

# Study allied health professions in the UK

## What are allied health professions?

Allied health professions (AHPs) are regulated healthcare roles that support diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation, and are distinct from medicine and nursing. They can be studied in universities across the UK.<sup>1</sup>

They cover a broad range of subject areas, such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, dietetics, radiography, paramedic science, podiatry, orthoptics, prosthetics and orthotics, and art therapy.

A full list of recognised AHP roles is published by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).<sup>2</sup> AHP degrees are delivered by universities yet include extensive clinical placements within the National Health Service (NHS), ensuring real-world healthcare experience. Accredited degrees are approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) or the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) for osteopaths.<sup>3</sup>

## What is the application process?

Most undergraduate allied health professions degrees are applied for through UCAS. Entry requirements vary by profession and university but they typically require three A-levels (often including a science subject, such as biology) or equivalent qualifications.<sup>4</sup>

Applicants are usually expected to demonstrate an understanding of the profession, often through work experience, volunteering, observation, or reflective statements.

English language requirements apply to international students and vary by institution.<sup>5</sup>

Postgraduate AHP programmes are available for many professions and usually require a relevant undergraduate degree. Applications are usually made directly to universities. Applicants must hold a relevant undergraduate degree and typically complete an interview process before enrolment.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

<sup>2</sup> [ucas.com](http://ucas.com)

<sup>3</sup> [healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://healthcareers.nhs.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [ucas.com](http://ucas.com)

<sup>5</sup> [ukcisa.org](http://ukcisa.org)

<sup>6</sup> [hcpc-uk.org](http://hcpc-uk.org)

## How long does it take to graduate?

Most undergraduate AHP degrees in the UK take three to four years to complete. While postgraduate pre-registration courses typically take one or two years of full-time study.

All approved AHP courses include mandatory practice-based learning.<sup>7</sup>

## What is the course structure?

Allied Health Profession degrees combine academic study with clinical placement experience. Course content varies by profession but commonly includes anatomy and physiology, evidence-based practice, professional ethics, communication skills, and patient-centred care.<sup>8</sup>

Students complete placements in settings such as hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centres, and community services.

## What kind of equipment will I be using?

Facilities depend on the profession but often include simulation suites, clinical skills labs, therapy rooms, and specialist teaching spaces. Students also train using professional equipment during supervised placements.<sup>9</sup>

## Why is the UK a good choice to study allied health professions?

The UK's NHS is world renowned for the quality of its medical education and training, so you'll be graduating with practical skills gained in a highly respected professional environment.

UK AHP qualifications are well regarded internationally, and often serve as entry qualifications in many countries, although graduates should check specific registration requirements.

## Are there any scholarships for studying allied health professions?

There are often funding options available for international students who want to study allied health professions subjects in the UK. These range from part-funding, for example paying part of your fees, to full-funding which covers programme fees, living expenses, and return flights to the UK.

You can search our database of scholarships at [study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships-funding](https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships-funding) and check with individual university websites for institution-specific opportunities.

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<sup>7</sup> [healthcareers.nhs.uk](https://healthcareers.nhs.uk)

<sup>8</sup> [healthcareers.nhs.uk](https://healthcareers.nhs.uk)

<sup>9</sup> [hcpc-uk.org](https://hcpc-uk.org)

## What are my work options after I graduate?

Graduates of approved AHP degrees may apply for professional registration in the UK, subject to regulatory requirements. Many work within the NHS, with opportunities also available in private practice, education, research, charities, and community health services.

International students who complete a UK degree may be eligible to stay and work in the UK for a limited period after graduation under the Graduate Route, subject to government regulations.

To find out more about studying allied health professions in the UK and to explore individual courses, visit Study UK at [study-uk.britishcouncil.org](https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org)