is a lot more to it than just hiring/firing and maintaining peace. I am also hoping to take on a few projects within HEE, so I can develop leadership and project management skills. Working for a large organisation like this allows you to grow in confidence and provides the opportunity to explore lots of different areas which will aid your development.

What will you be working on in the team?

I have been given quite a broad role in the HR business team which allows me to get involved with loads of the different areas of the organisation. My morning consists of everything recruitment: importing job applications, chasing managers to shortlist applications, setting up interviews on our system and sending out employment contracts. In the afternoons, I work with the workforce team where I create new positions for all new employees on our electronic system and most recently, I have been involved in a big financial restructure of the organisation. On top of this, I have control of the medical revalidation inbox and I also get the opportunity to get stuck into some project work, such

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as working on this year's graduate programme and most recently, exploring new ways to manage tasks and resources across the HR directorate.

What has been your favourite moment so far?

My favourite moment so far has been facilitating the corporate induction. Here I co-led a virtual session where new employees learned about HEE's values and the ways in which our roles influence patient care. Furthermore, I was able to facilitate our virtual marketplace sessions where our benefit providers spoke about the benefits and rewards that we are entitled to as employees of HEE.

What advice would you give to graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

Be proactive and find out the aims and values of HEE and use some of this knowledge in the application process. Also, try and find a way to set yourself apart from other applicants. You might do this by preparing a particularly memorable presentation, or by using an interesting life experience to answer an interview question. For me, preparation was key, and simply rehearsing my presentation over and over, and researching common interview questions allowed me to be more confident during the later stages of the process.

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Belle Yeung

Policy Advisor in the Private Office of the Chair and Chief Executive Graduate Student

Started at Health Education England in July 2020



A little bit about me and my university studies...

Hi! I'm Belle, I graduated in 2019 from the University of Edinburgh with a degree in linguistics. I'm particularly interested in education, sociology, language, policy and communications, which all came together in my studies. I spent the year prior to starting at HEE as a bilingual programme teacher in Spain and now hope to build a career at HEE!

Why did you choose to join HEE?

While I really enjoy education and teaching, I found myself wanting to be more involved with the policy side of things and started looking for routes into public policy. I was especially attracted to HEE when I discovered it's both an arms-length body of the government and part of the NHS. I hadn't realised what kind of roles there were available in the NHS, and, coming from a medical family, was excited by the opportunity to become a part of that and utilize my skills and interests. On the interview day, everyone was so lovely and friendly that it felt like the sort of workplace culture I wanted to join - and I haven't been disappointed.

What are you hoping to get out of your placement?

I've got a huge amount out of my placement already but ultimately, I'm hoping to gain a wide range of experience in everything from communications to equality, diversity and inclusion and policy. It's also been great to make lots of connections and I hope I'll make many more by the end of the year. It's been really fascinating to be a part of the private office as we transitioned from an Interim Chief Executive to a new Chief Executive, and whilst watching the organisation support the NHS with COVID-19 - I think I've learnt a huge amount!

What have you been working on in the team?

We work quite independently in the private office because we each have different portfolio areas which are delegated to us. We don't really work on projects together apart from ensuring the overall smooth running of the private office, which relies on each of us playing our part. It suits me really well because I like to work on things alone and get the 'teamwork' part in when I liaise and work with lots of different teams - it feels very social a lot of the time which is nice, and there's always a lot to learn working with so many different people!

Typically, I am heavily involved with Navina's CEO comms, attend meetings with her that are connected to my portfolio and prepare any briefings she might need. My role also includes dealing with external enquiries to pass on to the relevant people, chasing these up, and linking in with people across the Directorate of Education and Quality and Skills

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Development and Participation (my portfolio areas). I also make notes in meetings where needed, attend board and executive team meetings, and act as a general conduit for information between different areas of the organisation and the private office. And anything else that's needed to support Navina and Sir David (the current Chair of Health Education England).

What has been your favourite moment so far?

It may seem kind of weird but I love it when I'm super busy! Often I'm juggling a lot of different things, between enquiries, meetings, comms and deadlines. It can come from all different directions at once but I find it quite fun balancing all these different things and it makes me feel like a really connected part of HEE when I hear from so many people. In terms of specific moments - I really enjoyed Disability History Month at HEE and the International Day of People with Disabilities staff webinar - and I got to share my story on HEE connect, the staff intranet. I also like sitting in on meetings as you learn a great deal about how things work at the highest levels of the organisation, government and the NHS. Finally, I love lunchtime catchup chats with the team, working on stuff with comms and just feeling part of it all.

What advice would you give to students or graduates thinking of applying for a placement in HEE?

If you're even vaguely interested in the types of roles shown in the advert and share the NHS values, I'd say go for it! Just be yourself, and check that HEE's goals and values connect in some way with your own because you'll feel way more motivated and a stronger sense of belonging if they do. From my experience, HEE has a really welcoming culture (even whilst working remotely), and whether you're a graduate like me or a placement student you'll get a huge amount out of your year with us which will be invaluable for your future career, whether that's with HEE or elsewhere. Because HEE does so many different things there's a good chance you'll be able to explore other areas you're interested in and get in touch with those teams, which is always a plus especially at this stage in your career! New ideas and fresh perspective are always welcomed and I think people here see that as a real strength of graduates and students. Best of all, you can expect to be valued and treated as a colleague like anyone else, which is something that not all graduate schemes and placement years can claim to do.