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Physiotherapist

You'll help people improve their mobility and regain their independence after an injury or operation, or as a result of ageing or a disability.

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Working life

As a physiotherapist, you'll focus on identifying and maximising movement to improve the health and wellbeing of your patients.

Your role is vital in treating a variety of conditions such as:

- neurological (stroke [3], multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's).
- neuromusculoskeletal (back pain, whiplash associated disorder, sports injuries, arthritis).
- cardiovascular [4] (chronic heart disease, rehabilitation after heart attack).
- respiratory [5] (asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis).

You'll work with people on a daily basis, recommending exercise, carrying out massage, and using high-tech ultrasound [6] equipment or even hydrotherapy pools, depending on your patients' needs.

Once a patient's movement problem has been diagnosed, you'll work with them to determine a treatment plan. You'll also promote good health and advise people on how to avoid injury.

You may work alone, or as part of a team, and you'll have plenty of choice when it comes to places to work. In the NHS, you're needed in nearly every hospital department such as outpatients, women's health, paediatrics and occupational health. Physiotherapy is also provided in the local community, so you could be based in health centres or treat patients in their own homes, day centres, nursing homes or schools.

Real-life story - David Williams

Rotational physiotherapist

> A highlight was walking a Covid-19 survivor off the ward, to a guard of honour. He had spent over ten weeks in hospital and could now return home to his family.

Real-life story - David Williams [7]

Entry requirements

A university degree is the most popular way to become a physiotherapist. A full-time degree can take three years and a part-time course will take six years. A two-year accelerated Masters course is also an option if you already have a relevant degree. Once you've successfully completed your degree you'll need to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC [8]) before you can start practising. The other option is to apply for a degree apprenticeship.

Entry requirements for an undergraduate course are typically:

- two or three A levels, including a biological science and/or PE.
- five GCSEs (grades A-C [9]), including English language, maths and at least one science.

Or the equivalent qualifications:

Apprenticeships logo

- 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.
- a previous degree or a full practicing qualification in a related area.

Each university sets its own entry requirements, so it's important to check with them directly. In most cases, the results of an interview and other selection processes are taken into account as well as academic qualifications. It's also a good idea to spend some time with a registered physiotherapist to get some firsthand experience of what the role's really like.

When applying for a physiotherapy 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. [10]

Degree apprenticeship

A degree apprenticeship with a healthcare provider is another way to become a physiotherapist. 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

Whichever route you take, you'll also need to be a good communicator who can be hands-on and explain conditions and treatments easily to clients. Having a caring and calm nature is equally important. Physiotherapy can be physically and mentally strenuous so you should also be physically fit with strong organisational and planning skills 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 also be encouraged to join the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy where you'll be able to continually update your skills and training.

As a physiotherapist, you could specialise in a particular area such as sports injuries, critical care, or work with the elderly, children or cancer patients. Teaching, research and management roles are other options.

Outside the NHS, you could work with sports coaches or personal trainers, be based in a clinic or open your own practice.

Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours and may include a mix of shifts, such as nights, early starts, evenings and weekends. As a physiotherapist, you'll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [11], 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 a physiotherapist

Region - Any - ▼ **Type of qualification** - Any - ▼ **Full or part time** Search ▼

Displaying 6 - 10 of 109 matches

Physiotherapy

St Mary's University, Twickenham

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

Physiotherapy

- Contact details

apply@stmarys.ac.uk [13]

020 8240 2394

- Region

London

Admissions address

St Mary's University
Waldegrave Road
Twickenham
TW1 4SX
United Kingdom

Physiotherapy

University of Winchester

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

Physiotherapy

- Contact details

course.enquiries@winchester.ac.uk [15]

+44 (0)1962 827234

- Region

South East

Admissions address

Sparkford Road
Winchester
SO22 4NR
United Kingdom

Physiotherapy

University of Suffolk

View course [16] Opens in a new window

- Qualification

Bachelor of Science - BSc
Study mode
Full-time
Duration of the course
3 Years
Leading to a career in
Physiotherapy
- Contact details
infozone@uos.ac.uk [17]
01473 338833
- Region
East of England
Admissions address
Waterfront Building
Neptune Quay
Ipswich
IP4 1QJ
England

Physiotherapy with Integrated Masters

Keele University

View course [18] Opens in a new window
- Qualification
Master of Science (with Honours) - Msci (Hon)
Duration of the course
4 Years
Leading to a career in
Physiotherapy
- Contact details
sahp.admissions@keele.ac.uk [19]
01782 734551
- Region
West Midlands
Admissions address
Keele University
Keele
ST5 5BG
United Kingdom

Physiotherapy

University of Worcester

View course [20] 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
Physiotherapy
- Contact details
admissions@worc.ac.uk [21]
01905 855111
- Region
West Midlands
Admissions address
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
United Kingdom
- Load more Load more results [22]

- **Live vacancies**

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

Register for your guide to becoming a physiotherapist

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

Sign up [23]

Other roles that may interest you

- Physiotherapy assistants/support workers [24]
- Occupational therapist [25]
- Osteopath [26]
- Occupational therapy support worker [27]

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