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# Occupational therapist

As an occupational therapist, you'll help people who have difficulties carrying out day-to-day activities because of a disability, illness, trauma, ageing, and a range of long-term conditions.

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## Working life

Accidents, illness, disability, mental health issues and ageing affect millions of people, making it harder for them to do everyday things, along with activities they enjoy. As an occupational therapist, you'll help all kinds of people overcome all kinds of challenges, so they can live as fully and independently as possible. This might involve learning new ways to do things, or making changes to their environment to make things easier.

In the role, you could help:

- someone adapt to life after major surgery.
- people with mental illnesses or learning disabilities with everyday activities such as work or volunteering.
- elderly people stay in their own homes by providing adaptations such as level access showers or stair lifts.

You'll find solutions to everyday problems, such as:

- advising on how to approach a task differently.
- using equipment or assistive technology.
- adapting the living or working environment.
- finding strategies to meet your patient's goals.

As well as working with individual patients and their families, you could also work with groups, or as part of a multidisciplinary team in hospitals, clinics, charities, prisons and social services departments.

### Real-life story - Rachel Rule

**Lead occupational therapist**

> Occupational therapy allows you to make a difference to people's lives across the community which is something that really appeals to me about the career.

Read Rachel's story [3]

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# Entry requirements

To become an occupational therapist, you'll need a degree in occupational therapy, which usually takes three years full time or up to six years part time. In postgraduate studies, it's possible to gain a Masters degree in one to two years.  Once you've successfully completed your degree, you'll need to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC [4]) before you can start practising. The other option is to apply for an apprenticeship degree.

Entry requirements for an undergraduate course are typically:

Apprenticeships logo

- two or three A levels
- five GCSEs (grades 9-4/A-C), including science.

Or equivalent qualifications:

- a BTEC, HND or HNC, including biological science
- a relevant T level
- a relevant NVQ
- a science-based access course
- equivalent Scottish or Irish qualifications.

When applying for a occupational therapy degree, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

# Annual payments

If you're eligible, you'll receive at least £5,000 a year to help fund your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back. Find out more. [5]

# Degree apprenticeship

There are a growing number of degree apprenticeships. Apprenticeships give you the chance to earn a living while gaining your qualification. Your employer and the government will pay the tuition fees, so apprenticeships aren't eligible for student grants.

## Must-have skills

Don’t forget – academic qualifications aren't everything. You’ll need to be a natural ‘people person’ who is able to make anyone feel quickly at ease. Creativity and the ability to balance patience with enthusiasm is also needed. You’ll need to enjoy teamwork and be able to think quickly on your feet too.

## Training and career development

Once you’ve qualified, you’ll have annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) check-ins, where we’ll discuss your career aspirations and plan how we can help you to achieve them, so you’re always moving forward. You’ll be encouraged to join the Royal College of Occupational Therapists [6] where you’ll gain professional indemnity coverage and a trade union membership.

You’ll also be able to specialise in areas such as elderly care or paediatrics. You could move into research or education, and there are opportunities overseas. Or with experience, further qualifications and training, you could apply for more specialist and senior posts.

## Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours with the need to work flexibly over a seven day period. As an occupational therapist, you’ll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [7], typically starting on band 5.

You’ll also have access to our generous pension scheme and health service discounts, as well as 27 days of annual leave plus bank holidays.

- **Find your course to become an occupational therapist**

**Region** - Any -

**Type of qualification** - Any -

**Full or part time** Search

Displaying 1 - 5 of 84 matches

## Occupational Therapy with Foundation Year

University of Wolverhampton

View course [8] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  - Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
- Study mode
  - Full-time
- Duration of the course
  - 4 Years

Leading to a career in
Occupational Therapy
- Contact details
enquiries@wlv.ac.uk [9]
08009533222
- Region
West Midlands
Admissions address
Admissions Unit
Camp Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 1AD
United Kingdom

# Occupational Therapy

Teesside University, Middlesbrough

View course [10] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
Study mode
Full-time
Duration of the course
3 Years
Leading to a career in
Occupational Therapy
- Contact details
shlsadmissions@tees.ac.uk [11]
- Region
North East
Admissions address
Borough Road
Middlesbrough
TS1 3BX
United Kingdom

# Occupational Therapy

Ulster University

View course [12] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)
Study mode
Full-time
Duration of the course
3 Years
Leading to a career in

Occupational Therapy

- Contact details
  registryce@ulster.ac.uk [13]
  028 7012 4221
- Region
  Northern Ireland

Admissions address
Shore Road
Newtownabbey
BT37 0QB
United Kingdom

# Occupational Therapy

Oxford Brookes University

View course [14] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  Bachelor of Science (with Honours) - BSc (Hons)

Study mode
Full-time

Duration of the course
3 Years

Leading to a career in
Occupational Therapy

- Contact details
  admissions@brookes.ac.uk [15]
  01865 483040
- Region
  South East

Admissions address
Gipsy Lane
Oxford
OX3 0BP
United Kingdom

# Occupational Therapy

Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

View course [16] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  Masters in Occupational Therapy - MOccTh

Study mode
Full-time

Duration of the course
4 Years

Leading to a career in
Occupational Therapy

- Contact details
  admissions@qmu.ac.uk [17]
  0131 474 0000
- Region
  Scotland

  Admissions address
  Queen Margaret University
  Edinburgh
  EH21 6UU
  United Kingdom
- Load more Load more results [18]

- **Live vacancies**

## Find a vacancy

**Enter your location or postcode**

**Show results within**

Search

## Register for your guide to becoming an occupational therapist

We'll email you a step-by-step guide to help you on your way to joining us

Sign up [19]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Art therapist/art psychotherapist [20]
- Music therapist [21]
- Mental health nurse [22]
- Social worker [23]

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