

NHS FINANCE INSIGHTS PLACEMENT SCHEME

SOUTH WEST MINI CASE STUDIES AND TESTIMONIALS



INTRODUCTION

The Insights Placement Scheme began as a pilot programme in London in 2023. It provides a 12-month experience in an entry-level (band 2) finance role, allowing candidates to develop new skills and gain on-the-job work experience. The South West as a region was very keen to roll this scheme out, following the successful pilot. However, it quickly became apparent that the geography and transport links across the region would pose a significant challenge to a region wide trial. As a result, Bristol was identified as the ideal location to gain traction with the scheme and subsequently, this opportunity became available to four individuals to take part.

Colleagues across NHS finance in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICS worked hard to engage with local schools and colleges – not only to promote the scheme itself, but also to raise awareness of NHS finances a potential career path to young students.

In September 2024, four students enrolled onto the scheme. Under the guidance of their placement managers, they have been gaining valuable insights into what it is like to work in NHS finance, while also developing their professional skills.

In this document, you will find their individual case studies and discover what they have been involved in, as well as the lessons they have learnt over the past 12 months.

In September 2025, the Insights Placement Scheme is expanding across the region resulting in more placements.



NHS FINANCE COLLEAGUE PERSPECTIVE

CLAUDIA BISETTO, HEAD OF STRATEGIC FINANCE
UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BRISTOL AND WESTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST.

Claudia Bisetto is Head of Strategic Finance at University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust. She has been instrumental in the roll-out of the Insights Placement Scheme in the region.

From the moment I read the brief for the NHS Finance Insights Placement Scheme, I knew I wanted to be involved. Supporting the Regional Lead in Bristol and now across the South West has been an incredibly fulfilling experience.

This scheme resonates with me personally, as I was once a school leaver who stepped directly into the workplace. It provides a fantastic opportunity for young people, particularly those from less privileged backgrounds who choose not to pursue university. A 12-month paid placement in the finance department offers invaluable hands-on experience, with the hope of securing a substantive role and potential finance/accountancy training.

As part of promoting the scheme to students, we needed to present this to potential students that may want to apply. Initially, I was nervous about presenting to groups of Year 13 students in assemblies. However, the engagement and enthusiasm from both students and teachers quickly

put me at ease. Seeing their excitement reinforced my belief in the scheme's impact.

I was amazed by the maturity and professionalism of the school leavers during interviews last summer. After selection, I could not wait for them to start their careers with us. This scheme has the potential to change lives and create opportunities that might not otherwise exist. Even if they do not continue their careers with us, or continue to work in NHS Finance, I feel proud that they have had an incredible opportunity to start their careers with us and build on their professional skills. This is an opportunity that they may not have had, if it were not for the scheme.

The level of time commitment and dedication on behalf of the placement managers and direct line managers cannot be underestimated and my biggest thanks to my colleagues at North Bristol NHS Trust and University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust. Being part of this initiative has made me proud, it has boosted my confidence and allowed me to contribute to shaping young futures. I wholeheartedly encourage others to support and help drive this incredible scheme forward.

CASE STUDY 1

MOHAMED WARSAME, INSIGHTS TRAINEE

UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BRISTOL AND WESTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

My name is Mohamed Warsame, and I am currently on the Insights Placement Scheme at University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW). Reflecting on my time here, I cannot help but feel an overwhelming sense of pride and gratitude. I am very thankful for this scheme, it has been a game changer for me. It has been an incredibly rewarding and insightful experience.

Prior to this role, I had not worked a 9-to-5 job in an office setting and everything about it was new and unfamiliar to me. I used to work night shifts in a warehouse part-time while juggling school. My background is in A-level Maths, Business, and Media. I had some idea of what I wanted to do after sixth form, it was either go to university to study Accounting and Finance, or take a gap year and explore the world. However, this wonderful opportunity came up, and I thought: I am going to take a gap year and take part in the scheme.

When I joined the scheme, I was not entirely sure what to expect. I knew I had an interest in finance, and I believed in the values of the NHS — but stepping into a large, fast-paced organisation like UHBW was both exciting and daunting. What I found was more than just a placement. It became a life-changing experience and a genuine eye-opener that gave me insight into how the NHS

works behind the scenes and the pivotal role finance plays in patient care.

