



Exploring a career
in **Prosthetics
and Orthotics**

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Message from the Professional Body Chair, Dr Nicky Eddison

Discovering a new career can be an exciting and transformative journey, offering the chance to redefine your purpose and explore uncharted possibilities. It often begins with self-reflection, identifying passions, strengths, and interests that align with personal values and long-term goals, leading you to unveil paths previously unknown or unconsidered.

Ultimately, choosing a career is about embracing a fresh chapter that aligns with who you are and who you aspire to become.

I am delighted that you have chosen to learn more about all the wonderful opportunities a career in prosthetics and orthotics can offer you. We hope this guide provides you with all the information you need to help you make the choice that is right for you.



Dr Nicky Eddison
Chair, BAPO

Discover **YOUR FUTURE** in Prosthetics and Orthotics



Are you passionate about making a difference in people's lives? Curious about a career that blends problem solving, medical and engineering technology, and compassion?



Are you taking your Highers, A levels or equivalent and looking for an inspiring career with opportunities in healthcare, research, education, leadership, medical device design and much more?



Are you a graduate of Bio-engineering, Psychology, Sport Science, or Biomedical/Biology disciplines or a current healthcare professional looking for a career where you can utilise the transferable skills you have gained? Are you a carer or involved in volunteer work? Or do you have a career which has skills that could be transferred to a career in prosthetics and orthotics? Maybe you or a family member or friend are a prosthetic or orthotic service user who has been inspired by a personal experience of prosthetics and orthotics.

If so, a career in prosthetics and orthotics might be for you!

This guide draws from the Gatsby Benchmarks of
Good Career Guidance: www.gatsbybenchmarks.org.uk/



The Prosthetic and Orthotic Workforce

»»» Who we are and what we do

Prosthetics and orthotics is a medical and engineering based healthcare profession. Prosthetists and orthotists are Allied Health Professionals and are registered as autonomous clinicians under their membership of the Health and Care Professionals Council. (hcpc-uk.org). They are supported by a highly skilled technical and support workforce.

Prosthetists and orthotists assess, diagnose, and treat people who require external medical devices (prostheses and orthoses). They treat a vast range of people across most clinical pathways, including people with lifelong conditions such as cerebral palsy and spina bifida and conditions such as diabetes and arthritis or those who are born without a limb or who have limb difference; and those whom may be recovering from a health event such as a stroke or after a knee operation or an accident. The work is often varied and no two patients are the same. They work as autonomous practitioners as well as part of a wider healthcare team to help manage the rehabilitation of the patients they care for.

Fundamental theories underpinning prosthetics and orthotics are similar which is why they are taught as one degree, and clinicians have a dual title, however the jobs can be very different. In general prosthetists deal with patients who have a limb absence, whereas orthotists deal with patients who may have limbs that are not functioning as they should, that need extra support, or require pain relief.

Most graduates choose to specialise in either prosthetics or orthotics; however there are opportunities to work as a dual practitioner, as both a prosthetist and orthotist.

Prosthetics and orthotics is a practical health and engineering based subject, so it is beneficial if applicants:

- Enjoy helping others
- Enjoy problem solving
- Enjoy practical skills
- Are looking for a role which has variety

Take a look at what our current prosthetists, orthotists, technicians, support workers, students, and apprentices have to say about their experience in prosthetics and orthotics - www.bapo.com/careers/

»»» The impact of prosthetics and orthotics

The impact of Prosthetics & Orthotics is far-reaching and vitally important to the health and wellbeing of many people. This is displayed in the info-graph below.



»»» What is a prosthetist?

Prosthetists are autonomous registered practitioners who provide gait analysis and engineering solutions to patients with limb absence. They are extensively trained at undergraduate level in mechanics, bio-mechanics, and material science along with anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology. Their qualifications make them competent to design and provide prostheses that replicate the structural or functional characteristics of the patient's absent limb. They are also qualified to modify prostheses or componentry taking responsibility for the impact of any changes. They treat patients with congenital absence as well as limb loss due to diabetes, reduced vascularity, infection, and trauma. Military personnel are forming an increasing part of the prosthetist's case load. Prosthetists work closely with consultants, technicians, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists as part of multidisciplinary amputee rehabilitation teams.

»»» What is a prosthesis?

A prosthesis is an externally applied device that is used to replace wholly, or in part, an absent or deficient limb.



»»» What is an orthotist?

Orthotists are autonomous registered practitioners who provide gait analysis and engineering solutions to patients with problems of the neuro, muscular, and skeletal systems. They are extensively trained at undergraduate level in mechanics, bio-mechanics, and material science along with anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology. Their qualifications make them competent to design and provide orthoses that modify the structural or functional characteristics of the patients' neuro-muscular and skeletal systems enabling patients to mobilise, eliminate gait deviations, reduce falls, reduce pain, prevent and facilitate healing of ulcers. They are also qualified to modify orthoses or componentry taking responsibility for the impact of any changes. They treat patients with a wide range of conditions including diabetes, arthritis, cerebral palsy, stroke, spina bifida, scoliosis, musculoskeletal disorders, sports injuries, and trauma. The orthotist often forms part of various multidisciplinary teams such as within the diabetic foot team or neuro-rehabilitation team.

