

## Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of NHS careers? Use our compare roles section to get bite-size information on the entry requirements and training, pay and conditions, prospects and skills needed of up to three roles. If there is something that you think you could do, then get more in-depth information on the role.

Don't forget, you can also save your role comparisons by registering with us.

### • Occupational therapist <sup>[1]</sup>

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.

#### Training and qualifications required

You need to take approved training to become an occupational therapist. This could be an approved degree in occupational therapy (courses take three or four years full-time and are also available part-time). If you already have a relevant degree and healthcare experience, you can take a Masters in occupational therapy. These courses usually take two years. To get onto a full-time occupational therapy degree course you usually need two or three A levels or equivalent, along with five GCSEs (grades 9-4/A-C), including English language, maths and science. Each institution sets its own entry requirements, so it's important to check carefully. A degree apprenticeship in occupational therapy has also been approved and offers an alternative to full-time university study. You would apply to healthcare and social care providers for these apprenticeships. Level 3 qualifications would usually be required.

#### Expected working hours and salary range

You would start on band 5 of the NHS Agenda for Change pay system. With experience, further qualifications and training, you could apply for more specialist and senior posts at bands 6 and 7. Occupational therapists working at consultant level will typically be on band 8A or 8B. Occupational therapists in the NHS work around 37.5 hours a week and may be expected to work flexibly over a 7 day period.

#### Desirable skills and values

You'll need skills in communication and organisational. You also need patience, enthusiasm, creativity and the ability to work well within a team.

#### Prospects

You'll work across a range of settings; elderly care, physical and mental health settings, paediatrics, brain injury and learning disability to name a few. Occupational therapists are found in the public, private and voluntary sectors and also in independent practice. There are

also opportunities to become involved in research and education. You'll work within multidisciplinary teams or as service managers in health or social care.

### Related roles

- [Art therapist/art psychotherapist](#) [2]
- [Music therapist](#) [3]
- [Mental health nurse](#) [4]
- [Social worker](#) [5]

### • [Histopathology \(doctor\)](#) [6]

Histopathologists study organs, tissues, cells and [genetics](#) [7] to help provide a diagnosis.

#### Training and qualifications required

You'll follow a set pattern of training which usually starts with a five year first degree in medicine and two years of foundation training. You will then complete five years of specialist training (ST1-5). This period of training will include completing your royal college exams. The length of training can vary according to your circumstances.

#### Expected working hours and salary range

Doctors may work up to 48 hours a week. The working hours may sometimes extend beyond the normal working day to include early mornings, evenings and weekends. You'll first earn a salary when you start your foundation training after medical school. The basic salary ranges from £29,384 to £34,012. Once you start your specialty training as a histopathologist employed by the NHS, you can expect to earn a salary of at least £40,257, which can increase to between £84,559 and £114,003 as a consultant.

#### Desirable skills and values

You'll need excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues. You'll be emotionally resilient, have excellent problem-solving and diagnostic skills and work well in teams and under pressure. You'll also be very organised for the benefit of patients.

#### Prospects

In 2020, there were 261 applications for 97 specialty training places. After two years of integrated cellular pathology training, you will either decide to continue in histopathology specialty training or apply for training in one of the three other cellular pathology specialties: diagnostic neuropathology, forensic histopathology or paediatric and perinatal pathology.

### Related roles

- [Chemical pathology](#) [8]
- [Haematology \(doctor\)](#) [9]
- [Immunology](#) [10]
- [Medical microbiology and virology \(doctor\)](#) [11]

## Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/occupational-therapist> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/art-therapist-art-psychotherapist> [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/music-therapist> [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/nursing/roles-nursing/mental-health-nurse> [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/social-worker> [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/pathology/histopathology-doctor> [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Genetics> [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/pathology/chemical-pathology> [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/pathology/haematology-doctor> [10] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/immunology> [11] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/pathology/microbiology-and-virology-doctor>