***What is a Linen Assistant?***

Linen services staff make sure that clinical departments throughout the NHS have stocks of clean linen, such as sheets and towels. Their job role is an important part of healthcare as soiled linen that has not been cleaned correctly can spread infection. The role of a linen assistant can be physically demanding. There are various roles within linen services, these include Linen Services Assistant, Linen Services Supervisors and Line Services Managers.

***Is a Linen Assistant the right career for me?***

Linen services staff need to be:

* able to follow instructions and procedures carefully
* very health and safety aware
* physically fit for lifting, packing and moving trolleys
* able to use initiative
* willing to take responsibility for their own work
* able to work in a team

You'll also need

* organisational skills
* teamwork skills

***What do Linen Service Staff do?***

There are a variety of tasks that need to be completed in the linen department and dependent on the job role itself and area working, daily tasks may vary.

As a linen services assistant, you may:

* deliver items of clothing or linen to wards and other patient areas
* sort linen ready for cleaning or washing
* pack linen for storage or delivery
* keep records of stock levels

Some linen services staff also use a sewing machine or marking machine to:

* repair uniforms
* add logos to uniforms
* add labels to items of linen / uniforms
* order and maintain records of staff uniforms issued

In some hospitals, where there is a laundry on site, linen services staff:

* receive used linen from hospital departments
* sort items according to how they will be washed or cleaned
* operate industrial washing and dry cleaning equipment
* dry and finish using steam cabinets, steam and vacuum presses or by hand
* fold and pack linen
* issue uniforms to staff

As a ***linen services supervisor*** or team leader, you will oversee the work of a team of linen services assistants.

As a ***linen services manager***, you make sure that laundry services meet quality standards. You'll have other management tasks such as:

* recruiting and training staff
* arranging staff rotas
* managing absence and discipline
* controlling budgets

***Where do Linen Services staff work?***

Linen services assistants based in hospitals may work in a dedicated linen facility, some may have contact with patients, others working in off-site laundries have little or no contact with patients.

***How much do Linen Services Assistants earn?***

Agenda for Change Pay scales from April 2017 are currently:

Band 1, £14,727.00 with annual increments rising to £15.468.00 per annum, pro rata

Band 2, £15,468.00 with annual increments rising to £17,954 per annum, pro rata.

***What career progression opportunities are available for a Linen Services Assistant?***

When you start work as a linen services assistant you will receive the training you need. This includes an introduction to the department and its systems and equipment as well as health and safety and manual handling.

Employers will expect employees to obtain qualifications if they wish to progress further. With qualifications and experience, a linen services assistant could become a team leader, supervising a team of assistants. With further experience and training, they could progress to become a manager, responsible for a department or area.

You may be offered the opportunity to take qualifications in, for example, laundry services.

***How do I become a Linen Assistant?***

There are no set entry requirements for linen services assistants. Employers expect a good standard of numeracy and literacy. They may ask for GCSEs in English and math. Employers may also ask for relevant qualifications such as an NVQ in hotel services or health care.

Employers may ask for some experience of linen or laundry work or healthcare which could be from paid or voluntary work, some may require skills such as a sewing machinist.

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| --- | --- |
| ***Do I need a degree?*** **N/A** |  |
| ***Where can I train in Wales?*** |  |
| ***Is there funding available?*** **N/A** |  |
| ***Are there postgraduate opportunities?* N/A** |  |
| ***How do I get experience?*****Voluntary or work placement** |  |
|  |  |
| **How do I apply for a job?** **Search** [**www.jobs.nhs.uk**](http://www.jobs.nhs.uk) |  |

**Useful links**

**information@linenmanager.co.uk**

**enquries@gcl.org.uk**

**Other roles you may be interested in**

[Domestic services staff](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/domestic-services/domestic-services-staff)

[Housekeeper](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/domestic-services/housekeeper)