

# Trauma and orthopaedic surgery

Trauma and orthopaedic (T&O) surgeons diagnose and treat conditions of the musculoskeletal system including bones and joints and structures that enable movement such as ligaments, tendons, muscles and nerves.

You'll work with patients of all ages, often in a district general hospital or possibly in specialist centres or orthopaedic hospitals.

F2 female doctor checking patient arm

## Life as a trauma and orthopaedic surgeon

You'll spend around 40% of your time in surgery and the rest in outpatient clinics, the emergency department and assessing/monitoring patients before and after surgery. This is a rewarding specialty where your work can bring rapid relief from pain and discomfort for patients.

You'll work on trauma to the musculoskeletal system, such as broken, fractured or dislocated bones and soft tissue injuries. These could be caused by anything from a low energy fracture in an older patient to multiple injuries caused by a road traffic accident.

Your orthopaedic work will include the replacement of whole joints such as knees and hips following damage due to osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis. You'll also treat congenital and degenerative conditions of the musculoskeletal system, often in babies and children, as well as infections and tumours.

Your surgical work is specialised and varied. Some operations are very quick, for example a spinal injection, whereas other operations, to stabilise someone's neck or straighten a spine, may take several hours. You could work as part of a trauma team alongside emergency department doctors, anaesthetists, general surgeons and specialist nurses. You'll also work independently.

You will use the latest technologies such as minimally invasive techniques for diagnosis and surgery and computer-aided navigation during surgery which enables 3D mapping of a joint. This is exciting for you and highly beneficial for your patients with reduced scarring and recovery time.

You can expect to be on-call for trauma emergencies and to sometimes work out-of-hours on long surgical procedures, more so than in some other surgical specialties.

## 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.

**"It was a placement in a children's hospital towards the end of my specialist training that made me decide on paediatric T&O as my sub-specialty. I immediately loved the warm and welcoming atmosphere in the hospital, and working with children."**

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

## **What are my chances of starting a career in trauma and orthopaedics?**

In 2020 there were 715 applications for 125 specialty training places, (a competition ratio <sup>[5]</sup> of 5.72). There are currently 2,654 trauma and orthopaedic surgeons working in the NHS in England.

## **How to become a trauma and orthopaedic 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 trauma and orthopaedic surgeon, which will take a minimum of eight 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 in trauma and orthopaedics can take you**

You could:

- specialise or conduct research in areas such a particular part of the body for example shoulder/elbow, joint reconstruction such as hip or knee, paediatric surgery, sports injury or complex trauma surgery
- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector

### **• [Live vacancies](#)**

## **Find a vacancy**

**Enter your location or postcode**

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- **Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon - Lower Limb Arthroplasty**

Oswestry, SY10 7AG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon - Lower Limb Arthroplasty job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

- **Medical Secretary - Trauma and Orthopaedics**

Colchester, CO4 5JL

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Senior Arthroplasty Fellow - Trauma and Orthopaedics**

Sutton Coldfield, B75 7RR

Birmingham, B9 5SS

Solihull, B91 2JL

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Arthroplasty Fellow - Trauma and Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

- **Team Lead Physiotherapist -Trauma and Orthopaedics**

Brixton, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£54320.00 to £60981.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Team Lead Physiotherapist -Trauma and Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

- **Specialist Physiotherapist Trauma and Orthopaedics and Vascular**

London, W2 1NY

Salary:

£44806.00 to £53134.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Physiotherapist Trauma and Orthopaedics and Vascular job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow in Trauma and Orthopaedics**

Barnet, EN5 3DJ

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow in Trauma and Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgeon**

Grimsby, DN33 2BA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgeon job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

- **Senior Trauma Fellow in Trauma & Orthopaedics**

Leeds, LS1 3EX

Salary:

£70425.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Leeds Teaching Hospitals

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Trauma Fellow in Trauma & Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