»»» What is an orthosis?

An orthosis is an externally applied device used to modify the structural and/or functional characteristics of the neuro-muscular and skeletal systems. Examples of orthosis include insoles, footwear and adaptations; spinal braces, protective helmets; knee, elbow, shoulder, wrist, and hand braces.

»»» Where we work

Prosthetists generally work in specialist rehabilitation or disability centres alongside a team dedicated to treating those with limb absence or deficiency. These can be based on a hospital site or in a different location at a specialist rehabilitation centre.

Orthotists work in a variety of setting including in hospital outpatients department, with inpatients on wards, in satellite clinics at health centres, and in special schools. They are often required to move between clinics and may be part of a wider team in specialist clinics.



»»» What other roles are available in prosthetics and orthotics?

As well as professional qualifications there are also opportunities to work as a prosthetic/orthotic technician or a prosthetic/orthotic support worker.

»»» Prosthetic and orthotic technicians

Prosthetic/Orthotic technicians are vital members of the prosthetic/orthotic team who use evidence-based practice to provide clinical support, technical design and fabrication of prosthetic and/or orthotic devices. This role offers the opportunity to showcase your practical skills.

The University of Derby offers a level 3 prosthetic/orthotic technician apprenticeship.

This apprenticeship usually runs over 18 months. You will be completing on-the-job learning and uploading evidence of this to an e-portfolio, at the same time as studying for level 3 certificate.

This academic study will make up 20% of the course and is delivered through 'blended learning' - a combination of face-to-face and online teaching. Face-to-face sessions will be in blocks and online learning can include group webinars, independent activities, or reading between the block study sessions.

The apprentice/Learner must be employed within a prosthetic or orthotic service and must have the support of their manager to ensure they are able to complete the programme/apprenticeship.

»»» Prosthetic and Orthotic Support workers

AHP support worker responsibilities can range from performing routine tasks, such as welcoming and preparing service users for treatment, to direct clinical and support tasks such as helping service users meet their care plans, using prosthetists' and orthotists' designs to make artificial limbs and supply medical devices. Support workers work with registered professionals and provide support care and treatment.



Studying in the UK

»»» How do I become a prosthetist/orthotist?

To become a prosthetist/orthotist you must complete a programme of study which leads to registration as a prosthetist/orthotist with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Only people who are registered with the HCPC can legally use the title of prosthetist/orthotist in the UK.

There are three routes in the UK to train as a prosthetist/orthotist:

- A BSc degree
- A Master's pre-registration degree
- A level 6 apprenticeship

There are four universities in the UK who offer these programmes:

- The University of Salford (BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics)
- The University of Strathclyde (BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics)
- Keele University (Pre-registration MSc in Prosthetics and Orthotics)
- The University of Derby (Level 6 Apprenticeship in Prosthetics and Orthotics)

»»» What are the entry requirements?

Minimum entry requirements are set by the universities and do vary. The universities accept a variety of qualifications including A-levels, Highers, and Irish leaving certificates and both consider prior learning and access courses. Exact grade requirements can be found on their websites.

As prosthetists and orthotists work in a health care environment with vulnerable patients, an enhanced criminal record check will be required and your offer will most likely be dependent on this. You may also be required to pass a health assessment and further vaccinations may be required before being allowed to commence your programme of study.



»»» What skills will I need to show?

- Communication skills
- Sensitivity and tolerance
- Ability to use your initiative
- Reliability, honesty, and trustworthiness
- Enthusiasm, dedication, and determination
- Evidence of practical and people skills

»»» What will I learn?

You will gain the skills needed to assess and treat individuals in need of prosthetic and orthotic care. The courses emphasise strong practical components, integrated with relevant theoretical knowledge. The prosthetic and orthotic programmes will cover many different topics and involve a combination of styles of teaching. During your course you can expect to learn about:

- Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology Biomechanics
- Material science and the design process
- Communication skills
- Research skills
- Prosthetic and orthotic theory
- Leadership
- Clinical skills
- Technical skills
- Patient care

You will also have practical sessions on hand skills, casting, and problem solving.

During your BSc or MSc programme of study you will be required to undertake clinical placements. Clinical placements are based in prosthetic and/or orthotic centres. During these placements you will have the opportunity to observe experienced clinicians and participate in supervised practice thus gaining clinical experience with patients in both prosthetics and orthotics throughout your studies.

»»» How do apprenticeships work?

Apprenticeships offer you the chance to learn on the job and earn simultaneously. You will need to be employed in a prosthetic/orthotic service to qualify for the apprentice programme. The level 6 apprenticeship in prosthetics and orthotics is a three year programme which will provide you with the equivalent of a BSc in prosthetics and orthotics.

The course is 80% practical on the job work and 20% academic studies. You will not be required to attend the University of Derby to complete your studies, this is an online programme, with the exception of one week of the year where attendance at the university is required.

