

Healthcare Science Career of the Week



Anaesthetist

Area of HCS: Medicine
Pay Scale: £28k - £173k

AMAZING FACT

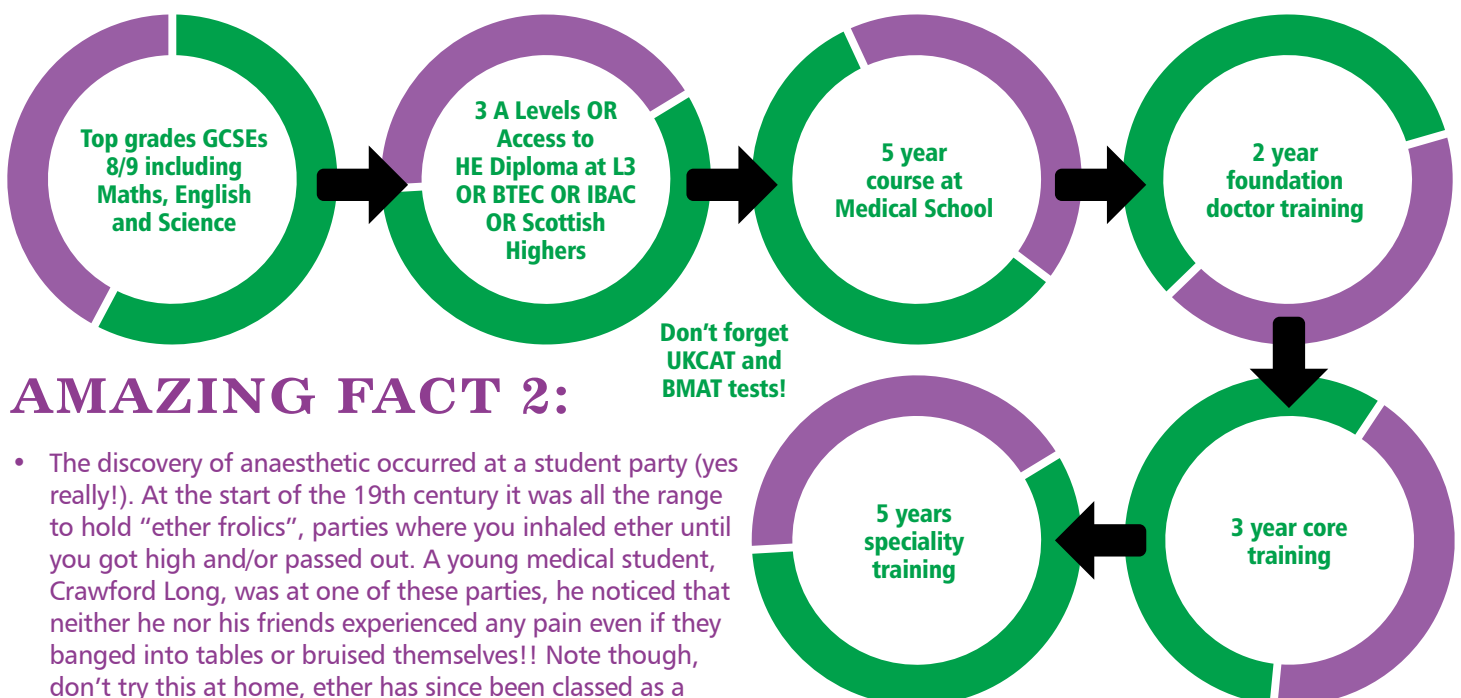
- Anaesthesia actually causes temporary amnesia. Most people say you are 'put to sleep', however if you WERE asleep, you would definitely be woken up in extreme pain (example: when your cat comes for a cuddle in the night then sinks its claws in), whereas you don't ever wake up under anaesthetic. Anaesthetic actually activates memory loss receptors in your brain!!! Which is why you don't remember any of the operation.

Anaesthetists aid in medical, surgical and psychiatric procedures. Each year 160, 000 babies are born pain free thanks to anaesthetists! They choose the right anaesthetic, monitor patient wellbeing and recovery all through the operation. However anaesthetists don't just pop up in surgery, they work with acutely ill patients and play a key role in pain management, intensive care, transport of very unwell patients and are often involved in resuscitation teams. Anaesthetists are the largest speciality group of doctors in NHS hospitals, although in a recent poll 60% of the UK population thought they were technicians or paramedics!

Anaesthetists offer 4 stages of patient care for each operation or anaesthetic:

- 1. Preparation** – assessing patient's fitness for the operation and creating a plan with them. It's not a case of "one size fits all" different people require different drugs so this part is extremely important.
- 2. Induction** – initiating anaesthesia
- 3. Maintenance** – CRUCIAL, this is the part of the operation where the anaesthetist maintains the patients' health through checking all of their vitals: activity of the heart, breathing, body temperature, blood pressure, oxygen levels and blood fluid levels.
- 4. Recovery** – reversing the anaesthesia and checking the patients recovery.

What to do to get into this career...



AMAZING FACT 2:

- The discovery of anaesthetic occurred at a student party (yes really!). At the start of the 19th century it was all the rage to hold "ether frolics", parties where you inhaled ether until you got high and/or passed out. A young medical student, Crawford Long, was at one of these parties, he noticed that neither he nor his friends experienced any pain even if they banged into tables or bruised themselves!! Note though, don't try this at home, ether has since been classed as a poison and is definitely not used anymore as an anaesthetic!