GETTING INTO MEDICAL SCHOOL

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GETTING INTO MEDICAL SCHOOL

• HORSES FOR COURSES
Choosing the right Medical School

• THE ART OF PERSUASION
Developing your application strategy

• PLAN B
There are alternatives

• FURTHER INFO
Choosing the Right Medical School - Factors to consider

Not all Medical courses are the same

1. Most 5 year, but some 6 years with foundation year (and 4 year graduate programmes)

2. Varying Entry Qualifications (not all 3 As) and GCSE entry requirements

3. Different Subject requirements

4. Style of Teaching/Learning (PBL/traditional etc)

5. The 5th Choice
Where Can I do A Medical Degree?

- Aberdeen
- Belfast (Queens)
- Birmingham
- Brighton and Sussex
- Bristol
- Cambridge
- Cardiff
- Dundee
- East Anglia
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow
- Hull York
- Keele
- Leeds
- Leicester
- Liverpool (inc Lancaster)

- London - Imperial
- London - Kings
- London - Queen Mary
- London - UCL
- London - St Georges
- Manchester
- Newcastle (inc Durham)
- Nottingham
- Oxford
- Peninsula
- Sheffield
- Southampton
- St Andrews (first 3 years only)
- Swansea *
- Warwick *

* = graduate schools only
GCSE Requirements 1.

Some Medical Schools require a minimum number of GCSEs at specific grades eg

- Birmingham 8 A *
- Bristol 5 A*/A
- East Anglia 6 A's
- Leeds at least 6 Bs
- Keele 4-5 As
- Nottingham 6 As
- Southampton 7 A-Bs
Gcse Requirements 2

Eng Lang
A- E Anglia, HYMS,
B- Birm, Brighton + Sussex, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Keele, Leeds, Liverpool*, Barts and the London, Imperial, Kings, Royal Free, St Georges, Manchester, Nottingham, Soton, St Andrews.
C- Aberdeen, Belfast, Cambridge, Peninsula, Sheffield

Maths
A- E Anglia, 
B- Birm., Brighton and Sussex, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, HYMS, Keele, Leeds, Liverpool*, Imperial, Kings,, St Georges, Manchester, Nottingham, Soton., St Andrews
C- Aberdeen, Belfast, Cambridge, Peninsula, Sheffield
* Liverpool includes Lancaster
GCSE Requirements - 3

Science

A - Cardiff (AA/AAB), East Anglia, HYMS, Nottingham

B - Bristol, (Biol) Dundee, Edinburgh, Keele (BB/BBB), Leeds, Liverpool, Imperial, Barts. and the London, St George, Manchester, St Andrews (B in Biol. if not offered at A level)

C - Cambridge, Belfast, Oxford, Sheffield
A Level Entry grades

AAA *
• Cambridge
AAA + Additional AS at A
• Queens Belfast
AAA + Additional AS at B
• East Anglia (AABb for some candidates)
  Edinburgh, Hull/York, Kings, Liverpool (inc Lancaster), Queen Mary,
AAA + Additional AS at C
• Peninsula
AAA + Additional AS at E
• University College
AAA or A*AB
• Brighton and Sussex

AAA
• Aberdeen, Birmingham,
  Cardiff, Dundee,
  Imperial, Leeds,
  Leicester, Manchester,
  Newcastle(inc Durham),
  Southampton, St Andrews,

AAB
• Bristol, Glasgow, Keele,
  Sheffield

Others:
• St Georges (normally AAAb but if School performance below a certain level then offer can be as low as BBCb)
A Level Subjects Required -1

- All require at least one Science
- 22 out of 29 require 2 Sciences
- 1 REQUIREs 3 Sciences (Oxford) but a few schools “prefer” (Cambridge require 3 for some Colleges)
- The third subject can be in a contrasting topic eg English, History, a Language (UCL esp. like the third subject to be contrasting)
- Human Biology is usually acceptable instead of Biology
Subjects Required 2…. 

