

FAQs about careers in the allied health professions

This page has some frequently asked questions about careers in the allied health professions.

• What are the allied health professions?

Allied health professionals ^[1] make a difference to the lives of thousands every day. As an important part of the NHS team, they provide treatment and help rehabilitate adults and children who are ill, have disabilities or special needs, to live life as fully as possible. They have a lot of responsibility and often manage their own caseloads.

• How do I train to be an AHP?

The training for each of these professions varies. An approved programme of degree training is required for all AHPs and for most are full-time and at undergraduate level.

Part-time courses and degree apprenticeships have been approved for some roles - enabling you to study for a degree part-time while being employed. You could also do an accelerated programme after a relevant first degree which means you could complete your training in two years rather than three as an undergraduate. A postgraduate route is the only route into some roles, such as the art therapies.

For more information about the profession and the training, explore the career that interests you:

- [art therapist](#) ^[2]
- [diagnostic radiographer](#) ^[3]
- [dietitian](#) ^[4]
- [dramatherapist](#) ^[5]
- [music therapist](#) ^[6]
- [occupational therapist](#) ^[7]

- [operating department practitioner](#) [8]
- [orthoptist](#) [9]
- [osteopath](#) [10]
- [paramedic](#) [11]
- [podiatrist](#) [12]
- [physiotherapist](#) [13]
- [prosthetist/orthotist](#) [14]
- [speech and language therapist](#) [15]
- [therapeutic radiographer](#) [16]

For these professions, use our [course finder](#) [17] to locate courses that lead to registration with the Health and Care Professions Council ([HCPC](#) [18]) for all professions except osteopaths. The General Osteopathic Council regulates osteopaths and statutory registration is a legal requirement to practice in the UK.

• Can I get financial support?

All undergraduate and postgraduate AHP students can access student loans, if eligible.

And you may also be eligible to receive at least £5,000 to help fund your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You don't have to pay it back.

Visit our [financial support pages](#) for the very latest information [19].

• Can I work as an assistant first?

Yes, there are opportunities to work in a variety of clinical support roles, such as

- [dietetic assistant](#) [20]
- [physiotherapy assistant](#) [21]
- [podiatry assistant](#) [22]
- [occupational therapy support worker](#) [23]
- [radiography assistant](#) [24]
- [orthotic technician](#) [25]
- [prosthetic technician](#) [26]
- [speech and language therapy assistant](#) [27].

Depending on your role, your employer may then support you to train as a fully qualified AHP. Have a look at [NHS Jobs](#) [28] for current vacancies.

• Can I use my interest in sport?

There are opportunities to work with patients who have received injuries through sport such as a physiotherapist [21] or podiatrist [29]. You could also help with diet and nutrition as a dietitian [30].

Outside of the AHPs, you could be a doctor specialising in this sport and exercise [31] or using sport as part of a programme of rehabilitation after an injury, illness or operation as a cardiac scientist [32] and in promoting better health as a health trainer [33].

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/faqs-allied-health-professions/faqs-about-careers-allied-health-professions>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals> [2]
<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/art-therapist> [3]
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