

# Plastic surgery

Plastic surgeons restore form and function following illness or trauma.

They also perform aesthetic or 'cosmetic' surgery which changes appearance or form.

Male trainee with surgical mask

## Life as a plastic surgeon

You'll treat the whole body and an interesting mix of emergency and non-life-threatening operations in children and adults.

You'll mainly work on reconstructive surgery in the NHS on cases such as breast reconstruction after cancer or burns, surgery for congenital conditions and trauma surgery after accidents and violent incidents. If you do cosmetic or aesthetic surgery it could include facelifts, surgery to treat protruding ears or eyelid surgery.

Your surgery will be varied, covering everything from brief operations under local anaesthetic to lengthy, complex surgery involving collaboration with other surgical specialists and long-term follow-up with patients. Your working week will also include outpatient clinics, ward rounds, pre-operative meetings with patients and monitoring of cases after surgery.

You can expect to work on a mixture of planned cases such as cancer surgery through to emergency cases for trauma, complex wounds or burns, which can sometimes mean callouts at night.

It's an exciting time to be involved in plastic surgery with new developments in areas such as tissue engineering, the development of scar-free wound healing and facial and hand transplants. Research is at the forefront of this specialty and most plastic surgery units in the UK contribute to this.

## How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your [foundation training](#) <sup>[1]</sup> after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, [SAS doctors](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and consultants on the ['Pay for doctors'](#) <sup>[3]</sup> page.

## How about the benefits?

- make a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- work anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- good holiday entitlement
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

## Must-have skills

- excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues, and patients and their families
- emotional resilience, a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure
- teamwork and the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams
- problem-solving and diagnostic skills
- outstanding organisational ability and effective decision-making skills
- first-class time and resource management for the benefit of patients
- a high degree of manual dexterity
- superb hand-eye co-ordination, excellent vision, and visuospatial awareness
- physical stamina to cope with the demands of surgery

## Entry requirements

Your first step is medical school. Typically, you'll need excellent GCSEs and three A or A\* passes at A level including chemistry for a five-year undergraduate degree in medicine. Many medical schools also ask for biology and others may require maths or physics.

If you already have a degree, you could study for a four-year postgraduate degree in medicine.

You'll need to pass an interview and admissions test. You'll be asked to show how you demonstrate the NHS values such as compassion and respect.

Some medical schools look to recruit a mix of students from different backgrounds and geographical areas, so your educational and economic background and family circumstances could be considered as part of your application.

**"I really love the breadth of work in plastic surgery and the fact that you see people of all ages from babies to elderly people. Plastic surgeons treat the whole body and also have an interesting mix of emergency and non life-threatening operations."**

[Read Lilli's story](#) <sup>[4]</sup>.

## What are my chances of starting a career in plastic surgery?

In 2021 there were 543 plastic surgeons in England. There were 190 applications for 41 specialty training places (a competition ratio <sup>[5]</sup> of 4.63).

## How to become a plastic surgeon

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year foundation programme <sup>[6]</sup> where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid specialty training <sup>[7]</sup> to become a plastic surgeon, which will take a minimum of six years.

You may be able to train part time, for example for health reasons or if you have family or caring responsibilities.

## Where a career as a plastic surgeon can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research in areas such as paediatric plastic surgery, hand surgery, treating congenital conditions such as cleft lip and palate or cancer surgery and reconstruction
- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector

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### ○ Consultant Plastic Surgeon with a special interest in Gender Surgery

London, SW10 9NH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Plastic Surgeon with a special interest in Gender Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

- **Medical Secretary - Plastic Surgery**

East Grinstead, RH19 3DZ

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Medical Secretary - Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

- **Plastic Surgery Skin Cancer CNS**

Ascot, SL5 7GB

Salary:

£39205.00 to £47084.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plastic Surgery Skin Cancer CNS job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant in Burns & Plastic Surgery- Skin and General Plastics**

Manchester, M23 9LT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant in Burns & Plastic Surgery- Skin and General Plastics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

- **Junior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery**

Stevenage, SG1 4AB

Salary:

£41632.00 to £53679.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Junior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