»»» Fees and funding

For the apprenticeship programmes, the course fees will be paid by your employer.

For the Salford BSc programme, the [NHS Learning Support Fund \(LSF\)](#) is available to support eligible healthcare students. To apply, you need to be on one of the specified pre-registration undergraduate or postgraduate courses. Prosthetics and orthotics are included in that funding. Find more information at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-learning-support-fund-lsf

For the Strathclyde BSc programme, students who meet the [relevant residence](#) requirements in Scotland, may be able to apply to the Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) to have tuition fees paid by the Scottish government. Scottish students may also be eligible for a bursary and loan to help cover living costs while at university. The university offers a generous package of bursaries for students from England, Northern Ireland, and Wales:

- [Strathclyde Access Bursary](#)
- [Strathclyde Excellence Scholarship](#)
- [Strathclyde Accommodation Bursary](#)

For the Keele MSc programme, eligible Prosthetics & Orthotics (Pre-Reg) MSc students are eligible to apply for funding support via the NHS Learning Support Fund which includes a training grant and certain travel and accommodation costs for placements. More information, including the eligibility criteria can be found on the [NHS Learning Support Fund website](#).

It's important to plan carefully for funding before you start your course as not all students are eligible for the UK government postgraduate loans and, in some cases, you would be expected to source alternative funding yourself. Visit www.gov.uk/masters-loan/eligibility for information on UK government postgraduate loans.



»»» Where can I find more information?

You can find out further details about the courses by contacting the universities. For the BSc and MSc programmes you must apply via UCAS, the university and college admissions service. More information about this can be found on their website: www.ucas.com



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow

National Centre for Prosthetics
and Orthotics Faculty of Engineering

University of Strathclyde
131 St. James Road
Glasgow G4 0LS

[www.strath.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/
prostheticsorthotics/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/prostheticsorthotics/)

E: contact-ncpo@strath.ac.uk
T: 01415483298



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Prosthetics & Orthotics Directorate of Allied &
Public Health School of Health & Society

University of Salford
Brian Blatchford Building
Frederick Road Campus M6 6PU

[www.salford.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/
prosthetics-and-orthotics](http://www.salford.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/prosthetics-and-orthotics)

E: enquiries@salford.ac.uk
T: 0161 295 5000



UNIVERSITY OF
DERBY

University of Derby

Kedleston Road, Derby DE22 1GB

[www.derby.ac.uk/apprenticeships/
prosthetics-and-orthotics-degree-apprenticeship/](http://www.derby.ac.uk/apprenticeships/prosthetics-and-orthotics-degree-apprenticeship/)

[www.derby.ac.uk/online/study-patterns/
prosthetic-and-orthotic-technician-level-3/](http://www.derby.ac.uk/online/study-patterns/prosthetic-and-orthotic-technician-level-3/)

E: businessgateway@derby.ac.uk
T: 0800 001 5500



School of Allied Health
Professions and Pharmacy

Mackay Building, Keele,
Staffordshire, ST5 5BG

[www.keele.ac.uk/study/postgraduatestudy/
postgraduatecourses/prostheticsandorthotics/](http://www.keele.ac.uk/study/postgraduatestudy/postgraduatecourses/prostheticsandorthotics/)

E: sahp.postgraduate-admin@keele.ac.uk

Job opportunities

Currently there is a national and international shortage of prosthetists, orthotists, prosthetic/orthotic technicians, and support workers. As such, career prospects both throughout the UK and abroad are excellent, especially for those willing to relocate.

Who can I work for?

Most prosthetists/orthotists either work directly for the NHS or are employed by a private company contracted to provide services to the NHS. There are also opportunities to undertake private practice in both disciplines. Prosthetic/orthotic technicians tend to be employed by private companies although there are opportunities for employment in the NHS also.

Employers advertise for Support Workers in their local areas and some attend local schools, colleges, and careers events. You may also find support worker adverts on the NHS jobs website. Some of the roles include access to the apprenticeship programmes to further develop your qualifications. You will need to ask specifically about this when you are looking at individual roles.

What can I expect to get paid?

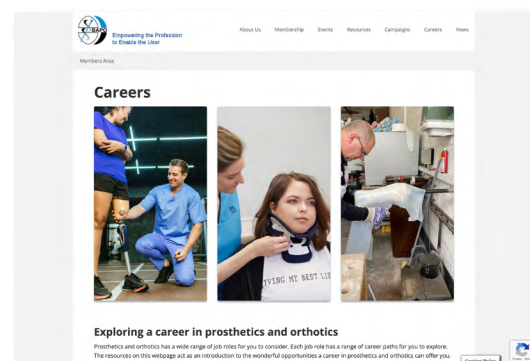
NHS prosthetists and orthotists are paid under the Agenda for Change pay scale in line with all other Allied Health Professionals. As a graduate orthotist you can expect to be paid a band 5 level. At the time of writing this document the salary for a band 5 staff member in the NHS was £29,970 - £36,483. The pay for support workers tends to start at a band 3 or equivalent (£24,071 - £25,674) but can progress to high pay scales for support worker roles which require increased skills and responsibilities. Technicians are largely employed by the private sector. Their pay is largely dependent on experience and skill level. For up to date information please go to <https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/pay-scales-202425>. Salaries with private companies may vary.