Chemistry A: Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Brighton and Sussex, Cambridge, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull York, Imperial, Keele, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, St Andrew’s, UCL

Chemistry AS: Cardiff (with Biol. A Level), Q. Mary, Kings, St Georges

Biology A: Brighton and Sussex, UEA, Hull York, Leicester, Liverpool, Nottingham, Oxford, UCL

Biology AS: Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff (with Chem. A Level), Edinburgh, Leicester, Liverpool, Q. Mary, Imperial, Kings, UCL, Sheffield
Subjects required 3

• **Chemistry or Biology**: Cardiff (the other at AS) Imperial, Keele, Kings, Newcastle, Peninsula, Queen Mary, St George’s.

• **Chemistry and Biology**: Hull/York, Leicester, Liverpool, Nottingham, Oxford, UCL

• Biology **NOT** required at A or AS
  Aberdeen, Bristol, Dundee, Glasgow (but preferred), Leeds, St Georges, Manchester, Newcastle (providing Chem. At A or AS), Sheffield, Southampton,

• Chemistry **NOT** required at either A or AS
  UEA

• Maths and Physics **NOT** required (but must have 1 of them at Oxford and at some Cambridge Colleges)
Excluded A Level Subjects

• General Studies
Not acceptable at any Med School
• Critical Thinking
Not acceptable at:
Brighton and Sussex, Keele, Liverpool (inc Lancaster), Newcastle (inc Durham), Queen Mary, St Andrews, University College

• Others
Keele: Art, Dance, Photography
Southampton: subjects which overlap each other eg Biology/P.E./Sports Studies and Maths/Further Maths
Style of Teaching/Learning 1

“Traditional” Courses

1. Oxford and Cambridge
6 year courses, first 3 years traditional Science degree with no Clinical experience till year 4.
Choice of clinical school in yr. 4

2. Imperial and UCL/Royal Free
6 year courses with BSc Year integrated. Later clinical experience

3. St Andrews
3 Year course with final 3 years Manchester or any Scottish Med School
Example of “Intercalated “ degree

BSc at Imperial
Medical Sciences with one of:
• Cardiovascular Science
• Endocrinology
• Gastroenterology and Hepatology
• Haematology
• Immunity and Infection
• Management
• Neurosciences and Mental Health
• Reproductive and Developmental Science
• Respiratory Science
• Surgery and Anaesthesia
Style of Teaching/Learning 2

• “PBL” approach
  eg
  UEA, Manchester, Keele, Glasgow, HYMS, Liverpool

• Integrated (Systems based) Courses
  .eg
  Edinburgh, Bristol, Cardiff, Birmingham, Newcastle
  (incorporate some elements of PBL)
How does Problem based learning work?

Structure of a typical two-week PBL module at LIVERPOOL

Students are assigned in small groups of seven or eight. The group and their tutor meet at the beginning of the first week to consider the clinical scenario, the 'problem', on which the Module is based.

The group explores the problem by bringing their prior knowledge to bear and by asking questions (as outlined above). In these ways, students identify areas and topics about which they need to know more.

Students leave the tutorial with their unanswered questions (learning objectives), which each student in the group will use as a framework for further research and study.
Other factors to take into account

• What are the local hospitals like?
• Feedback from current students (eg national student survey)
• Atmosphere (open days and visits)
• Does it offer the sort of accommodation you want at the right price?
• Does it cater for your particular interest/hobby
• Could you live there for 5 to 6 Years?
• Size Matters
THE ART OF PERSUASION
Developing your application strategy

• Be sure its the right thing for you
• Timing could be CRUCIAL
• Getting Your Hands Dirty - Learning by Experience
• The PERSONAL statement - your Sales Pitch!
• Make sure you are TEST fit!
“A Doctor provides primary and continuing medical care for patients. He/ she considers physical, psychological and social factors when diagnosing illness, prescribing and administering treatment and practising preventative medicine.”

Definition from NHS careers
Reasons for becoming a Doctor

- Medicine helps people and society.
- Medicine addresses issues of importance.
- Medicine offers a major intellectual challenge.
- Medicine confronts important moral and ethical issues.
- Medicine is extremely varied.
- Medicine is secure and well paid.
- Medicine offers a mobile qualification.
- Medicine will be challenging.
- Medicine is fun!
- Medicine still commands respect.
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Possible reasons for **not** becoming a Doctor.

