

# Architect

Architects design buildings and the space around them. They develop designs which reflect the client's needs and specification. They have to make sure that buildings are fit for purpose and meet environmental standards.

This page has information on the role of an architect in the NHS, including entry requirements and skills needed.?

## Working life

The NHS owns a huge number of buildings. As an architect, you may be involved in renovating and extending existing buildings or designing new ones. Many of the buildings owned by the NHS are of historic value. Some have been listed to ensure they are preserved. When renovating or extending historic buildings, you'll have to be aware of the heritage while still meeting modern healthcare standards and requirements.



Architects working on NHS buildings may work within the NHS or for a private firm which specialises in designing NHS buildings.

Architects work with other staff from corporate services, such as surveyors [1], finance staff [2], estates and facilities managers [3], project managers [4] and purchasing and contract managers [5]. They may meet healthcare staff when they travel to NHS sites. Architects are unlikely to have contact with patients. They also work with people outside the NHS, mainly in the construction industry.

Architects in private firms may work in a team with other architectural staff.

You may be involved in renovating and extending existing buildings or designing new ones

You'll be based in an office but travel to meetings and spend time on site.

## Entry requirements

To practice as an architect, you have to be registered with the Architects Registration Board [6].?

To get onto an undergraduate architecture degree, you usually need

- at least two A levels, along with at least five GCSEs (grades A-C), including English language and maths

or alternative qualifications, including

- BTEC, HND or HNC
- relevant NVQ
- access course
- art and design foundation course
- equivalent Scottish or Irish qualifications

Some universities ask for a portfolio of your design work. Each institution sets its own entry requirements, so it's important to check carefully.

## Skills needed

Architects need to be

- creative
- interested in buildings and design
- able to pay attention to detail
- imaginative
- able to work on several projects at a time
- able to listen to clients and understand their requirements

You'll also need

- design skills
- project management skills
- organisational skills

- business skills

## Training and development

Training takes at least seven years and is a mix of university courses and practical experience, consisting of

- a recognised undergraduate degree course lasting three or four years
- a year working in an architect's office
- two years full-time, or four years part time, studying for a diploma or higher degree
- a further year's work experience
- the Royal Institute of British Architects [7] (RIBA) Professional Practice Examination.

There is a list of accredited courses on the Royal Institute of British Architects [7] website.

Architects can become members of the Royal Institute of British Architects [7] (RIBA). RIBA offers meetings and seminars where architects can update their skills and network with others.

Employers may offer short courses in particular topics such as budgeting or project management.

- Pay and conditions

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Architects in the NHS work standard hours of around 37.5 a week. They may have some evening meetings. Pay will depend on whether they are employed directly by the NHS, in which case they may be on the Agenda for Change (AfC) pay [8] system. An example of a project architect in the NHS in May 2015 was on AfC [9] band 8a.

If they are contracted as part of an external firm to work on an NHS project, then salaries will be different.

- Where the role can lead

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With experience, you could take on bigger projects and more senior roles. You could manage the work of other architects and construction professionals. You could specialise in a particular aspect of architecture such as heritage.

Some architects set up their own private practices, either alongside their NHS work or instead. There may be opportunities to work overseas.

- Job market and vacancies

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Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [10]. Some advertise on their own websites. You can find a list of NHS organisations NHS Choices [11].

If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work.

Find out more about NHS values. [12]

- Further information

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- Royal Institute of British Architects [13]

## Other roles that may interest you

- Estates manager [14]
- Facilities management [15]
- Project management and procurement [16]
- Surveyor [17]

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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/corporate-services/architect>

### Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/surveyor>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/corporate-services/finance-staff>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/estates-and-facilities-management>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/general-management/project-manager>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/general-management/purchasing-and-contract-management>
- [6] <http://www.arb.org.uk/>
- [7] <http://www.architecture.com/>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [10] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [11] <http://www.nhs.uk/aboutnhs/howthenhsworks/authoritiesandtrusts/Pages/Authoritiesandtrusts.aspx>
- [12] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [13] <http://www.architecture.com>
- [14] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/estates-and-facilities-management/estates-manager>
- [15] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/operational-management/facilities-management>
- [16] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/management/roles-management/project-and-programme-management/project-management-and-procurement>
- [17] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/Explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/corporate-services/surveyor>