- **Plastic Surgery Registrars - on call, UHND**

Durham, DH1 5TW

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plastic Surgery Registrars - on call, UHND job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

- **Junior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery**

London, W2 1NY

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Junior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow In Plastic Surgery**

London, SE1 7EH

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow In Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

- **Plastic Surgery Consultant - spec int. in Microsurgical Reconstruction**

London, SE1 7EH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plastic Surgery Consultant - spec int. in Microsurgical Reconstruction job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

- **Clinical Psychologist in Cleft and Paediatric Plastic Surgery**

Nottingham, NG5 1PB

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trusts

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Psychologist in Cleft and Paediatric Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

- **Consultant in Plastic Surgery (with interest in Head and Neck Surgery)**

Preston, PR2 9HT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Plastic Surgery \(with interest in Head and Neck Surgery\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Plastic Surgery & Burns WSI Hands & Skin Cancer**

Chelmsford, CM1 7ET

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Plastic Surgery & Burns WSI Hands](#)

[& Skin Cancer job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

- **IDWG's Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery EAG**

London, E14 4PU

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for IDWG's Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery EAG job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery (interest in skin oncology)**

Salford, M6 8HD

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow in Plastic Surgery \(interest in skin oncology\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow in Plastics and Gender Affirmation Surgery**

London, SW10 9NH

Salary:

£41750.00 to £64288.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow in Plastics and Gender Affirmation Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[22]</sup>

- **Plastics Theatre Scheduler**

East Grinstead, RH19 3DZ

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Plastics Theatre Scheduler job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

- **Joint Plastics and Orthopaedics Hand Fellow**

East Grinstead, RH19 3DZ

Salary:

£63152.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Joint Plastics and Orthopaedics Hand Fellow job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

- **Specilaity Lead for Trauma Orthopaedics and Plastics Theatre**

Coventry, CV2 2DX

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specilaity Lead for Trauma Orthopaedics and Plastics Theatre job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

- **Specialist pharmacist- Orthopaedics, Burns & Plastics - 7 to 8a + RRP**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£46148.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist pharmacist- Orthopaedics, Burns & Plastics - 7 to 8a + RRP job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Surgeon in Oral & Maxillo Facial Surgery**

London, E9 6SR

Salary:



£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Surgeon in Oral & Maxillo Facial Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

- **Consultant General Surgeon with a Sub Specialty in Colorectal Surgery**

Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9DT

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant General Surgeon with a Sub Specialty in Colorectal Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

- **Consultant Oral Surgeon**

Hereford, HR1 2ER

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wye Valley NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oral Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[29]</sup>

- **Consultant Hand Surgeon**

Doncaster, DN40TG

Barnsley, S71 1TH

Sheffield, S105UB

Sheffield, S80YH

Sheffield, S61GA

Rotherham, S639EH

Barnsley, S728SU

Sheffield, S56AZ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Locum

Employer:

HealthHarmonie

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Hand Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[30]

- **Consultant Colorectal Surgeon**

Winchester, SO22 5DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Colorectal Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [31]

- **Consultant Cardiac Surgeon**

Bristol, BS2 8HN

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Cardiac Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [32]

- **Consultant Spinal Surgeon**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

One Health Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Spinal Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [33]

- **Consultant Hand Surgeon**

Bristol, BS7 8SA

Bristol, BS11 0QE

Bristol, BS9 3AA

Bristol, BS10 6AF  
Bristol, BS34 6BQ  
Bristol, BS15 4EJ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Locum

Employer:

HealthHarmonie

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Hand Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[34]

- **Consultant Dermatology Surgeon**

Canterbury, CT1 3NG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Dermatology Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [35]

- **Consultant Upper GI Surgeon**

Winchester, SO22 5DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Upper GI Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [36]

- **Specialist committee member - Surgeon**

Virtual, M1 4BT

Salary:

£1.00 to £300.00

Type:

Voluntary

Employer:

NICE – The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist committee member - Surgeon job \(opens in](#)

[a new window\)](#) <sup>[37]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Urological Surgeon**

Northampton, NN1 5BD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Northampton General Hospital

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Urological Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[38]</sup>

- **Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon**

Northampton, NN1 5DB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northampton General Hospital

