

# Ophthalmology

Ophthalmologists are doctors who care for patients with eye conditions.

They diagnose, treat and prevent disorders of the eyes and visual system, using medical and surgical skills.

Female ophthalmologist checking eye

## Life as an ophthalmologist

You'll look for possible links with other conditions within the body. You'll treat patients from premature babies to the most senior members of the community. They will generally be well, without life-threatening conditions, but eye conditions are common and can cause anxiety. You'll need to be sympathetic and reassuring.

You'll be involved in a mix of medical and surgical work and will treat a range of conditions from common issues such as cataracts, glaucoma or squints through to infectious eye disease and chronic diseases such as age-related macular degeneration (deterioration of the macula, the central area of the retina).

You'll run specialty, general or acute clinics, work in treatment clinics using lasers and other technology or in a specialist eye theatre, performing operations such as cataract surgery. You will regularly work with a range of other clinical specialists.

You'll mainly work regular hours, with occasional out-of-hours work to cover eye emergencies.

A surge in exciting new technology and treatments in recent years means you'll be able to manage patients with eye diseases in a much more effective way and use the latest surgical procedures to perform day case operations. You'll often be able to see the effects of your treatment almost immediately.

## How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your [foundation training](#) <sup>[1]</sup> after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, [SAS doctors](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and consultants on the ['Pay for doctors'](#) <sup>[3]</sup> page.

## How about the benefits?

- make a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- work anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- good holiday entitlement
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

## Must-have skills

- excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues, and patients and their families
- emotional resilience, a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure
- teamwork and the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams
- problem-solving and diagnostic skills
- outstanding organisational ability and effective decision-making skills
- first-class time and resource management for the benefit of patients
- a high degree of manual dexterity
- superb hand-eye co-ordination, excellent vision, and visuospatial awareness
- physical stamina to cope with the demands of surgery

## Entry requirements

Your first step is medical school. Typically, you'll need excellent GCSEs and three A or A\* passes at A level including chemistry for a five-year undergraduate degree in medicine. Many medical schools also ask for biology and others may require maths or physics.

If you already have a degree, you could study for a four-year postgraduate degree in medicine.

You'll need to pass an interview and admissions test. You'll be asked to show how you demonstrate the NHS values such as compassion and respect.

Some medical schools look to recruit a mix of students from different backgrounds and geographical areas, so your educational and economic background and family circumstances could be considered as part of your application.

**"Ophthalmology appealed to me because it combines medicine and microsurgery and is also one of the few specialisms where you can see the effects of treatment almost immediately."**

**[Read Kavita's story](#)** <sup>[4]</sup>.

# What are my chances of starting a career in ophthalmology?

In 2020 there were 430 applications for 75 specialty training places (a competition ratio <sup>[5]</sup> of 5.73).

## How to become an ophthalmologist

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year foundation programme <sup>[6]</sup> where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid specialty training <sup>[7]</sup> to become an ophthalmologist, which will take a minimum of seven years.

You may be able to train part time, for example for health reasons or if you have family or caring responsibilities.

## Where a career in ophthalmology can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research in areas such as eye development and diseases in children, retinal disease and its onset in patients with conditions like diabetes, or oculoplastic surgery (plastic surgery around the eye)
- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector

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### ◦ Speciality Doctor in Ophthalmology

Carmarthen, SA31 2AF

Salary:

£59727.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Speciality Doctor in Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist with Interest In Paediatric Ophthalmology**

London, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist with Interest In Paediatric Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

- **Trust Doctor in Ophthalmology Cornea and Oculoplastics**

London, E14 5HJ

Salary:

£41750.00 to £64288.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Barts Health NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Trust Doctor in Ophthalmology Cornea and Oculoplastics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- **Senior Locally Employed Doctor in Ophthalmology (Medical Education)**

Manchester, M13 9WL

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Locally Employed Doctor in Ophthalmology \(Medical Education\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

- **Healthcare Assistant - Ophthalmology**

Preston, PR5 6LF

Salary:

£23809.50

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Healthcare Assistant - Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

- **Registered Nurse Ophthalmology**

Carmarthen, SA31 2AF

Salary:

£30420.00 to £37030.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Registered Nurse Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

- **Registered Nurse - Ophthalmology**

Barrow in Furness, LA14 4LF

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Registered Nurse - Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

- **Ophthalmology Nurse Band 5**

Llwynypia, CF40 2LX

Salary:

£30420.00 to £37030.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Ophthalmology Nurse Band 5 job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

- **Lead Nurse Ophthalmology B8a**

Guildford, GU2 7XX

Salary:

£55877.00 to £62626.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Lead Nurse Ophthalmology B8a job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

- **Staff Nurse - Outpatient Ophthalmology**

High Wycombe, HP11 2TT

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Staff Nurse - Outpatient Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

- **Lead Divisional Pharmacist - Ophthalmology**

Liverpool, L7 8YE

Salary:

£62215.00 to £72293.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Lead Divisional Pharmacist - Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

- **Advanced Clinical Practitioner - Ophthalmology**

Carshalton, SM5 1AA

Salary:

£59490.00 to £66239.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Clinical Practitioner - Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

- **Diabetic Failsafe Officer - Ophthalmology**

Colchester, CO4 5JR

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Diabetic Failsafe Officer - Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

- **Clinic Coordinator – Ophthalmology (Failsafe)**

York, YO31 8HE

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinic Coordinator – Ophthalmology \(Failsafe\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

- **Receptionist/Appointment Clerk - Ophthalmology Colchester**

Colchester, CO4 5JL

Salary:

£24169.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Receptionist/Appointment Clerk - Ophthalmology Colchester job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

