Entry requirements and training (operating department practice)

This page has information on the entry requirements for operating department practice.

You’ll need to study for a two year diploma or three year degree in operating department practice at university.

You will usually need a minimum of five GCSEs at grades A–C [1] or equivalent plus A-level or equivalent qualifications. These will vary depending on the university so check with the universities you are considering applying to.

A degree standard apprenticeship in operating department practice has also been approved. To get onto a degree apprenticeship, you will need to apply for an apprentice position with a health care provider. You can search for vacancies on the NHS Jobs website [2] and Find an Apprenticeship website [3].

Applicants for full-time courses and apprenticeships may be given recognition for any relevant experience or they may be able to enter with alternative qualifications eg an appropriate Access to Higher Education course.

Entry requirements will vary depending on the university so check with the universities.

Training and registration

Training varies between higher education institutions, combining plenty of practical involvement in an operating department, with learning the background and theory. You will spend time at local hospitals in theatres, accident and emergency and intensive care [4] units.
You must also be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council [5] to practice as an operating department practitioner. In order to register, you first need to successfully complete an HCPC [6]-approved programme. You are then eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC [6]. Once registered as a practitioner, you’ll be required to retain your name on the register by keeping your knowledge and skills up to date and paying an annual retention fee.

**Want to learn more?**

- Find ODP courses on our course finder [7]
- Find more information on studying to be an ODP [8]
- Search for degree apprenticeship vacancies on the NHS Jobs website [2] and Find an Apprenticeship website [3].

**Source URL:** https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/operating-department-practitioner/entry-requirements-and-training-operating

**Links**
[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#GCSEs_at_grades_A-C
[6] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#HCPC
[8] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-operating-department-practice