

Doctor – Hospital

Hospital doctors identify and treat injury and illness, often in a chosen specialist area. They may work with a particular client group, such as children, or in a particular specialism such as psychiatry or accident and emergency.

The Work

You could be:

- walking round the wards, discussing symptoms with in-patients and their relatives
- running a weekly clinic in your specialist field for out-patients
- examining a patient and identifying the illness from your own knowledge and experience and from test results
- checking on the computer about the right kind of medicine, calculating the correct dosage and prescribing it
- caring for patients before, during and after an operation
- if you specialise in surgery, carrying out operations (see [Surgeon](#) job profile)
- working with other hospital staff including other doctors, nurses, therapists and office staff
- working in a laboratory to identify causes and effects of diseases (see [Medical Pathologist](#) job profile)
- keeping records on computer and writing up case notes.

Pay

As of October 2024, in most junior posts (Foundation Year 1) you would earn a basic salary of £34,500 a year, increasing to a basic of £42,794 a year in Foundation Year 2. In specialist training this can rise to between £45,050 and £60,199 a year (depending on the length of training).

Training salaries increase between 20% and 50% with supplements, depending on the number of extra hours and intensity of work involved. A doctor in the new specialty doctor grade earns between £45,504 and £71,550 a year.

A consultant's salary ranges from £107,144 to £1142,369 a year.

Conditions

- You work in hospital wards, clinics, laboratories or operating theatres, depending on your chosen area of work.
- Doctors often work very long and unsocial hours, including weekend and evening work (usually on a rota basis), although working hours vary according to specialty. The working time directive makes it illegal for junior doctors to work more than 48 hours a week.
- You would sometimes be on call for emergencies.
- Part time work is possible, particularly at the training grades.
- You might sometimes have to sleep at the hospital when on call.
- You would wear a uniform consisting of a tunic and trousers, and sometimes other protective clothing such as a mask or gloves.

Getting In

To qualify as a hospital doctor you need a degree in medicine and surgery (SCQF Level 10) which is recognised by the General Medical Council (GMC).

- You can study the 5-year MB ChB course at the universities of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh (6 years) and Glasgow. Entry requirements are 5 good Highers, usually at one sitting, including Chemistry and (depending on the university) 1 or 2 from Maths, Biology and Physics, with English and science subjects at National 5. Although most institutions set the minimum entry of 5 Highers at AAAAB, the majority of applicants have AAAAA.
- The 3-year BSc Hons Medicine at the University of St Andrews guarantees its graduates the chance to finish their training at one of the four Scottish medical schools or in Manchester.
- A course is available at the universities of Dundee and St Andrews for those with an arts or science degree (at least 2:1). The Scottish Graduate Entry Medicine Programme (ScotGEM) is 4 years and leads to the MB ChB. There is a focus on rural health and it offers opportunities to train in remote and rural areas.
- For all courses except ScotGEM, before applying to medical school you must sit the University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT). For entry in 2026 you must register and book a test before 19 September 2025 and sit the test by 26 September 2025. If you get an Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) you can apply for a bursary to cover the cost of the test. Check the [UCAT website](#) for further details.
- For the ScotGEM course you are required to sit both the UCAT Situational Judgement Test for Admission to Clinical Education (SJFace) and the [Graduate Medical School Admissions Test \(GAMSAT\)](#). Dates for the SJFace are as above and the sittings for the GAMSAT are held in March and September.
- For all courses, including ScotGEM, you must apply to UCAS by 15 October 2025 for entry in 2026.

Other requirements:

- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.
- You must undergo screening for blood borne diseases such as Hepatitis B and C or HIV. Infection does not prevent you from qualifying or practising as a doctor, but there is a restriction on carrying out exposure-prone procedures.
- It is helpful to have a driving licence.

After your degree you do a 2-year foundation training programme, which gives you registration with the GMC, which you need to work as a doctor (see 'Training' below). Most doctors work for the National Health Service (NHS), but you might work in private practice. You could be a medical adviser to a company or the Department for Work and Pensions. You could be a medical officer for the police and prison service.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- able to communicate well with people from all backgrounds and of all ages
- patient, understanding and able to put people at ease
- able to remember large amounts of scientific and technical information

- confident enough to make decisions based on your own specialist knowledge
- willing to take responsibility
- able to work alone or as part of a team.

You should have:

- good leadership skills
- good negotiating skills
- the ability to influence others.

Training

- After completing your degree, you must complete a 2-year Foundation programme followed by a run-through Specialty training. There are over 50 recognised medical specialties. You can get details from the [Scottish Medical Training](#) website.
- You will be assessed throughout your training, and if the correct standards are met, you will be awarded a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). This will allow you to join the GMC Specialist Register.
- Throughout your career you will take courses to keep up to date with new developments in your specialism.

Getting On

- With experience and training you could become a consultant. You can find more details about the career progression path for doctors on the Scottish Medical Training website.
- Entry to some specialisms is very competitive.
- It can help if you are able to move around the country or abroad.
- You might move into teaching or research.

More Information

The [Medical Careers NHS](#) website is useful, there is a section on 'Choosing a medical school'.

If you want a taste of what it is like to be a doctor have a look at the Medic Insight programme. This is a week long programme aimed at fourth and fifth year pupils in Scotland who are interested in becoming doctors. It is run by Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee universities. See the university website for details.

For more information have a look at the [You can be a Doctor](#) website which will give you all sorts of information about how to get into medicine.

Contacts

British Medical Association (BMA) (Scotland)

Tel: 0131 247 3000

Email: BMAScotland@bma.org.uk

Website: www.bma.org.uk

X: @TheBMA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheBMA

Medical Schools Council

Tel: 020 7419 5494

Website: www.medschools.ac.uk

Website (2): www.medschools.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Entry-requirements-for-UK-medical-schools.aspx

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Royal Society of Medicine (RSM)

Tel: 020 7290 2900

Email: info@rsm.ac.uk

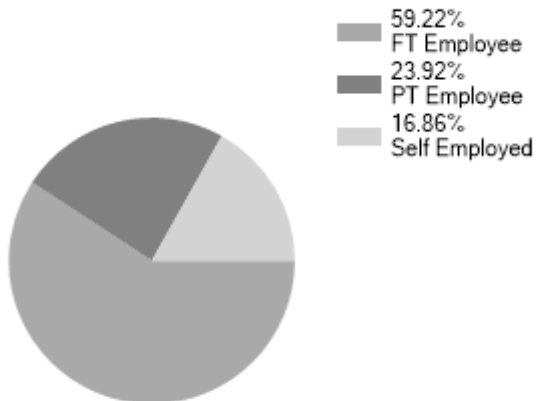
Website: www.rsm.ac.uk

X: @RoySocMed

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RoyalSocietyofMedicine

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

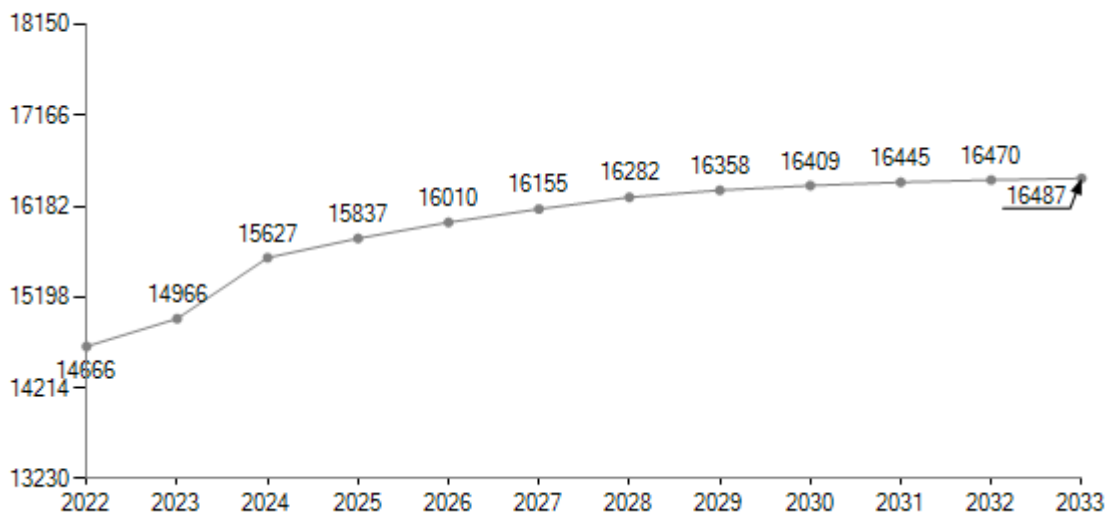


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)