

Entry requirements and training (orthoptist)

This page has information on the entry requirements and training needed to become an orthoptist.

To practice as an orthoptist, you must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council ([HCPC](#) [1]). In order to register with the [HCPC](#) [1], you first need to have successfully completed an approved degree (BSc) in orthoptics.

University courses

Degree courses are available at three universities in the UK. They take three or four years. Courses involve a lot of practical work with patients as well as the theoretical knowledge you will need.

To get onto an orthoptics degree course you will need

- two or three A levels, including a science, along with five GCSEs ([grades A-C](#) [2]), including English language, maths and science
- or alternative qualifications, including
 - BTEC, HND or HNC which includes science
 - relevant NVQ
 - science-based access course
 - equivalent Scottish or Irish qualifications.

However, each institution sets its own entry requirements. Some specify which science you need (usually biology and/or physics). It's important to check carefully.

Wherever you study, you will need to show that you have an understanding of orthoptics. It is a good idea to spend some time with a registered orthoptist to see what the work is like.

Once you've successfully completed a programme approved by the [HCPC](#) [1], you are then eligible to apply for registration with the [HCPC](#) [1]. Once registered as a practitioner, you'll be required to retain your name on the register by keeping your knowledge and skills up to date and paying an annual retention fee.

Financial support while studying at university

You'll be entitled to receive at least £5,000 a year towards your studies while at university. Your personal circumstances may mean you could receive more. And the good news? You'll never have to pay it back

- Find out more about financial support while at university. [3]

Want to learn more?

- Find orthoptic courses on our course finder [4]

-

Personal characteristics

Expand / collapse

Orthoptists need to be

- caring and understanding
- able to work with adults or children
- interested in science
- caring and dedicated
- willing to work alone or in a team

-

Skills required

Expand / collapse

Skills needed to be an orthoptist include

- good communication skills
- good organisational skills
- ability to explain treatment to patients
- good observation skills
- attention to detail

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/orthoptist/entry-requirements-and-training-orthoptist>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#HCPC>

[2] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Grades_A-C

[3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/study-and-training/considering-or-university/financial-support-university>

[4] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning/course-finder?field_leading_to_a_career_in_tid=193&field_qualification_type_tid=All&field_study_mode_tid=All&