How can I get work experience?

We recommend contacting the universities or BAPO who may be able to give you details of your local centre. Work experience in other Health and Care disciplines is also considered as favourable.

Keeping up to date

You keep up to date with career information, events, and resources by signing up to the free BAPO newsletter at www.bapo.com or visiting our designated [Careers page](#). Please follow the link or scan the QR code below. If you still have questions you can email our dedicated careers email address at careersinp&o@bapo.com.



»»» Are there other opportunities once I graduate?

Yes, prosthetists and orthotists can work in a variety of settings and roles. Once you graduate you can choose to focus on a clinical role or you can choose to explore roles in education, leadership, and research.

You may choose to work in higher education, educating the future professionals or delivering research. Prosthetists and orthotists are also involved in product design and development.

There are also opportunities to work with elite athletes.



»»» Career opportunities in prosthetics and orthotics

The infographic below demonstrates the career pathways available in prosthetics and orthotics.*



*The above diagram does not include all titles within the prosthetic and orthotic workforce but provides examples of career opportunities

►►► Career highlights

Trailblazers, educators, researchers, innovators, clinical specialists, and influential leaders across prosthetics and orthotics have made significant contributions to the field. The following examples highlight the career paths that some of our professionals have taken throughout their prosthetic and orthotic career journey. We hope these examples inspire you and introduce you to the possibilities offered by a career in prosthetics and orthotics.

Nikki Munro

Clinical lead and service manager for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

"I chose P&O after identifying at school I wanted a job that combined caring for people in a profession related to medicine and engineering. After graduating I worked with for a private orthotic contractor gaining a wider range of experience as an orthotist."

"I took the opportunity to improve my project management skills gaining a lean bronze qualification."

"I realise my true passion was in leadership and management rather than a clinical consultant path."

"I am an active member of the wider AHP community in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. I also chair the Scottish Clinical Orthotic Leads group."

"I enjoy raising the profile of Prosthetics and Orthotics positively and enjoy seeing us getting the same exposure and opportunities as the other bigger AHP professions."

"I represent my professional body at AHP Federation Scotland."

"I joined NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde as a senior orthotist and I was given opportunities in project management. I went on to work with NHS Quality Improvement in Scotland and chaired the NHS quality Improvement Scotland Prosthetics and orthotics practice development network."

"During my career, I have gained advanced practice skills in diabetes and neurological conditions and have become a Principal Investigator for research projects."

"I went on to lead multi-professional AHP projects and became an NES Scottish Improvement Leader."



"I am clinical lead and service manager for NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde orthotic service which is the biggest health board in Scotland and is the biggest in-house Orthotic team in the UK."

"Our service works across 8 different hospital sites and I lead a team of 21 Orthotists, 6 healthcare support worker staff - 3 Orthotic Clinical assistants and 3 Orthotic Technicians and 9 orthotic administrative staff. I am also professional lead for all Orthotists working in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde."

Laura Barr

Advanced Orthotic Practitioner

"I graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Prosthetics and Orthotics from the University of Strathclyde in 2007 and began working as an orthotist in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC). My early years in general orthotics helped me discover a passion for musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions and orthopaedics, leading me to pursue further clinical experience and postgraduate education. This groundwork enabled me to step into an Extended Scope Practitioner role, later formalised as an Advanced Practice position in 2020."

"I chose Advanced Practice because it allows me to maintain a hands-on clinical role while expanding into leadership, education, and research. I thrive on working with complex cases that require problem-solving and interdisciplinary collaboration. My journey has included completion of an MSc, a postgraduate certificate, and various standalone master's-level modules. Currently, I balance my clinical work with completing a PhD, allowing me to integrate research into the orthotics department."



"Advanced Practice offers a dynamic and flexible career path, allowing me to shape my role around my interests, continuously evolve, and contribute to the profession beyond direct patient care."

"I work across both the Orthopaedics and Orthotics services in NHS GGC, covering the four pillars of practice:

Clinical: I assess, diagnose, and manage patients in the Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle service and lead escalation clinics for complex orthotic cases. These clinics also serve as training opportunities for colleagues and external healthcare providers.

Education: I oversee MSK education within the NHS GGC Orthotic department, developing training programs and a Professional Development Framework. I also contribute to university teaching, act as an external examiner, and train clinicians nationally through BAPO courses.

Research: As an NRS Research Fellow, I lead research initiatives to integrate evidence-based practice into the Orthotic service. I co-manage the MSK foot and ankle pathway and lead the national Orthotics Evidence Portal project for BAPO.

Leadership: I serve as the MSK specialist team lead in NHS GGC and the national MSK Lead for orthotics in Scotland. This dual role allows me to combine patient care with strategic service development, education, and research—keeping my career both rewarding and impactful."

