

Anaesthesia associate

Becoming an anaesthesia associate offers the chance to use your passion for, and skills in science. You'll look after patients at every stage on their surgical journey working as part of the anaesthesia and wider surgical team. You'll have a positive impact on a patient's care while being a supportive and welcome addition to the team.

Your career as an anaesthesia associate involves intellectual growth. You'll be a team player and effective communicator. It's a challenging role but offers the chance to meet your career motivations with a sense of achievement.

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Courses

Find your anaesthesia associate course

Explore the universities running an anaesthesia associate course and find out who you need to speak to.

[Let's go](#) ^[3]

Working life

You'll provide and support anaesthetic services to patients across various surgical specialities. You'll aid emergency, life sustaining services that rely on anaesthesia.

You'll have face to face contact with patients, ensuring they feel reassured ahead of their surgery and be a vital part in the assessment and planning of their anaesthesia and post-surgery care.

You'll work under the supervision of a consultant anaesthetist in the anaesthesia team and work with the wider theatre and critical care teams including anaesthetists, surgeons, operating department practitioners (and other AHPs), nurses and [intensive care](#) ^[4] and emergency medicine doctors.

You'll have clear responsibilities and duties including:

- reviewing patients before surgery and assessing them for anaesthesia
- taking a medical history and clinical assessment allowing for an anaesthesia plan to be created
- inducing, maintaining and waking up patients from anaesthesia under appropriate supervision
- use anaesthesia techniques/agents, medications and specialist equipment.
- interpreting and monitoring clinical readings and patients' parameters during anaesthesia and respond appropriately .
- initiating and managing medications, fluid, and blood therapy during surgery
- identifying potential issues during surgery and anaesthesia, taking action and seeking appropriate support when required
- ensuring that there is a plan for patients following their operation and that it's carried out
- being involved in the teaching, supervising and assessing of other team members
- support innovation, audit, and research within the anaesthetic department.

You will also deputise for anaesthetists in a variety of situations where your airway and venous cannulation skills will assist in patient care.

Antoinette Jenkins

Anaesthesia associate

Having someone say “thank you” is amazing, not for the praise but because they’ve had a good experience.

[Read Antoinette's story](#) ^[5]

Entry requirements

To apply for a post as a student anaesthesia associate, you'll need to be either:

- an experienced registered health care professional e.g. a nurse or operating department practitioner with at least three years' full-time, post-qualification work experience and evidence of recent academic study

Or

- graduates with a biomedical science or biological science 2:1 honours degree or better.

Must have skills

You'll:

- have an interest in science
- care about getting the detail right
- be a great communicator
- work well in a team

- be organised
- be calm under pressure

Training

You'll need to apply to be a student anaesthesia associate within the NHS and complete a full-time, 24 or 27 month postgraduate qualification. It's length will depend on the university programme. You'll spend most of the time within a clinical placement being taught by medical anaesthetists under direct NHS supervision. You'll have access to teaching and learning materials from the universities delivered in several formats and ways, including simulation and online material.

Topics covered in your training include:

- the anaesthesia machine and monitoring
- the heart and circulation
- the airways and lungs
- the kidneys, liver, endocrine system, and blood
- management of life-threatening emergencies

Since December 2024 all newly qualified anaesthesia associates must be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) before employment. Further information on joining the register is available on the [GMC website](#) ^[6].

Pay and benefits

Your pay as a student anaesthesia associate will vary depending on your employer and your personal circumstances. You would usually be paid anywhere between band 5 and 7 of [NHS terms and conditions](#) ^[7]. After completion of the training, you'll be paid at least band 7 with the chance for additional pay with career progression.

Where the role can lead

Anaesthesia is a dynamic speciality with several areas that the role can expand and extend into. With further training and/or experience, you may be able to apply for roles in specialist anaesthesia teams, clinical management or make the move into education or research.

Further information

- [Association of Anaesthesia Associates](#) ^[8]
- [Royal College of Anaesthetists](#) ^[9]
- [General Medical Council](#) ^[10]
- [Health Education England](#) ^[11]
- [NHS Employers](#) ^[12]

• Find your course to become an anaesthesia associate

Region	Type of qualification	Full or part time
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Other roles that may interest you

- [Adult nurse](#) ^[13]
- [Emergency medicine](#) ^[14]
- [Operating department practitioner](#) ^[15]
- [Anaesthesia](#) ^[16]

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