

# Paramedic

As a paramedic, you'll often be one of the first to arrive when a patient needs help. It's a fast-paced and vital role where you'll need to quickly take charge of the situation to save lives.

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## Working life

When you're a qualified paramedic, no day is ever the same. You'll work in a range of emergency and non-emergency situations, using your judgement and skills to quickly assess a patient's condition and make life-saving decisions.

You'll be trained to resuscitate and stabilise patients using sophisticated techniques, equipment and drugs. In an emergency, you may use high-tech equipment such as defibrillators, spinal and traction splints, as well as administering oxygen and drugs.

You'll often work alongside the police and fire and rescue services. Along with your patients, you'll also support their relatives, friends and members of the public, some of whom might be highly agitated.

As a paramedic, you'll be the senior member of a two-person team, with an emergency care assistant or technician to support you. You may also work on your own using a motorbike or bicycle, or provide advice over the telephone from a control room or clinical hub.

Paramedics work closely with other healthcare teams in the community, such as GPs, occupational therapists, mental health teams, diabetes specialists and doctors and nurses in hospital emergency departments.

Based primarily at a local ambulance station, you'll usually work shifts, including evenings, nights and weekends and will work in all types of weather conditions.

## Elisha Miller

### Paramedic

Most of all, I love the feeling that I've helped others in their moment of need.

Read Elisha's story [3]

## Entry requirements

To practise as a paramedic, you'll first need to successfully complete an approved degree in paramedic science or with an apprenticeship degree. You'll then need to apply to an ambulance service as a qualified

paramedic and register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC [4]).

Paramedic science courses usually take between three or four years full time and include a mixture of theory and practical work including placements with the ambulance services.

Entry requirements for an undergraduate course are typically:



- two or three A levels, including a science, along with five GCSEs (grades 9-4/A-C), including English language, maths and science

or equivalent qualifications:

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

Every university sets its own entry requirements, so it's important to check with them directly.

If you're applying to be a paramedic, you'll be asked to show how you think the values of the NHS Constitution [5] apply in your everyday work. The same will be true if you are applying for a paramedic degree.

## 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. [6]

## Degree apprenticeship/student paramedic

Some ambulance trusts offer the option of studying whilst you work and each will set its own entry requirements. They usually ask for:

- at least five GCSEs, grade 4/C or above, including English, maths and science>

?or

- equivalent academic qualification with a high level of health or science content.

Employers will look for a good level of physical fitness and two years' driving experience. The recruitment process often involves several stages of interviews, tests, fitness assessments and driving tasks. Your employer and the government will pay any fees, so apprenticeships aren't eligible for student grants but you will get paid a salary.

## Driving licence

When applying to an ambulance service trust as a student paramedic or once you're fully qualified, you'll

need to have a full, manual driving licence. If you passed your test after 1996, you may also need an extra driving qualification to drive larger vehicles and carry passengers. Ambulance service trusts use vehicles of different sizes, so check which classifications you need on your licence.

## Must-have skills

Don't forget - academic qualifications aren't everything. As a paramedic, you'll be thrown into unknown or unpredictable situations, so you'll need to be able to remain calm and reassuring in stressful situations, and have great communication skills. You'll also need to be able to work fast and make quick and precise decisions.

## Training and career development

Once you've qualified, you could become a team leader, supervising other paramedics and emergency care assistants, specialise in a specific area like strokes, or work for the air ambulance. With additional training, you could become an experienced paramedic, which is a senior role with more responsibilities. Teaching, research and management roles are other options.

## Pay and benefits

Your standard working week will be around 37.5 hours on shift pattern which will usually include nights, early starts, evenings, weekends and bank holidays. As a paramedic, you'll be paid on the Agenda for Change (AFC) pay system [7], typically starting at band 5 and progressing to band 6 after two years.

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.

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## Paramedic Science

## Sheffield Hallam University

View course [8] 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
  - Paramedic
- Contact details
  - admissions@shu.ac.uk [9]
  - (+44) 0114 225 5533
- Region
  - Yorkshire and The Humber
- Admissions address
  - City Campus
  - Howard Street
  - Sheffield
  - S1 1WB
  - United Kingdom

## Paramedic Science

### University of Gloucestershire

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
  - Paramedic
- Contact details
  - enquiries@glos.ac.uk [11]
  - 03330 141414
- Region
  - South West
- Admissions address
  - Park Campus
  - The Park
  - Cheltenham
  - GL50 2RH
  - United Kingdom

## Paramedic Science

University of Brighton

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
  - Paramedic
- Contact details
  - 01273 644644
- Region
  - South East
- Admissions address
  - Mithras House
  - Lewes Road
  - Brighton
  - BN2 4AT
  - England

## Paramedic Science

Oxford Brookes University

View course [13] 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
  - Paramedic
- Contact details
  - admissions@brookes.ac.uk [14]
  - 01865 483040
- Region
  - South East
- Admissions address
  - Gipsy Lane
  - Oxford
  - OX3 0BP
  - United Kingdom

## Paramedic Science

University of Suffolk

View course [15] 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
  - Paramedic
- Contact details
  - infozone@uos.ac.uk [16]
  - 01473 338833
- Region
  - East of England
- Admissions address
  - Waterfront Building
  - Neptune Quay
  - Ipswich
  - IP4 1QJ
  - England
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## Register for your guide to becoming a paramedic

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

Sign up [18]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Emergency care assistant [19]
- Call handler/emergency medical dispatcher [20]
- Experienced paramedic [21]
- Patient Transport Service (PTS) call handler [22]

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**Source URL:**<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/roles-allied-health-professions/paramedic?page=1&gclid=aw.ds>

### Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/privacy-and-cookies/#CookieDeclarationChangeConsentChange>

[2] <https://www.youtube.com/NHSCareers> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/ambulance-service-team/roles-ambulance-service/paramedic/real-life-story-elisha-miller>  
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