

Maxillofacial prosthetics and reconstruction

Join the team and make a difference

Professionals working in this area of healthcare science specialise in reconstructive and corrective treatment of the face, skull and jaw due to malformation, disease or traumatic injuries.

What will you do?

As a healthcare scientist working in this area, you will produce maxillofacial prosthetic and technological devices, including custom-made components and splints, for use in implants and reconstruction.

The appliances you produce will be from a prescription or referral from a medical team working on a patient's rehabilitation.

You will treat patients with a variety of conditions and abnormalities that affect the mouth, jaw, face and body, helping to improve the function and quality of the lives of your patients. Also, as an essential part of a multidisciplinary team, you will advise on the use of devices during reconstructive operations in theatre.



Some of your work will involve dealing with patients who are terminally ill, or are in a highly emotional state following facial disfigurement, so you will need good counselling and interpersonal skills.

The mix of patient contact, counselling and scientific input makes this a challenging, varied and innovative role that has scope for you to transform patients' lives for the better.

Where will you work?	What skills and qualities will you need?
You will work in the maxillofacial departments of hospitals, and will be based mostly in laboratories.	• technical skills
It's likely that you will liaise with clinicians in the ear, nose and throat (ENT), plastic surgery, neurosurgery and clinical oncology departments.	• interest in anatomy and physiology
	• health and safety awareness – you will deal with hazardous substances on a daily basis
	• good communication skills
	• good logic and reasoning
	• ability to empathise with patients and their families to gain their confidence
	• teamworking skills

What entry routes are available?

To work as a maxillofacial prosthetist and technologist, you will need a BSc degree in dental technology, followed by a post graduate diploma or MSc in maxillofacial prosthetics and technology, which includes an element of on-the-job training.

Alternatively, a BTEC Higher National Certificate/Diploma or NVQ level 4 in dental technology or maxillofacial prosthetics and technology with vocational training is also suitable.

With GCSEs or an equivalent NVQ and/or previous work experience, it is often possible to start work as an assistant in healthcare science, combining on-the-job training with study so that you learn as you earn. For more information, see the *Clinical support worker* factsheet.

Some employers also offer apprenticeships in engineering and science, enabling you to gain experience and qualifications in a particular role.

For more information on the range of opportunities available in healthcare science, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/qualifications. This gives more specific details about what qualifications are necessary for each role. You can search for current vacancies and download job descriptions at www.jobs.nhs.uk

How can you develop your career?

This is a career with excellent prospects, and includes openings for research, management and education. As a maxillofacial prosthetist, you will be expected to continually expand your knowledge as advances are made and you may carry out related specialised work.

With training, responsibility and experience, you could reach the highest level in the profession, attaining consultant status.

Find out more about what training is open to you and how you can develop your career, at www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/training

As well as moving to more senior and specialised roles within this area, you will also have the chance to take on additional responsibilities and progress within the organisation as part of the Career Framework. For more information please see the *Careers in healthcare science* or *Careers in the dental team* booklets.

Pay

The national pay system in the NHS is called Agenda for Change (AfC). This applies to all staff except doctors, dentists and very senior managers. These are examples of roles and the AfC bands at which they may be paid: healthcare science support worker (Band 2); healthcare science assistant (Band 4); healthcare science practitioner (Band 5); healthcare science specialist (Band 6); healthcare science advanced (Band 7); healthcare science consultant (Band 8a-9). For more information, visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/payandbenefits

To find out more about this area of healthcare science, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/working

For more information on the professional bodies relevant to healthcare science and the dental team, please visit www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/list/contacts