

FAQ

What is pathology?

Pathology is the study of disease.

[Read more: What is pathology?](#) »

What career opportunities are there in pathology?

There are several options for a career in pathology. You can work as a pathologist (a doctor who specialises in one of the areas of pathology), a scientist or a laboratory assistant. The different careers require different qualifications.

I want to be a pathologist. What qualifications do I need?

To work as a pathologist in any of the pathology specialties you need to qualify as a doctor first before going into pathology training.

[Read more: I want to be a pathologist. What qualifications do I need?](#) »

How long does it take to train to be a pathologist?

It takes at least 12 years to qualify as a pathologist after leaving school.

[Read more: How long does it take to train to be a pathologist?](#) »

I want to be a clinical scientist. What qualifications do I need?

Clinical scientists take a degree in a subject such as biochemistry and often go on to do a PhD. You usually then undertake a three-year paid programme of basic training, followed by four to five years of specialist training.

[Read more: I want to be a clinical scientist. What qualifications do I need?](#) »

I want to be a biomedical scientist. What qualifications do I need?

Biomedical scientists usually enter pathology training after their first degree. Training takes up to two years after that. An alternative route into the profession is to begin training after A levels and study for a degree on a day-release basis. This takes a bit longer but gives trainees an opportunity to learn on the job – and to earn some money while they're studying.

[Read more: I want to be a biomedical scientist. What qualifications do I need?](#) »

I want to work in a pathology laboratory as a laboratory assistant. What qualifications do I need?

Laboratory assistants work in laboratories alongside scientists and pathologists. Examples of jobs a laboratory assistant might do are taking blood from patients for testing or booking specimens in when they arrive. There are no particular qualifications needed to be a laboratory assistant but GCSEs are an advantage. Training is provided and most people take NVQs (national vocational qualifications) while working.

What does the Royal College of Pathologists do?

The Royal College of Pathologists is a charitable organisation whose main aim is to promote excellence in all areas of pathology for the benefit of patients.

[Read more: What does the Royal College of Pathologists do?](#) »

Where is the Royal College of Pathologists?

The headquarters of the College is at 2 Carlton House Terrace in London, but the College is more than just a handsome building in the capital. The College is really its members, as they are the people who work with patients every day to provide the best health care available.

How many members are there?

The College has approximately 8000 members, 20% of whom are non-medically trained scientists. 25% of members are based overseas. There are also many trainee members.

What specialties make up the Royal College of Pathologists?

The largest specialties are histopathology (22% of members) and haematology (21%). The other large specialties include medical microbiology (14%), clinical biochemistry (13%) and cytopathology (9%). The smaller, but no less important, specialties include clinical cytogenetics (3%), immunology (3%), virology (2%) and molecular genetics (2%). In total there are up to 18 different specialties within the College, with new ones emerging every year.

How is the Royal College of Pathologists aiming to increase public awareness of pathology?

In 2008, 2009 and 2010 the College ran 'National Pathology Week' as part of a strategy to increase public engagement. The weeks were very successful with hundreds of events taking place across the country.

[Read more: How is the Royal College of Pathologists aiming to increase public awareness of pathology?](#) »

Our Events

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