

Length of training

This page gives an introduction to the length of training for medical school, foundation school and specialty training.

The learning path for medicine is much longer than only four to seven years of medical school. It involves further training during which you will have the opportunity to decide whether you will become a GP or a doctor in one of the other specialties.



Medical school

(4 to 7 years)

If you're coming straight from a secondary school, sixth form college or a college of further education to study at medical school, your medical degree will normally be five years long. You may choose to study an intercalated year which will mean that you study for an extra year.

There's also the possibility of studying a foundation year, before starting your medical degree for those who have not studied sufficient science, or are coming from a disadvantaged

background.

If you're on the accelerated graduate degree programme, your studies will be four years' long (plus one year if you study for the [intercalated degree](#) [1]).

Find out more about [medical school courses](#) [2].

Foundation school

(2 years)

After medical school you'll apply to complete a two year foundation programme. This is a general medical training programme, where you'll combine work experience with training. During the foundation years you will move around different medical specialties. One third of the way through the second year you will be asked to make a choice about which specialty training you would like to embark on in later years.

At this stage you will be paid a salary. [Find out more about pay and benefits for doctors.](#) [3]

Specialty training

(3 years at present for GP, and for other specialties 5 to 8 years)

Once you begin GP specialty training it will be three years long, although this is under review and is likely to be [extended to four years in the future](#) [4].

If you choose other specialty training pathways, the length of training will vary between five to eight years according to specialty. For example paediatrics normally involves ten more years of training after medical school.

Find out more:

- by downloading a diagram of the [UK medical education and training framework](#) [5]
- by [exploring the different roles](#) [6] (there are more than 60 different specialties in medicine)

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/length-training>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Intercalated_degree

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-medicine/applying-medical-school/medical-school-courses>

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-medicine/pay-doctors>

[4] <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/policy/rcgp-policy-areas/enhanced-and-extended-speciality-training-in-general-practice.aspx>

[5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/resources/uk-medical-education-and-training-framework>

[6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles>