

Orthoptist

Orthoptists examine eyes, to investigate, diagnose and treat disorders such as squints, double vision or damage to sight caused by illness or accident. They work out the most appropriate treatment. Orthoptists work with patients of all ages, although much of their work is with children.

The Work

You could be:

- using a variety of tests and instruments to examine eye movement, position, pressure and field vision
- screening children for eye defects
- checking the vision of people with head injuries or brain tumours
- prescribing the patient treatment, such as exercises or glasses
- treating the patient, often over a number of visits
- arranging for the patient to see a specialist, such as a surgeon, if necessary
- working with other health care professionals such as nurses, consultant surgeons and optometrists
- writing reports, keeping records and informing doctors of diagnosis, treatment and progress
- doing clinical research.

Pay

Within the NHS Agenda for Change scales orthoptists are on Band 5, £34,494 to £42,977 a year. Specialist orthoptists are on Band 6, £43,169 to £52,603 a year. Specialist orthoptists are on Band 7, £52,769 to £61,377 a year. The current pay scales are from April 2025.

Conditions

- You would work in a hospital or in the community, visiting schools or clinics.
- You may need to travel.
- Hours of work are normally regular.

Getting In

- You need a degree in orthoptics approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).
- Glasgow Caledonian University offers the only BSc Hons degree course in Orthoptics in Scotland. Entry requirements are 4 Highers at BBBC including two science subjects.
- 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 should arrange to visit an orthoptic department before you apply for a course. This shows you are committed to and understand the job.
- When you complete your course you gain UK state registration with the [Health and Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](#). You need this to work in the National Health Service (NHS).
- A driving licence is useful.

The majority of orthoptists work in the NHS. There are also opportunities in private practice, and with educational institutions and charities. You may be able to work abroad.

What Does It Take

You should be able to:

- get on well with people from all backgrounds and of all ages
- pay close attention to detail
- handle precise instruments and record results carefully
- explain diagnoses and treatment clearly and simply
- to work alone and as part of a team.

You should have:

- excellent communication skills
- patience and understanding
- good organisational skills.

Training

Once you have gained state registration, training is on the job, with short courses to keep you up to date.

Getting On

- You will need to keep your skills and knowledge up to date with Continuing Professional Development (CPD). [The British and Irish Orthoptic Society \(BIOS\)](#) run suitable courses.
- With experience you could become a specialist and then consultant orthoptist.
- You might specialise in a particular area such as work with children.
- You could go into research or teaching orthoptics.
- It can help if you are willing to move around the country.

More Information

Visit this great resource [NHS Education Scotland Virtual Tour](#) to learn more about this job.

Contacts

British and Irish Orthoptic Society

Tel: 0121 728 5633

Email: bios@orthoptics.org.uk

Website: www.orthoptics.org.uk

X: @BIOS_Orthoptics

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BritishIrishOrthoptics

Careers in Eyecare

Website: www.careersineyecare.org.uk

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

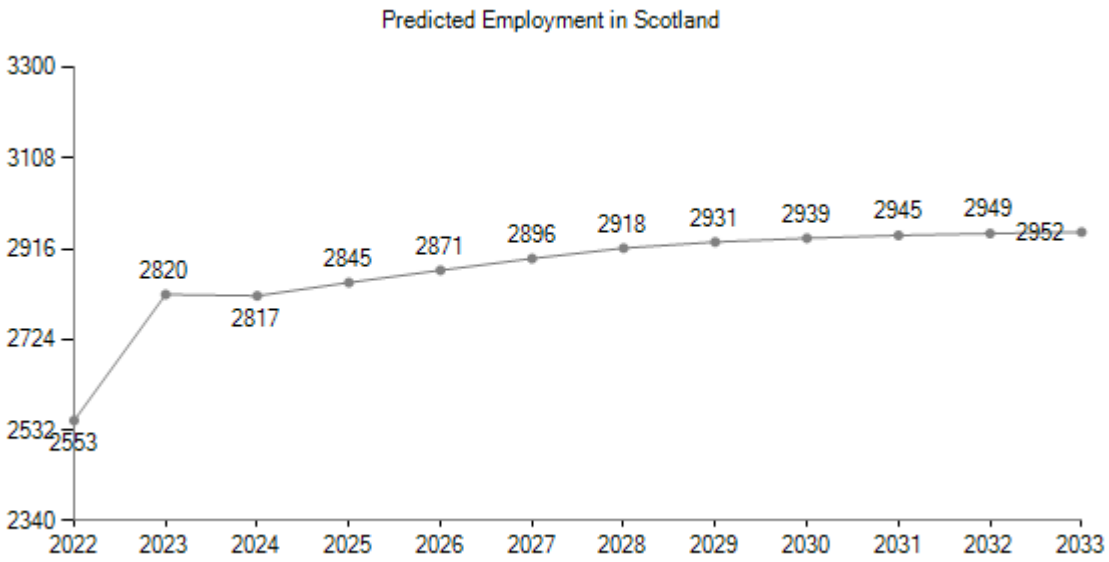
Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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