The scheme offers a chance for people like me to demonstrate our potential and develop essential skills such as using Excel, making decisions, and managing time. These are skills that will prepare me for a future career in finance.

My first role was within the Financial Accounts team, where I was introduced to the core processes that ensure the Trust remains financially sustainable. I learned how to:

- Assist in the production of monthly accounts and financial reconciliations.
- Monitor expenditure and income against budgets.
- Work with Charitable Funds.

This experience showed me that every figure, every transaction, and every ledger has a direct link to healthcare outcomes. I started to understand the bigger picture and how finance is not just about numbers, but about lives. I felt proud knowing that my work contributed, even in a small way, to helping hospitals provide the best possible care.

After gaining confidence in Financial Accounts, I moved into Transactional Services. This was where I really started to develop my skills and independence. I worked across:

- Accounts Payable: Ensuring suppliers were paid on time, this is vital for maintaining good relationships with vendors and keeping essential services running.
- Accounts Receivable: Supporting invoicing and debt management, and learning how to communicate clearly and professionally.

I began to see how the day-to-day tasks I handled, such as DB Capture, made a significant impact. These services keep the gears turning in the NHS machine and being trusted to handle them felt incredibly rewarding.

One of the unexpected highlights of my week is helping the Payroll team every Monday. I support key tasks such as managing the sick returns and register, copying P60s and payslips, and processing bank terminations. These tasks may seem routine, but they are vital in ensuring payroll accuracy and supporting the smooth running of staff services. In a high-pressure environment like the NHS, every detail matters. Being trusted to handle confidential information and contribute to something as essential as payroll gives me a real sense of responsibility and it is my way of supporting the dedicated staff who make patient care possible.

As my time at UHBW continues, I feel deeply grateful for this opportunity. I have grown both professionally and personally. I have met colleagues who are not just talented, but kind, passionate, and dedicated to public service. I have seen firsthand how finance is more than spreadsheets, it is about people, responsibility, and impact.

For anyone considering the NHS Finance Insights Placement Scheme: do it. It might just change your life, like it did mine.



I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR THIS SCHEME—IT HAS BEEN A GAME CHANGER FOR ME. IT HAS BEEN AN INCREDIBLY REWARDING AND INSIGHTFUL EXPERIENCE.



CASE STUDY 2

JESVIN JIJO, INSIGHTS TRAINEE NORTH BRISTOL NHS TRUST

Starting my Insights placement at North Bristol NHS Trust, I did not expect it to have such a profound impact on me. I initially applied thinking it was just another job opportunity, but it has become much more, both personally and professionally. From the beginning, I was welcomed into a supportive environment that helped me build confidence, explore my interest in finance, and make a meaningful contribution.

During my time here, I have worked in Accounts Receivable, supported the Private and Overseas Patients Team, and assisted with stock counts. Each role has provided me with valuable, hands-on experience and a deeper understanding of how finance supports patient care. The early challenges, such as learning how to use Microsoft Excel and understanding National Health Service (NHS) accounts, were made easier thanks to the guidance and support of my colleagues. Shadowing senior team members showed me how financial decisions directly impact both patient care and operational efficiency.

One of the most important outcomes of this placement has been my personal growth, especially in developing self-confidence. Before joining the NHS, I worked in a non-office, customer-facing role where I did not need to interact much with others or give presentations. At the start of this programme, I was nervous about presenting, but with encouragement from my colleagues and by stepping out of my comfort zone, I overcame that fear. As the saying goes, “Growth begins at the end of your comfort zone.”

What I have found most rewarding is the strong sense of teamwork and community. Collaborating with different teams has taught me how to contribute effectively, support others, and learn from their experiences within the NHS. As I approach the end of my placement, I am excited to take the next step by ideally securing an apprenticeship in NHS finance. I am eager to keep learning and hope to build a long-term career in this field.

The Insights Placement Scheme has given me both clarity and direction for the future, and I would highly recommend it to anyone passionate about finance. There is no better place to gain real, meaningful experience.



