

# Case Study | Radiography Student Profile



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## **Gary Hicks shares his AECC University College story**

Diagnostic radiographers are highly skilled practitioners who carry out medical imaging for diagnoses using specialised technical equipment such as X-ray, CT scanning, MRI scanning, Nuclear medicine and Ultrasound.

They are very much in demand by the NHS - 95% of people will interact with a diagnostic radiographer at some point in their lives. This course provides students with all the training and knowledge needed to become a fully qualified practitioner.



We spoke to Gary Hicks to find out how he and those on his course are getting on as they undertake their studies. He tells us about his passion to work in a health-care setting, making a difference to the lives of his patients and how he is learning something new every day from his inspiring lecturers and use of AECC University College’s industry-leading facilities.

## **A passion for healthcare**

“Family health issues made me realise that I wanted to dedicate the rest of my life to healthcare. Just as the physiotherapists improved the life of my mother and fiancé, I wanted to help improve the lives of others.

“This eventually led me to do an access course for allied health professionals at Bournemouth and Poole College and working in domiciliary care. This was a great experience, as studying alongside aspiring ambulance technicians, nurses and midwives led me to radiography.

“I first learnt about radiography from my friends at Bournemouth Hospital. I started to look into different radiography options and one of the first things that excited me about AECC University College was its fantastic research. Professor Alan Breen and his involvement in Quantitative Fluoroscopy flung my geek brain into overdrive. I just wanted to be a part of it all. I saw the School of Radiology was to start this new course and I thought to myself ‘what a fantastic opportunity’.”

## **A career in radiography**

“I was volunteering in a physiotherapy rehabilitation ward and I kept on seeing one practice which worked across almost every department in the hospital – medical imaging. I spoke to my friends in theatre and they told me about interventional radiology. It blew my mind. From physios to advance practitioners and GPs, everyone needs imaging.

“It just seemed like a great career, especially important during Covid-19. There are so many different areas to get involved in, such as the intersection of the anatomy, science, patient care etc. As an aspiring physio, I was really passionate about patient care and I think you can make a really big impact on patient care as a radiographer.

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“I came to AECC University College looking at the research from Professor Alan and Dr. Alex Breen, thinking it was great and that I would love to be a researcher. But, actually, I came here and was inspired so much by my radiography lecturers that I changed my mind. I want to be a radiographer first and then progress to a sonographer and maybe an MSK sonographer.”

## Studying at AECC University College

“Life at AECC University College is good. Social life on and outside of campus has been affected by Covid-19 but I think everyone here, including myself, feels safe. The University College is certainly taking Covid-19 very seriously and the students are too. The learning culture is very good and curiosity is encouraged. I think everyone is really happy and safe.

“I have only been here for a few weeks, but there are definitely some highlights already. Getting down to the X-ray lab for the first time and pushing the X-ray button was a big one! I feel so privileged that we have a brand-new X-ray lab to work with. Also, the opportunity to commence our clinical placements. Everyone is very happy and fortunate to have these experiences planned.”

“Our class have all been on campus, and include regular practical experience in the X-ray lab. I think the class as a whole are getting more confident week by week with all the tools and the X-ray tube. I also feel that it is unique to AECC University College that we have MRI, Fluoroscopy and ultrasound clinics on site. That’s definitely a strong point of the course.

“We have also got some amazing lecturers here in Radiography and Anatomy. Our Anatomy teacher was a neurosurgeon – that is insane! We’ve also had some really good guest lectures - we are learning something new here every day.

“I am really proud to be here with my cohort and the future looks great for us. AECC University College is the right size campus for our cohort size. We are able to keep socially distanced yet still get all the clinical teaching done – it is great. We are learning so much and having so many opportunities.”

Students studying on BSc (Hons) Radiography courses receive funding as the subject is seen as a ‘shortage specialism’ and important to delivering the NHS long term plan. You can read more about the Radiography courses we offer [here](#).