

# 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 (Burns / General Plastic Surgery)

Wakefield, WF14DG

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Plastic Surgeon \(Burns / General Plastic Surgery\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Plastic Surgeon - Hand Specialist**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Plastic Surgeon - Hand Specialist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Plastic Surgeon in Hand Surgery or Skin and General**

Bradford, BD9 6RJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Plastic Surgeon in Hand Surgery or Skin and General job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant in Paediatric Plastic Surgery**

London, SE1 7EH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant in Paediatric Plastic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Plastic and Breast Surgeon**

Nottingham, NG5 1PB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trusts

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Plastic and Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[12]</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>[13]</sup>

- **Burns & Plastics Specialist Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Burns & Plastics Specialist Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

- **Band 7 Theatre Practitioner - Breast & Plastics Team**

West End, W1G 6BW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The London Clinic

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 7 Theatre Practitioner - Breast & Plastics Team job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

- **Locum Urological Surgeon Specialized General & Reconstructive 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 Urological Surgeon Specialized General & Reconstructive Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

- **OMFS Consultant Surgeon**

Plymouth, PL6 8DH

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for OMFS Consultant Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[17]</sup>

- **Consultant ENT Surgeon**

Luton, LU4 0DZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant ENT Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[18]</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 \(opens in a new window\)](#)

[19]

- **Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [20]

- **Consultant Urological Surgeon**

Salford, M6 8HD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Urological Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [21]

- **Consultant Prostate Surgeon**

Southampton, SO16 6YD

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Prostate Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [22]

- **Consultant Cardiac Surgeon**

Oxford, OX3 9DU

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Cardiac Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

- **Consultant Breast Surgeon**

Barnsley, S75 2EP

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[24]</sup>

- **Consultant Vascular Surgeon**

London, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Vascular Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

- **ToP Surgeon (Rotherham)**

Rotherham, S60 1FL

Salary:

£78488.17 to £109691.14

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

MSI Reproductive Choices

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ToP Surgeon \(Rotherham\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

- **Consultant Cardiac Surgeon**



Brighton, BN2 5BE

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Cardiac Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

- **Consultant Upper GI Surgeon**

Kettering, NN16 8UZ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Upper GI Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Urological Surgeon**

Oxford, OX3 7LE

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Consultant Colorectal & General Surgeon**

Watford, WD18 0HB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Colorectal & General Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[30]</sup>

- **Consultant Colorectal & General Surgeon**

Basildon/Broomfield/Southend, CM1 7ET

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Colorectal & General Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[31]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon**

Camberwell, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[32]</sup>

- **Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon**

Derby, DE22 3NE

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[33]</sup>

- **Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon**

Wolverhampton, WV10 0QP

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[34]</sup>

- **Consultant Surgeon - Orthopaedics & Trauma**

Braddan, IM4 4RJ

Salary:

£107208.00 to £185166.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Manx Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Surgeon - Orthopaedics & Trauma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[35]</sup>

- **Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[36]</sup>

- **Treatment Doctor / Surgeon - 7.5 hours**

Reading, RG1 4QA

Salary:

£101000.00 to £151000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Treatment Doctor / Surgeon - 7.5 hours job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[37]</sup>

- **Consultant Colorectal and General Surgeon**

Dorchester, DT1 2JY

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Fixed Term Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon**

Exeter, EX2 5DW

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Fixed Term Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[39]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon - Oculoplastic & General Ophthalmology**

Bury St. Edmunds, IP33 2QZ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[41]</sup>

- **Advanced Pharmacist - Surgery**

Derby, DE22 3NE

Salary:

£55690.00 to £62682.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Pharmacist - Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[42]</sup>

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#)

<sup>[43]</sup>

- **Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon – Upper Limb or Shoulder & Elbow**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon – Upper Limb or Shoulder & Elbow job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[44]</sup>

- **Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon, Hand and Wrist**

Wythenshawe, M23 9LT

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon, Hand and Wrist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[45]</sup>

- **Locum Urological Surgeon Specialized in Cancer Diagnosis Management**

London, E9 6SR

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Urological Surgeon Specialized in Cancer Diagnosis Management job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[46]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Paediatric Surgeon with Interest in Oncology**

Leeds, LS1 3EX

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Leeds Teaching Hospitals

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Paediatric Surgeon with Interest in Oncology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[47]</sup>

- **Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon with specialist interest in Paediatrics**

Watford, WD18 0HB

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon with specialist interest in Paediatrics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[48]</sup>

- **Consultant Surgeon with a Special Interest in Dermatology**

Kettering, NN16 8UZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Surgeon with a Special Interest in Dermatology job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[49]</sup>

- **General Practitioner - Mount Surgery**

Port Talbot, SA13 2BN

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

GP Practice in Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for General Practitioner - Mount Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[50]</sup>

- **Consultant in Vascular Surgery**

Manchester, M13 9WL

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Vascular Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[51]</sup>

- **ARRS GP Surgery Paramedic**

Billericay, CM12 9DX

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Western Road Surgery

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ARRS GP Surgery Paramedic job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[52]</sup>

- **Speciality Registrar - General Surgery**

Gloucester, GL1 3NN

Salary:

£65048.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Speciality Registrar - General Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[53]</sup>

- **Specialist Bariatric Surgery Dietitian**

Coventry, CV2 2DX

Salary:

£38682.00 to £46580.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Bariatric Surgery Dietitian job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[54]</sup>

- **ARRS GP Surgery Paramedic**

Billericay, CM12 9DX

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Western Road Surgery

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ARRS GP Surgery Paramedic job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[52]</sup>

- **General Practitioner Kingsway Surgery**

Swansea, SA1 5LF

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

GP Practice in Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for General Practitioner Kingsway Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[55]</sup>

- **Specialist in Oral Surgery**



Plymouth, PL1 4JZ

Plymouth, PL6 8BT

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise CIC

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

[56]

- **GP Surgery Healthcare Assistant**

Southampton, SO19 0HS

Southampton, SO19 4AA

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Peartree Practice

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for GP Surgery Healthcare Assistant job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [57]

- **Specialty Doctor General Surgery**

Hastings, TN37 7RD

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor General Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) [58]

- **General Practitioner Kingsway Surgery**

Swansea, SA1 5LF

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

GP Practice in Wales

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for General Practitioner Kingsway Surgery job \(opens in a](#)

[new window](#)) <sup>[59]</sup>

- **ANP/ACP - Park Surgery**

Horsham , RG12 1BG

Salary:

£48000.00 to £60000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Operose Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for ANP/ACP - Park Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

<sup>[60]</sup>

- **Consultant in Vascular Surgery**

Derby, DE22 3NE

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Vascular Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[61]</sup>

- **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](#) <sup>[62]</sup>

[British Association of Plastic and Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons](#) <sup>[63]</sup>

[British Society for Surgery of the Hand](#) <sup>[64]</sup>

[Hand Transplant UK](#) <sup>[65]</sup>

[Healing Foundation](#) <sup>[66]</sup>

[Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations](#) <sup>[67]</sup>

[Royal College of Surgeons](#) <sup>[68]</sup>

[Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh](#) <sup>[69]</sup>

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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