CASE STUDY 3

HANAD MOHAMED, INSIGHTS TRAINEE NORTH BRISTOL NHS TRUST

The Insights Placement Scheme has been an incredible opportunity for me to gain not only top-tier experience working in finance but also a deeper understanding of how the professional world operates. Consistency, efficiency, and reliability are the three key lessons that the scheme has taught me. Additionally, problem-solving skills and the ability to adapt in a fast-paced working environment are invaluable traits that will stay with me for life, all thanks to the guidance of my placement manager, Sanjay, and the team I work with in Payroll.

During my placement, Payroll has been where I have gained the most knowledge and hands-on experience. I have come to understand that payroll is not just about calculating pay; it is about managing a wide range of important and detailed information that is crucial not just to an individual's pay but to an entire division. From tax codes to overtime and leave entitlement, attention to detail is essential. Whether it is inputting accurate employee data or ensuring everything complies with regulations, working in payroll requires a high level of accuracy and accountability. Thanks to the Insights Scheme, I am now considering a payroll apprenticeship, something I had never considered before. The experience truly helped me discover skills I did not realise that I had.

Apart from the professional skills I have learned, the placement has also helped me grow personally. The two key things it has taught me are self-confidence and time management. Confidence is vital, and when I first started, I was overwhelmed by how different my surroundings were and how much I had to adapt. Over time, I realised I was there to learn, and everyone was very patient with me. Gaining the confidence to contribute and ask questions has been one of the most valuable lessons, both inside and outside of work, and I will always be grateful for this skill.

I highly recommend the Insight Placement Scheme to anyone leaving school and considering a career in finance. It offers an excellent introduction to the industry and provides a valuable professional network that can benefit you for years to come.

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ME DISCOVER SKILLS I DID NOT
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CASE STUDY 4

O'SHAE SMITH, INSIGHTS TRAINEE UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS BRISTOL AND WESTON NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

My time so far on the Insights Placement Scheme has been an amazing experience which has helped me develop as a person in so many ways. While I was in college, I already knew I was not going to go to University; however, I had no idea what I was going to do afterwards. When I heard about the scheme at my college careers fair, it immediately caught my attention. The application process was easy to understand but also professional, which was amazing in setting the tone for how the scheme would help me develop in the future.

The scheme has been fantastic and crucial in helping me grow as a person entering the working world. I have gained countless skills which have helped me immensely while on the scheme, and it has really developed my confidence. I have had my ability to meet deadlines tested throughout, with numerous tasks requiring me to work to tight timescales, which has been key to improving my time management skills. The scheme has

provided many different challenges which have tested and significantly improved my professional abilities. It has also taught me how to use a lot of software, especially Excel. Before joining, I had no idea how to use Excel, but since being here, I have learned so much about it.

The scheme has also offered a lot of unique opportunities that not many people my age would have experienced. I have been invited to a variety of corporate meetings, which really showed me how the Trust is run. Being in those meetings has taught me a lot, and the range of meetings I have attended has shown me how each component of the Trust comes together to run not just one, but two hospital sites.

Being here also gave me another amazing opportunity, to go back to my old college and present the scheme to younger students.

A few years ago, I would never have imagined doing something like that, but with the confidence and support this scheme has given me, I have been able to. Another great opportunity has been working independently in the cash office. This has been one of the best things I have done. It gave me a real sense of responsibility, as I was overseeing the exchange of money with different departments across the hospital, handling reimbursements, banking, and supporting the children's charity.

The scheme has also allowed me to meet so many amazing people who have made my time here a great experience. Everyone has been really kind and helpful, always providing me with opportunities and support, no matter which team they are in.

Overall, I think the scheme is an amazing opportunity, and I am very grateful to have taken part in it. It is a fantastic option for people who are unsure about going to University.

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Create, develop and support a leading NHS Finance community for the South West that reflects the population we serve and supports the delivery of the NHS Finance Development Strategy.

If you have any questions on any of the above or would like any further information, then please get in touch with the team at one.finance@nhs.net

<https://financecareers.nhs.uk>

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