Steve Seccombe

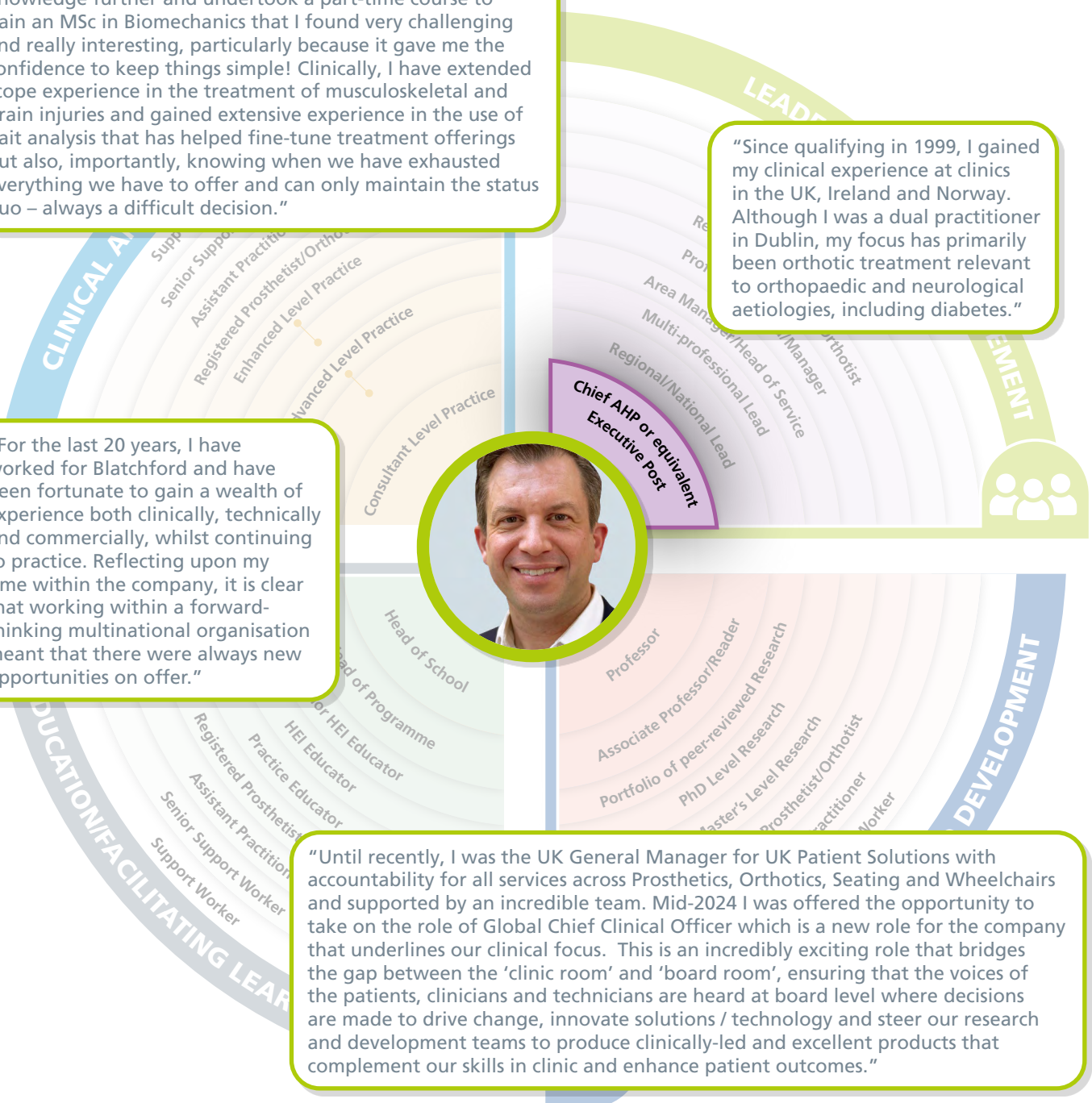
Group Chief Clinical Officer for Blatchford

"After 10 years of practice, I felt ready to deepen by knowledge further and undertook a part-time course to gain an MSc in Biomechanics that I found very challenging and really interesting, particularly because it gave me the confidence to keep things simple! Clinically, I have extended scope experience in the treatment of musculoskeletal and brain injuries and gained extensive experience in the use of gait analysis that has helped fine-tune treatment offerings but also, importantly, knowing when we have exhausted everything we have to offer and can only maintain the status quo – always a difficult decision."

"Since qualifying in 1999, I gained my clinical experience at clinics in the UK, Ireland and Norway. Although I was a dual practitioner in Dublin, my focus has primarily been orthotic treatment relevant to orthopaedic and neurological aetiologies, including diabetes."

"For the last 20 years, I have worked for Blatchford and have been fortunate to gain a wealth of experience both clinically, technically and commercially, whilst continuing to practice. Reflecting upon my time within the company, it is clear that working within a forward-thinking multinational organisation meant that there were always new opportunities on offer."