- **Ophthalmology Nurse Practitioner, Band 6**

Cheltenham, GL53 7AN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Ophthalmology Nurse Practitioner, Band 6 job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

- **Consultant - Ophthalmology - Medical Retina and Diabetic**

Truro, TR1 3LJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant - Ophthalmology - Medical Retina and Diabetic job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

- **International Clinical Fellow in Oculoplastics & Ophthalmology**

Hereford, HR12ER

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Wye Valley NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for International Clinical Fellow in Oculoplastics & Ophthalmology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

- **Registered Nurse - Ophthalmology Eye Surgery Unit**

Torquay, TQ2 7AA

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Registered Nurse - Ophthalmology Eye Surgery Unit job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

- **Advanced Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmology (PCEU Windsor)**

Windsor, SL4 3DP



Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmology \(PCEU Windsor\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

- **Consultant in Ophthalmology interest in Primary Care**

Bangor, LL57 2PW

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Ophthalmology interest in Primary Care job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

- **Consultant in Ophthalmology (special interest in Paediatrics)**

Barnsley, S75 2EP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Ophthalmology \(special interest in Paediatrics\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[29]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant in Ophthalmology (Oculoplastics and Acute Eye Care)**

Wakefield, WF1 4DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant in Ophthalmology \(Oculoplastics and Acute Eye Care\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[30]</sup>

- **Receptionist (CAT 2A Ophthalmology - Prince Charles Eye Unit, Windsor)**

Windsor, SL4 3DP

Salary:

£24169.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Receptionist \(CAT 2A Ophthalmology - Prince Charles Eye Unit, Windsor\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[31]</sup>

- **Consultant in Ophthalmology with a Special Interest in Medical Retina**

Doncaster, DN2 5LT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS FT

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Ophthalmology with a Special Interest in Medical Retina job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[32]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist**

Swansea, SA2 8QA

Salary:

£106600.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Swansea Bay University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[33]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist**

Swansea, SA2 8QA

Salary:

£116600.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Swansea Bay University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[34]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist (Glaucoma)**

London, E11 1NR

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Barts Health NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist \(Glaucoma\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[35]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Glaucoma**

Basingstoke, RG24 9NA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Glaucoma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[36]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist - Cornea / Glaucoma**

Chorely, PR7 1PP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist - Cornea / Glaucoma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[37]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist (SI in Paeds & Strabismus)**

Exeter, EX2 5DW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist \(SI in Paeds & Strabismus\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[38]</sup>

- **Substantive Consultant Ophthalmologist - Interest in Glaucoma**

Bournemouth, BH7 7DW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Substantive Consultant Ophthalmologist - Interest in Glaucoma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[39]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Paediatric and Strabismus**

Bournemouth, BH7 7DW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Paediatric and Strabismus job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[40]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Paediatrics and Strabismus**

London, EC1V 2PD

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist - Paediatrics and Strabismus job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[41]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist in Paediatric and Strabismus**

Taunton, TA1 5DA  
Yeovil, BA21 4AT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist in Paediatric and Strabismus job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[42]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist with Interest in Paediatrics & Strabismus**

Bournemouth, BH7 7DW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist with Interest in Paediatrics & Strabismus job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[43]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist sub-specialist interest in Oculoplastic**

Shrewsbury, SY3 8XQ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist sub-specialist interest in Oculoplastic job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[44]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmologist w/ special interest in Glaucoma**

Boston, PE21 9QS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmologist w/ special interest in Glaucoma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[45]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist with Special Interest in Cataract**

Sidcup, DA14 6LT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Ophthalmologist with Special Interest in Cataract job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[46]</sup>

- **Specialty Doctor**

Salford, M6 7WQ

Salary:

£82000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cygnnet Health Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[47]</sup>

- **ENT Doctor**

Sheffield, S9 1XH

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ENT Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[48]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Canterbury, CT1 1BN

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[49]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

London, SE14 6BL

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[50]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Wandsworth, SW18 4WW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[51]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Slough, SL1 2EJ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[52]</sup>

- **Specialty Doctor**

Lewisham, SE13 6LH

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[53]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Leicester, LE1 2BU

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[54]</sup>

- **ENT Doctor**

Leicester, LE1 2BU

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ENT Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[55]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Swindon, SN3 3RB

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[56]</sup>

- **ENT Doctor**

Swindon, SN3 3RB

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ENT Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[57]</sup>



- **ENT Doctor**

Leeds, LS16 6EB

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ENT Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[58]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Macclesfield, SK11 6HB

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[59]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Sheffield, S9 1XH

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[60]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Milton Keynes , MK11 3LW

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[61]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Leicester, LE1 2BU

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[62]</sup>

- **Specialty Doctor**

London, SE5 8UH

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[63]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Leeds, LS16 6EB

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[64]</sup>

- **Specialty Doctor**

Blackpool, FY3 8NU

Salary:

£80000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cygnnet Health Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[65]</sup>

- **Dermatology Doctor**

Worthing, BN11 3BN

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dermatology Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[66]</sup>

- **Specialty Doctor**

London, SE18 4QH

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[67]</sup>

- **Further information**

The [Royal College of Ophthalmologists](#) <sup>[68]</sup> has further information about being an ophthalmology doctor, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

And hear from people working in ophthalmology:

[A consultant ophthalmologist \(BMJ\)](#) <sup>[69]</sup>

[A consultant in ophthalmology talking about their specialty \(HEWM\)](#) <sup>[70]</sup>

## Other roles that may interest you

- [Medical ophthalmology](#) <sup>[71]</sup>
- [Ophthalmic and vision science](#) <sup>[72]</sup>
- [Neurosurgeon](#) <sup>[73]</sup>
- [Plastic surgery](#) <sup>[74]</sup>

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## Links

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