

# 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](#) <sup>[1]</sup> units.

Can't see the video? You'll need to accept all [cookies](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. Alternatively, visit our YouTube Channel to view our [videos](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

## 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](#) <sup>[1]</sup> units.

You can expect to work in areas such as:

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

- acute pain teams
- dentistry
- perioperative <sup>[4]</sup> clinics
- research
- psychiatry – for patients receiving electro-convulsive therapy <sup>[5]</sup> (ECT)
- radiology – anaesthesia for CT scans <sup>[6]</sup> and MRI <sup>[7]</sup>, 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.](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

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## How much can I earn?

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

## 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 <sup>[12]</sup> programme <sup>[12]</sup> where you'll work in six placements in different settings.?
- After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid specialty training <sup>[13]</sup> 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
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## Medicine

University of Sunderland

[View course](#) <sup>[14]</sup> Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB ChB
- Study mode
  - Full-time
- Duration of the course
  - 5 Years
- Leading to a career in
  - Medicine
- Contact details
  - [student.helpline@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:student.helpline@sunderland.ac.uk) <sup>[15]</sup>
  - 0191 515 3000
- Region
  - North East
- Admissions address
  - Chester Road
  - Sunderland
  - SR1 3SD
  - England

## Medicine and Surgery

Lancaster University

[View course](#) <sup>[16]</sup> Opens in a new window

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

- Medicine
- Contact details
  - [medicine@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:medicine@lancaster.ac.uk) <sup>[17]</sup>
  - +44 (0)1524 594547
- Region
  - North West
- Admissions address
  - Admissions
  - Bailrigg
  - Lancaster
  - LA1 4YW
  - United Kingdom

## Medicine and Surgery (with a Gateway Year)

Lancaster University

[View course](#) <sup>[18]</sup> Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB ChB
- Study mode
  - Full-time
- Duration of the course
  - 6 Years
- Leading to a career in
  - Medicine
- Contact details
  - [ugadmissions@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:ugadmissions@lancaster.ac.uk) <sup>[19]</sup>
  - 01524 592028
- Region
  - North West
- Admissions address
  - Admissions
  - Bailrigg
  - Lancaster
  - LA1 4YW
  - United Kingdom

## Medicine

Imperial College London

[View course](#) <sup>[20]</sup> Opens in a new window

- Qualification
  - Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB BS
- Study mode
  - Full-time
- Duration of the course
  - 6 Years

- Leading to a career in  
Medicine
- Contact details  
020 7589 5111
- Region  
London
- Admissions address  
Imperial College  
Prince Consort Road  
London  
SW7 2AZ  
United Kingdom

## Medicine

University of Sheffield

[View course](#) <sup>[21]</sup> Opens in a new window

- Qualification  
Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery - MB ChB
- Study mode  
Full-time
- Duration of the course  
5 Years
- Leading to a career in  
Medicine
- Contact details  
[study@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:study@sheffield.ac.uk) <sup>[22]</sup>  
0114 222 8030
- Region  
Yorkshire and The Humber
- Admissions address  
Western Bank  
Sheffield  
S10 2TN  
England
- [Load more Load more results](#) <sup>[23]</sup>

## • Live vacancies

## Find a vacancy

Enter your location or postcode

Show results within

Search

- **Anaesthetist**

Milton Keynes, MK14 5HR

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Ramsay Health Care UK Operations Limited

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

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

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 Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#)

<sup>[25]</sup>

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Wrexham, LL11 7TD

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

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

<sup>[26]</sup>

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Grantham, NG31 8DG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent  
Employer:  
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust  
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#)  
[27]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Birmingham, B152QD

Salary:  
£130000.00

Type:  
Permanent

Employer:  
Practice Plus Group

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[28]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Crewe, CW1 4QJ

Salary:  
£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:  
Permanent

Employer:  
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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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**

Whitehaven, CA28 8JG

Salary:



£93666.00 to £126281.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

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[31]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Salisbury, SP2 8BJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust

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[32]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Shepton Mallet, BA4 4LP

Salary:

£99275.00 to £147700.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Practice Plus Group

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[33]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL6 9RW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

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[34]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Ipswich, IP4 5PD

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

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[35]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Wigan, WN1 2NN

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Wrightington Wigan & Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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[36]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Barnet, EN5 3DJ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust

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[37]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Lincoln, LN2 5QY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

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[38]

- **Consultant Anaesthetist**

Dorchester, DT1 2JY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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[39]

- **Locum Consultant Anaesthetist**

Liverpool, L9 7LJ

Salary:

£99532.00 to £131964.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **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 \(opens in a new window\)](#) [41]

- **Locum General Consultant Anaesthetist**

Sheffield, S5 7AU

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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

- **Fixed Term Consultant Anaesthetist**

Boston, PE21 9QS

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust

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

- **Consultant Anaesthetist in Obstetric Anaesthesia**

Hull, HU3 2JZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

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

- **Consultant Anaesthetist in General Anaesthesia**

Hull, HU3 2JZ

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

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

- **Fixed Term Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist**

Brighton, BN2 5BE

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (279)

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Fixed Term Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[46]</sup>

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with a interest in Neuroanaesthesia**

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 Anaesthetist with a interest in Neuroanaesthesia job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[47]</sup>

- **Senior Clinical Fellow in PICU (Anaesthetist / Paediatrics) ST3+**

London, SW17 0QT

Salary:

£61825.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Clinical Fellow in PICU \(Anaesthetist / Paediatrics\) ST3+ job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[48]</sup>

- **Consultant Anaesthetist with interest in Paediatric Spinal 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 with interest in Paediatric Spinal Surgery job \(opens in a new window\)](#) <sup>[49]</sup>

- **Further information**

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

[The Royal College of Anaesthetists](#) [50]

[The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland](#) [51]

[Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthetists](#) [52]

[The National Institute of Academic Anaesthesia](#) [53]

And hear from people already working as an anaesthetist:

[Starting in anaesthetics \(BMJ\)](#) [54]

[The secret life of an anaesthetist \(The Guardian\)](#) [55]

[About anaesthesia \(HEWM\)](#) [56]

[Dr Zulfi Sadiq, anaesthesia \(HEEM\)](#) [57]

## Other roles that may interest you

- [Emergency medicine](#) [58]
- [Acute internal medicine](#) [59]
- [General surgery](#) [60]
- [General practitioner](#) [61]

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