"Until recently, I was the UK General Manager for UK Patient Solutions with accountability for all services across Prosthetics, Orthotics, Seating and Wheelchairs and supported by an incredible team. Mid-2024 I was offered the opportunity to take on the role of Global Chief Clinical Officer which is a new role for the company that underlines our clinical focus. This is an incredibly exciting role that bridges the gap between the 'clinic room' and 'board room', ensuring that the voices of the patients, clinicians and technicians are heard at board level where decisions are made to drive change, innovate solutions / technology and steer our research and development teams to produce clinically-led and excellent products that complement our skills in clinic and enhance patient outcomes."

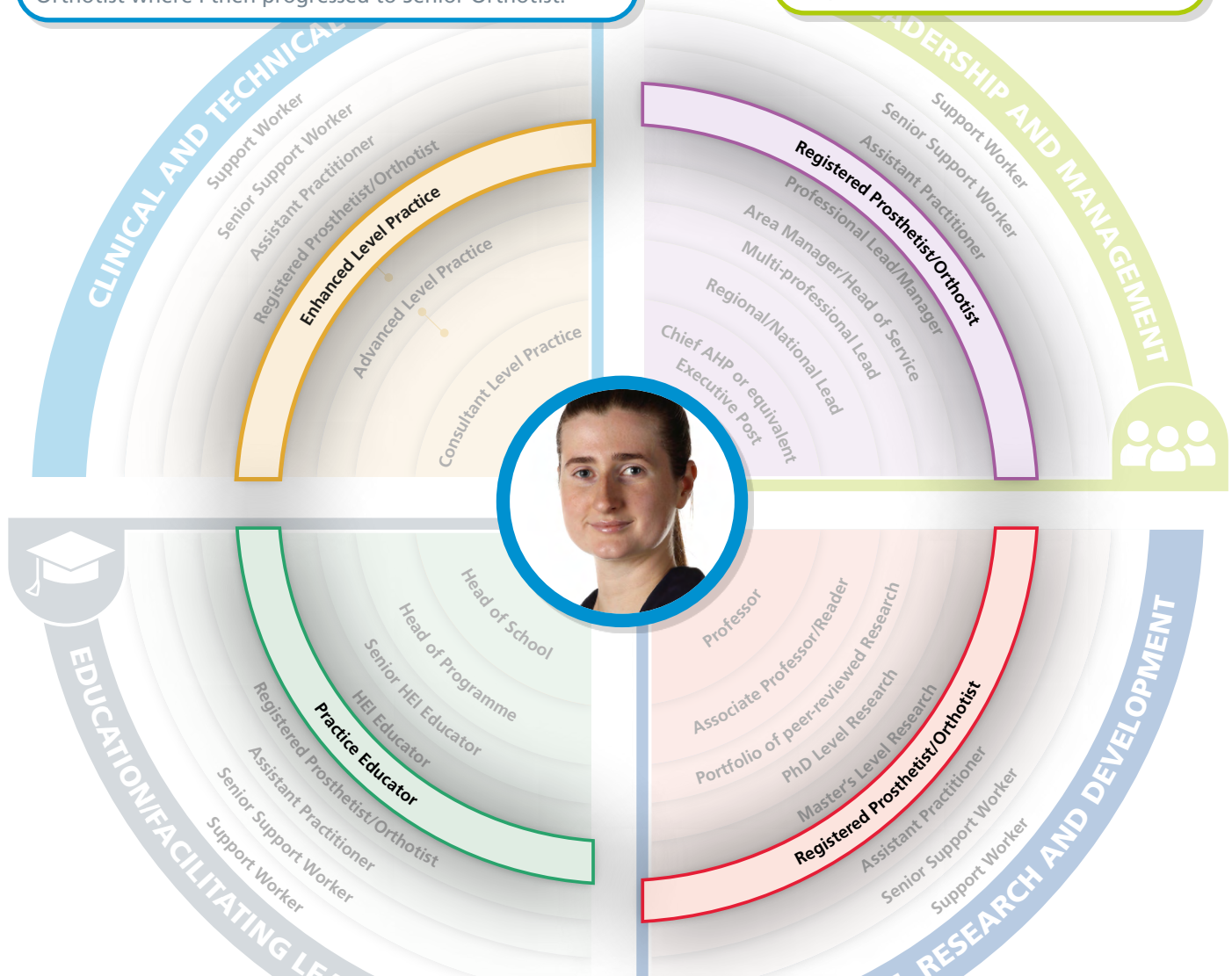


Alice Dudley

Senior Orthotist

"My first job was a graduate orthotist position at a small GP practice and Broadgreen/Aintree Hospital which led me to a role at a wider scoped practice in Leicester. From here I moved to The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust as an Orthotist where I then progressed to Senior Orthotist."

"I have catered my early education to suite the requirements for a P+O degree. My A-Levels were Maths, Psychology and BTEC Science. I went to Salford University for 3 years and completed placements at Haywood hospital (prosthetics), Medway hospital (prosthetics) and The Royal Blackburn Hospital (orthotics)."



"In my current role I have the responsibility of managing the band 6 team and ensuring administrative things such as standard operating procedures and policies are up to date. I am also required to manage queries and complaints. In the absence of the orthotic service manager a senior orthotist is expected to pick up any management tasks within their scope."