- **Occupational Therapist - Trauma & Orthopaedics**

Margate, CT9 4AN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Occupational Therapist - Trauma & Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[16]</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>[17]</sup>

- **B6 Occupational Therapist - Trauma & Orthopaedics**

Ipswich, IP4 5PD

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for B6 Occupational Therapist - Trauma & Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[18]</sup>

- **Consultant in Trauma & Orthopaedics (Knee)**

Norwich, NR4 7UY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Trauma & Orthopaedics \(Knee\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[19]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedics (Lower Limb)**

Kettering, NN16 8UZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedics \(Lower Limb\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[20]</sup>

- **Consultant in Trauma & Orthopaedics - Hip & Knee Surgery**

Cardiff, CF64 2XX

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Trauma & Orthopaedics - Hip & Knee Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[21]</sup>

- **Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedics (Hands and Wrist)**

Kettering, NN16 8UZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Trauma & Orthopaedics \(Hands and Wrist\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[22]</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>[23]</sup>

- **Consultant in Trauma and Pelvic Surgery**

Manchester, M13 9WL

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Consultant in Anaesthesia: Trauma and Regional Anaesthesia**

Reading, RG1 5AN

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Anaesthesia: Trauma and Regional Anaesthesia job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[25]</sup>

- **Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner**

Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00



Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[26]</sup>

- **Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner**

Guernsey, GY4 6UU

Salary:

£38744.00 to £49970.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

States of Guernsey

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[27]</sup>

- **Advanced Physiotherapist - Orthopaedics**

London, SE1 2PR

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCA Healthcare UK

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Advanced Physiotherapist - Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[28]</sup>

- **Physiotherapist - Orthopaedic/Outpatients**

Kendal, LA9 7RG

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Physiotherapist - Orthopaedic/Outpatients job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[29]</sup>

- **Senior Orthopaedic Physiotherapist**

Ormskirk, L39 2AZ

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Orthopaedic Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[30]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic Specialist Physiotherapist**

Chichester, PO19 6SE

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic Specialist Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[31]</sup>

- **Assistant Orthopaedic Practitioner**

Cardiff, CF14 4XW

Salary:

£26928.00 to £29551.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

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

- **Major Trauma Rehabilitation Co-ordinator**

Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Major Trauma Rehabilitation Co-ordinator job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[33]</sup>

- **Orthopaedics Clinical Fellow Doctor**

Braddan, IM4 4RJ

Salary:

£61825.00 to £70425.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manx Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedics Clinical Fellow Doctor job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[34]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic Practitioner (Plaster Technician)**

Ashford, TN24 0LZ

Salary:

£29970.00 to £36483.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic Practitioner \(Plaster Technician\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[35]</sup>

- **Theatre Team Lead - Orthopaedics**

Sutton, SM3 9DW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Spire Healthcare Ltd

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Theatre Team Lead - Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[36]</sup>

- **Strategic Senior Buyer - Orthopaedics**

Epsom, KT18 5AL

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Strategic Senior Buyer - Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[37]</sup>

- **Theatre Practitioner (Orthopaedic Scrub)**

Eastleigh, SO53 2DW

Salary:

£38500.00 to £38500.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Theatre Practitioner \(Orthopaedic Scrub\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[38]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic - Junior Clinical Fellow**

Croydon, CR7 7YE

Salary:

£49909.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic - Junior Clinical Fellow job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[39]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic Shoulder & Elbow Fellow**

Basingstoke/Winchester, SO22 5DG

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic Shoulder & Elbow Fellow job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[40]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Fellow**

Basingstoke/Winchester, RG24 9NA

Salary:

£70425.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Fellow job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[41]</sup>

- **Senior MSK/Orthopaedic Physiotherapist**

Chichester, PO19 8EL

Salary:

£40750.00 to £44750.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior MSK/Orthopaedic Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[42]</sup>

- **Trauma Informed Therapist (Part-time Prisons)**

Salford, M3 7BB

Millom, LA18 4NA

Salary:

£27810.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

We Are Survivors

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Trauma Informed Therapist \(Part-time Prisons\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[43]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow in Major Trauma**

London, W2 1NY

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow in Major Trauma job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[44]</sup>

- **Ward Clerk - Ward M2 Orthopaedic**

Bebington, CH63 4JY

Salary:

£24169.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wirral University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Ward Clerk - Ward M2 Orthopaedic job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[45]</sup>

- **Orthopaedic Interface Service Admin Lead**

Bristol, BS39 7SB

Salary:

£26250.00 to £31500.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Orthopaedic Interface Service Admin Lead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[46]</sup>

- **Senior Physiotherapy Technical Instructor - Orthopaedics**

Haywards Heath, RH16 4EX

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Physiotherapy Technical Instructor - Orthopaedics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[47]</sup>

- **Lead Orthopaedic Scrub Theatre Practitioner**

Birmingham, B15 2FQ

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCA Healthcare UK

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Lead Orthopaedic Scrub Theatre Practitioner job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[48]</sup>

- **Band 4 Resuscitation and Trauma Course Coordinator**

Birmingham, B15 2TH

Salary:

£26530.00 to £29114.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 4 Resuscitation and Trauma Course Coordinator job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[49]</sup>

- **Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT (Bank)**

Oxford, OX3 7RP

Salary:

£25.00 to £29.00

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT \(Bank\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[50]</sup>

- **Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT (Bank)**

Oxford, OX3 7RP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT \(Bank\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[51]</sup>

- **Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT (Bank)**

Oxford, OX3 7RP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Nuffield Health

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Theatre Practitioner - Ophthalmics, Orthopaedics, ENT \(Bank\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[52]</sup>

- **Generic Therapy Assistant - Orthopaedics (Band 3)**

Steeton, BD20 6TD

Salary:

£24625.00 to £25674.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Airedale NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Generic Therapy Assistant - Orthopaedics \(Band 3\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[53]</sup>

- **Consultant Clin'/Coun' Psychologist - Trauma Informed Approaches Lead**

London, SW1V 2RH

Salary:

£82462.00 to £93773.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Clin'/Coun' Psychologist - Trauma Informed Approaches Lead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[54]</sup>

- **Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist - Orthopaedics and Spines**

London, WC1N 3JH

Salary:

£61927.00 to £68676.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist - Orthopaedics and Spines job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[55]</sup>

- **Senior Locally Employed Doctor in Paediatric Orthopaedics**

Manchester, M13 9WL

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Locally Employed Doctor in Paediatric](#)



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

- **Senior Fellow (SpR Level) in Upper Limb Orthopaedic Surgery**

Bristol, BS10 5NB

Salary:

£61825.00 to £70425.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

North Bristol NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Fellow \(SpR Level\) in Upper Limb Orthopaedic Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[57]</sup>

- **Further information**

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

[British Orthopaedic Association](#) <sup>[58]</sup>

[British Orthopaedic Trainees Association](#) <sup>[59]</sup>

[Future Orthopaedic Surgeons](#) <sup>[60]</sup>

[Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations](#) <sup>[61]</sup>

[The Royal College of Surgeons of England](#) <sup>[62]</sup>

[The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh](#) <sup>[63]</sup>

[Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow](#) <sup>[64]</sup>

And hear from people working as a trauma and orthopaedic surgeon:

[Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon](#) <sup>[65]</sup>- Council member Royal College of Surgeons

[A career in trauma and orthopaedics](#) <sup>[66]</sup>- Alexander F Young, Benjamin C Caesar, Lee A David

## Other roles that may interest you

- [Anaesthesia](#) <sup>[67]</sup>
- [Emergency medicine](#) <sup>[68]</sup>
- [Rheumatology](#) <sup>[69]</sup>
- [Sport and exercise medicine](#) <sup>[70]</sup>

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