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[39]</sup>

- **ENT Consultant Surgeon (General)**

Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ENT Consultant Surgeon \(General\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[40]</sup>

- **Consultant Head & Neck Surgeon**

Guildford, GU2 7XX

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Head & Neck Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[41]</sup>

- **Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon**

Northampton, NN1 5BD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northampton General Hospital

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[42]</sup>

- **Consultant Paediatric Spinal Surgeon**

London, WC1N 3JH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Paediatric Spinal Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[43]</sup>

- **Consultant Paediatric Spinal Surgeon**

London, WC1N 3JH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Paediatric Spinal Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[43]</sup>

- **Consultant Gastroenterologist/ Colorectal Surgeon**

Manchester, M22 4DB

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Beacon Medical Services Group Ltd

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Gastroenterologist/ Colorectal Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[44]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant General Surgeon**

Harrow, HA1 3UJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant General Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[45]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Spinal Deformity Surgeon**

Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2AP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Spinal Deformity Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[46]</sup>

- **Fellowship-trained Foot & Ankle Surgeon**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

One Health Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Fellowship-trained Foot & Ankle Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[47]</sup>

- **Consultant Hip and Knee Surgeon**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:

Negotiable  
Type:  
Permanent  
Employer:  
One Health Group  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Hip and Knee Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[48]</sup>

- **Consultant General Surgeon ( Upper GI )**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:  
Negotiable  
Type:  
Permanent  
Employer:  
One Health Group  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant General Surgeon \( Upper GI \) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[49]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon**

Liverpool, L7 8YE

Salary:  
£105504.00 to £139882.00  
Type:  
Fixed-Term  
Employer:  
Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[50]</sup>

- **Consultant General Surgeon ( Lower GI )**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:  
Negotiable  
Type:  
Permanent  
Employer:  
One Health Group  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant General Surgeon \( Lower GI \) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[51]</sup>

- **Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon - Foot and Ankle**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon - Foot and Ankle job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[52]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Oral & Maxillo Facial Surgeon**

London, E9 6SR

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Oral & Maxillo Facial Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[53]</sup>

- **Consultant ENT Head & Neck Cancer Surgeon**

Rhyl, LL18 5UJ

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant ENT Head & Neck Cancer Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[54]</sup>

- **Consultant T&O - Brachial Plexus Surgeon**

Bristol, BS105NB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North Bristol NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant T&O - Brachial Plexus Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[55]</sup>



- **Consultant Oncoplastic and Reconstructive Breast Surgeon**

Wakefield, WF14DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oncoplastic and Reconstructive Breast](#)

[Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[56]</sup>

- **Consultant General Surgery with an Interest in Colorectal Surgery**

Wolverhampton, WV10 0QP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant General Surgery with an Interest in](#)

[Colorectal Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[57]</sup>

- **Clinical Fellow in Breast Surgery or Breast & Endocrine Surgery**

London, E9 6SR

Salary:

£41750.00 to £64288.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Fellow in Breast Surgery or Breast &](#)

[Endocrine Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[58]</sup>

- **Minor Surgery Clinician**

Sheffield, S9 1XH

Salary:

£550.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

CHEC

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Minor Surgery Clinician job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[59]

- **SHO in Surgery**

Chelsea, SW3 6JJ

Salary:

£49909.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for SHO in Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [60]

- **HCA - Ballater Surgery**

Orpington, BR6 0DP

Salary:

£13.50 to £15.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Ballater Surgery

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for HCA - Ballater Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[61]

- **Further information**

These organisations have further information about being a plastic surgeon, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

[British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons](#) [62]

[British Association of Plastic and Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons](#) [63]

[British Society for Surgery of the Hand](#) [64]

[Hand Transplant UK](#) [65]

[Healing Foundation](#) [66]

[Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations](#) [67]

[Royal College of Surgeons](#) [68]

[Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh](#) [69]

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow [70]

And hear from someone already working as a plastic surgeon.

David Ward - Consultant Plastic Surgeon, Leicester Royal Infirmary [71]

## Other roles that may interest you

- General surgery [72]
- Oral and maxillofacial surgery [73]
- Otorhinolaryngology (ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgery) [74]
- Vascular surgery [75]

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### Links

[1] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation\\_training](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation_training) [2]  
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