Christabelle Asoluka

Band 6 Orthotist, South Tees NHS Trust

"I earned a B.Tech in Prosthetics and Orthotics in 2017 in Nigeria, building a strong foundation in biomechanics, material science, and clinical applications. My journey led me to the UK for a master's in Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Technology, opening doors to diverse career paths. Now, as a Band 6 Orthotist at South Tees NHS Trust, I run general adult and insole clinics, focusing on biomechanical instabilities and mobility enhancement."

"In the eight years since graduating, I have held multiple leadership roles across different sectors. As a marketing lead in a P&O manufacturing company, I developed strategic communication skills, bridging the gap between clinicians and industry. I later expanded into the tech sector, working as a content lead at a 3D-printing orthotic software company, where I contributed to marketing strategies and product development. I have also served as BAPO Secretary (2022-2024), supporting the profession through governance and strategic planning."

CLINICAL AND TECHNICAL

Support Worker
Senior Support Worker
Assistant Practitioner
Registered Prosthetist/Orthotist
Enhanced Level Practice
Advanced Level Practice
Consultant Level Practice

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
Support Worker
Senior Support Worker
Assistant Practitioner
Registered Prosthetist/Orthotist
Professional Lead/Manager
Area Manager/Head of Service
Multi-professional Lead
Regional/National Lead
Chief AHP or equivalent
Executive Post



"As an Assistant Education, Practice, and Development Officer at BAPO, I play an active role in shaping CPD initiatives, helping develop and plan training programs to support the growth of professionals in P&O."

EDUCATION
Head of School
Head of Programme
Senior HEI Educator
HEI Educator
Practice Educator
Registered Prosthetist/Orthotist
Assistant Practitioner
Senior Support Worker
Support Worker

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
Professor
Associate Professor/Reader
Portfolio of peer-reviewed Research
PhD Level Research
Master's Level Research
Registered Prosthetist/Orthotist
Assistant Practitioner
Senior Support Worker
Support Worker

"My passion for innovation has driven me to explore digital health and AI adoption in P&O. I am currently researching how technology enhances CPD, clinical decision-making, and professional learning. Additionally, I have contributed to workforce reform projects, particularly in preceptorship development and pre-registration curriculum design to strengthen professional training pathways."

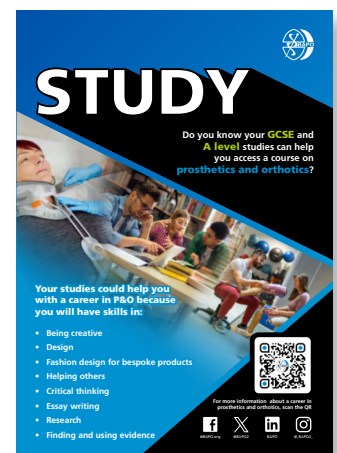
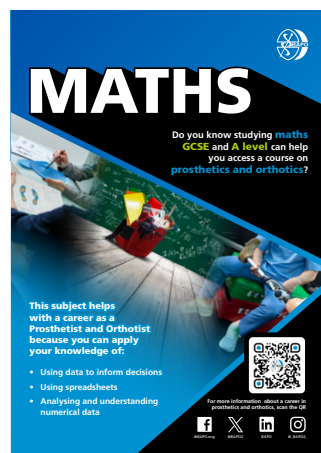
"My career has not followed a traditional ladder - rather, I've embraced opportunities to explore the full scope of P&O. From clinical practice to education, leadership, and digital innovation, I continue to find new ways to contribute to and expand the field."

Information for young people, parents/carers/guardians and schools and colleges

Prosthetics and orthotics has a wide range of job roles for you to consider. Each job role has a range of career paths for learners to explore. Please explore all the resources on our dedicated webpages for further information:

www.bapo.com/career-information-for-schools-and-colleges/

Subjects that support P&O careers



Meaningful encounters with employers and learning providers

If you are at school or college, please talk to your Careers Adviser about opportunities to spend time with local employers including commercial companies and health services.

Open Days run by the Universities can also give you an insight into the degree programme on offer, alongside an experience of what life on campus may feel like. Sometimes you can take a Virtual Tour ahead of exploring a university in person.

Finding work experience programmes, placements and volunteering opportunities is not always easy and will vary across different parts of the UK. You may have to explore broader opportunities that enable you to gain transferable skills that you can bring into the profession.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

NHS England: www.stepintothenhhs.nhs.uk/work-experience

NHS Cadets: www.sja.org.uk/get-involved/young-people/nhs-cadets-home/

NHS Scotland: www.careers.nhs.scot/shape-your-future/work-placements-and-volunteering/

NHS Wales: <https://heiw.nhs.wales/careers/nhs-wales-careers/experience-and-jobs/work-experience/>

Information for career changers and career seekers

Transferable skills

Prosthetics and orthotics lends itself to a wide range of transferable skills from people of differing backgrounds and experiences. If you hold a degree in bio-engineering, biology, sports science, psychology or similar fields you will have skills that can be transferred to a career in prosthetic and orthotics. If you have a background in professional sports or the Armed Forces you will have a multitude of skills that will equip you for a career in prosthetics and orthotics.

