

Anaesthesia

Anaesthetists are the largest group of hospital-based specialists and give anaesthetics for surgical, medical and psychiatric procedures.

They facilitate pain-free childbirth, resuscitate acutely unwell patients, run chronic pain services and lead [intensive care](#) ^[1] units.

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Life as an anaesthetist

It's your responsibility to choose the appropriate anaesthetic for your patient. Typically, you'll offer four stages of patient care for a routine anaesthetic:

- preparation – you'll assess your patient's fitness for anaesthesia and agree on an anaesthetic plan
- induction – you'll initiate the anaesthesia
- maintenance – you'll continue the anaesthesia while monitoring your patient's condition, including checking the activity of the heart, blood pressure, oxygen and carbon dioxide levels, breathing, body temperature, depth of anaesthesia and the body fluid balance
- recovery – you'll reverse the anaesthesia and support the patient's recovery

Most of your time will be spent in operating theatres, but anaesthetists perform numerous roles in many different areas of a hospital. On any given day, you'll facilitate pain free childbirth, resuscitate acutely unwell patients, run chronic pain services and lead [intensive care](#) ^[1] units.

You can expect to work in areas such as:

- obstetric units
- critical care services for [intensive care](#) ^[1] and high dependency patients
- resuscitation services
- emergency departments
- chronic pain management

- acute pain teams
- dentistry
- perioperative ^[4] clinics
- research
- psychiatry – for patients receiving electro-convulsive therapy ^[5] (ECT)
- radiology – anaesthesia for CT scans ^[6] and MRI ^[7], especially in children
- inter-hospital transfers of critically ill patients

You'll also work closely with patients, understanding their condition and treatment. It's your responsibility to care for a patient for the duration of their operation. Being prepared for the unexpected can be exciting but also challenging at times.

Dr Sarah Plummer

Consultant anaesthetist

Seeing patients wake up safely and with good pain relief after any surgery always makes my job worthwhile.

[Read Sarah's story.](#) ^[8]

How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your foundation training ^[9] after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, [SAS doctors](#) ^[10] and consultants on the '[Pay for doctors](#)' ^[11] 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

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.

What are my chances of starting a career as an anaesthetist?

In 2020, there were 1,479 applications for 569 places for anaesthetic specialty training.

How to become an anaesthetist

- After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year [foundation programme](#)^[12] where you'll work in six placements in different settings.?
- After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid [specialty training](#)^[13] to become an anaesthetist which will take a minimum of 7 or 8 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 an anaesthetist can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research in areas such as pain medicine

- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector?

• Find your degree in medicine

Region	Type of qualification	Full or part time
- Any - ▼	- Any - ▼	Search ▼

Displaying 1 - 5 of 77 matches

Medicine with Foundation Year

University of Plymouth

[View course](#) ^[14] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
 - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - BMBS
- Study mode
 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 6 Years
- Leading to a career in
 - Medicine
- Contact details
 - meddent-admissions@plymouth.ac.uk ^[15]
 - +44 (0)1752 437333
- Region
 - South West
- Admissions address
 - Drake Circus
 - Plymouth
 - PL4 8AA
 - United Kingdom

Medicine (Graduate Entry) (4 years)

University of St Andrews

[View course](#) ^[16] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
 - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB ChB
- Study mode
 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 4 Years
- Leading to a career in

- Medicine
- Contact details
 - scotgem-admissions@st-andrews.ac.uk ^[17]
 - 01334 463619
- Region
 - Scotland
- Admissions address
 - 16 St Katharine's West
 - St Andrews
 - KY16 9AX
 - United Kingdom

Medicine (Graduate Entry)

Cardiff University

[View course](#) ^[18] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
 - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB BCh
- Study mode
 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 4 Years
- Leading to a career in
 - Medicine
- Contact details
 - admissions@cardiff.ac.uk ^[19]
 - 029 2087 9999
- Region
 - Wales
- Admissions address
 - 30-36 Newport Road
 - Cardiff
 - CF24 0DE
 - United Kingdom

Medicine North Wales

Cardiff University

[View course](#) ^[20] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
 - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB BCh
- Study mode
 - Full-time
- Duration of the course
 - 4 Years
- Leading to a career in
 - Medicine

- Contact details
admissions@cardiff.ac.uk ^[19]
 029 2087 9999
- Region
 Wales
 Admissions address
 Bangor University
 Bangor
 Gwynedd, North Wales
 Bangor
 LL57 2DG
 Wales

Medicine

Cardiff University

[View course](#) ^[21] Opens in a new window

- Qualification
 Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB BCh
 Study mode
 Full-time
 Duration of the course
 5 Years
 Leading to a career in
 Medicine
- Contact details
admissions@cardiff.ac.uk ^[19]
 029 2087 9999
- Region
 Wales
 Admissions address
 30-36 Newport Road
 Cardiff
 CF24 0DE
 United Kingdom
- [Load more Load more results](#) ^[22]

• Live vacancies

Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

East Lancashire, BB10 2PQ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

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

[23]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Peterborough, PE3 9GZ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust

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[24]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Whitehaven, CA28 8JG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

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[25]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Basingstoke, RG24 9NA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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[26]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Chesterfield, S43 4XE

Salary:

£118668.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

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[27]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Sheffield, S11 8UX

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

One Health Group

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[28]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

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[29]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Whitehaven, CA28 8JG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

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[30]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Winchester, SO22 5DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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[31]

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetists**

London, SE5 9RS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetist**

Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 8PE

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetist**

East Lancashire, BB10 2PQ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[34]

- **Bank Consultant Anaesthetist**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Bank

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

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

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetist**

Warwick, CV34 5BW

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[36]

- **Part Time Consultant Anaesthetist**

Birmingham, B152QD

Salary:

£130000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Part Time Consultant Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[37]

- **Locum Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist**

Bristol, BS2 8BL

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust (UHBW)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[38]

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetist in Paediatric Anaesthesia**

Oxford, OX3 9DU

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Anaesthetist in Paediatric Anaesthesia job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[39]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with interest in ITU**

Croydon, CR7 7YE

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Anaesthetist with interest in ITU job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[40]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with interest in Obstetric anaesthesia**

Croydon, CR7 7YE

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Croydon Health Services NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Anaesthetist with interest in Obstetric anaesthesia job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[41]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with an interest in Obstetrics**

Cramlington, NE23 6NZ

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Anaesthetist with an interest in Obstetrics job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[42]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with an Interest in Obstetric Anaesthesia**

Telford, TF1 6TF

Salary:

£109725.00 to £145478.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Anaesthetist with an Interest in Obstetric Anaesthesia job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[43]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist (Interest in Specialist/Major General Surgery)**

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 Anaesthetist \(Interest in Specialist/Major General Surgery\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[44]

- **Further information**

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

[The Royal College of Anaesthetists](#) [45]

[The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland](#) [46]

[Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthetists](#) [47]

[The National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia](#) [48]

And hear from people already working as an anaesthetist:

[Starting in anaesthetics \(BMJ\)](#) [49]

[The secret life of an anaesthetist \(The Guardian\)](#) [50]

[About anaesthesia \(HEWM\)](#) [51]

[Dr Zulfi Sadiq, anaesthesia \(HEEM\)](#) [52]

Other roles that may interest you

- [Emergency medicine](#) [53]
- [Acute internal medicine](#) [54]
- [General surgery](#) [55]
- [General practitioner](#) [56]

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