Similarly, carers possess a wealth of transferable skills that make them well-suited for roles in healthcare. Their ability to demonstrate empathy, patience, and effective communication is critical for providing compassionate care to patients. Carers are experienced in managing complex situations, such as responding to emergencies, organising care routines, and maintaining accurate records, which aligns seamlessly with healthcare requirements. They bring problem-solving skills and adaptability, essential for handling diverse patient needs and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams. Additionally, carers' experience in promoting dignity, understanding confidentiality, and building trust equips them to excel in patient-centred healthcare environments.



Advice for people considering joining the P&O workforce from overseas

»»» International recruitment

International recruits must complete the HCPC's international registration process, before they can begin their career as a prosthetist/orthotist in the UK. This involves several key steps to ensure your qualifications align with UK standards. The process generally includes:

Qualification Verification: The HCPC evaluates whether your educational qualifications are equivalent to UK-based qualifications in prosthetics and orthotics. This ensures that all professionals have the necessary foundation in P&O practices to meet UK standards.

Professional Experience: Applicants may be required to provide documentation of their professional experience, including work history, clinical skills, and any specific competencies in prosthetics or orthotics. This can be in the form of employment references, records of clinical work, and supervisor assessments.

English Language Proficiency: To work effectively in the UK, a high level of English proficiency is required. International recruits may need to provide proof of English proficiency, typically through exams like the IELTS or TOEFL. This is particularly important if your primary language is not English, as clear communication with patients and colleagues is essential for effective practice.

For more detailed information on the application process, visit [HCPC International Applications](#).

»»» Visa and work permit requirements

To work legally in the UK, international recruits may need a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from an employer, which supports their work visa application. For prosthetists and orthotists, the Health and Care Worker Visa is the most relevant visa option. This visa category applies to Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), including those in the P&O field, and provides a streamlined route for obtaining work authorisation.

»»» Important points for health and care worker visas

Job's Occupation Code: For P&O roles, use occupation code 2259 – Other health professionals not elsewhere classified when applying for the Health and Care Worker Visa.

Eligibility and Requirements: The visa requires sponsorship from a licensed employer, so it's crucial to confirm the CoS availability when applying for jobs. This visa permits employment with the NHS or any other approved healthcare provider.

More details on the visa application and requirements are available on the [UK Health and Care Worker Visa page](#).

»»» What do the P&O workforce love about their jobs?



“ The rewarding part of the job is being able to treat patients, allowing them to achieve more than they thought they could, whether that’s a Paralympic athlete getting a medal or someone getting their mobility back to allow them to play with their children. That’s the thing I love. ”

Alan McDougall
Prosthetist

“ Every time when I make any kind of devices, whether it be in Prosthetics or Orthotics. I can proudly say that my tiny contribution makes a huge difference on every patient’s day to day life! That job satisfaction is a different kind of feelings/happiness which can’t be expressed! ”

Subramanian Nellayappan (Raja)
Orthotic Technician



“ The best thing about my job is the difference we can make to someones life by using our skills to create a custom device that can make a huge difference to the level of pain they are in, maintain/increase their physical health and because of these changes can have a positive impact on their mental health ”

Isabella Proctor
Orthotic Clinical Assistant Team Lead



“ Seeing people live a better quality of life, and being able to do and achieve the things that matter to them. ”

Amie Holland
Senior Orthotist

“ Supporting others on their learning journey- seeing students grow in confidence as they develop their problem-solving skills and clinical knowledge. ”

Christine McMonagle
Senior Teaching Fellow at the National Centre
for Prosthetics and Orthotics, University of Strathclyde



“ Being able to continue to work, and carry out my existing clinical work, while building my knowledge, skills, and competencies. I am to work alongside trained clinicians benefitting from their knowledge and experience, whilst learning the theoretical knowledge through study. ”

Russell Salt
Prosthetic/Orthotic Apprentice

Exploring a career in **Prosthetics and Orthotics**



“ Our clinical assistants and practitioners play a key role in providing support to orthotists and prosthetists. Assistants take outcome measures, collect patient feedback and run their own clinics, assessing and fitting patients with stock orthotic items and hosiery. Their roles also include setting up clinic rooms, assisting with patients during their appointments and taking on some elements of clinicians' responsibilities. This allows clinicians more time to spend with their patients, to write their clinic notes and raise orders. Overall, clinicians feel their clinics run more smoothly and efficiently with the support of the clinical assistants and assistant practitioners. ”

Frances Knowles
Lead Assistant Practitioner

“ Being part of someone's rehabilitation journey and getting back to all the activities they enjoyed previously. ”

Bex Wilkinson
Prosthetic Technician



“ For me, the best thing about being an Orthotist is using my problem-solving skills to put smiles on patients' faces at the end of a successful treatment. ”

Chiazoko Ezeuzo
Orthotist



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