- Medicine requires good social and communication skills - it will not suit those who do not enjoy being with people
- **Medicine is very hard work**
- **Medicine is stressful and demanding**
- **A medical career can peak very early**
“MEDICS”

- Motivation
- Empathy
- Dependability
- Intelligence
- Career - understanding
- Stamina
Things Medical students say

'The sheer number of specialties available and that I wasn’t just training as a ‘general doctor’.

'It’s a long slog - consider having a gap year before you come to university as once you are on the ‘training route’ it can be hard to decide when you should take time off - and you need it!'
“Make potential students aware that an MBChB degree is only the START followed by at least 5 and possibly up to 12 years of study – I’m sure I was told this but I certainly didn’t think about it!”

“Unlike other undergraduates who may leave the university after 3 years you will be in the same place for 5 years & then most students will undertake their Foundation 2 years in that region, so THINK Carefully about WHERE you want to be”

“Make the most of your first few years at Medical School to mix with students from different departments as it gets much harder after 3rd year because of demands on your time & it’s all too easy to just mix with medics”
Continued...........

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Aptitude Tests For Undergraduate Medicine Courses

BMAT (Biomedical Admissions Test)
Standard 6-year programmes (Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial College, University College London)
www.bmat.org.uk

UKCAT (UK Clinical Aptitude Test)
Majority of medical schools
www.ukcat.ac.uk

Some schools (Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool) do not use admissions tests
UKCAT help

- **YOUTUBE** - search for UKCAT & short tutorials are available on each of the test sections

- **ACE Medicine & KAPLAN** offer familiarisation courses at a cost & there are a number of books available

- There are several discussion forums where you can chat to fellow applicants e.g. The Student Room
The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) for Medical and Dental Degrees

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) is used in the selection process by a consortium of UK university Medical and Dental Schools.

The test helps universities to make more informed choices from amongst the many highly-qualified applicants who apply for their medical and dental degree programmes.
Strategies to maximise chances of acceptance

- Qualifications – check in the UCAS guide and on individual Medical School websites – many misconceptions persist

- Timing of application – pre/post results? First degree/Graduate entry? Mature/Access course?

- Hospital/GP Practice /Caring/other – work experience is ESSENTIAL – you will be rejected if you don’t have it + you MUST reflect on it in your Personal Statement
Strategies... continued

- Personal statement - is it used as a sift?
- Personal statement - stand out from the crowd; it **must be reflective**.
- Interviews - so much information is available - no excuse for being unprepared or for not remembering the content of the personal statement!
Offers and Rejections - Elation and Dejection?

- Early application - early replies?
- Offers - range and responses
- Rejections - strategies to help
- Clearing - any chance?
- Reapplication - if so, where?
PLAN B
There are alternatives

- The 5th Choice
- 6 year Courses
- Supported entry routes
- Graduate Courses
The 5th Choice?

1. Should you make a fifth choice?
2. The Good, The Bad and the Ok?
3. UCAS Extra???

- Physiotherapy?
- Dentistry?
- Nursing?
- Radiography?
- Biomedical sciences?
- Anatomy/physiology?
- Biological Sciences?
- Chemistry?
- Pharmacy?
- Pharmacology?
6 Yr Programme with Foundation/Pre Med Year

Available at:
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Dundee
- Keele
- Manchester
- Sheffield
- Southampton

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
Majority are for able students who have not studied Science at Advanced Level.

nb Southampton have a widening access focus and will consider a range of entry routes.

Keele’s first year is a General Health foundation year.
GRADUATE COURSES

- Birmingham
- Bristol
- Cambridge
- Imperial
- Keele
- Kings College, London
- Newcastle
- Leicester
- Liverpool
- Nottingham
- Oxford
- Queen Mary London
- Southampton
- St. George's, London
- Swansea
- Warwick
Some Alternative Courses

- Medical Sciences
  University of Glamorgan
- BSc Clinical Sciences
  University of Bradford
- Other “local” progression arrangements eg PARTNERS at Newcastle
Experiential Research - Obtain a real 'feel' for the institution and courses

- HE Conventions
- Institution Open Days
- Taster Courses
- Subject specific events
- Career Fairs
Some useful reading...

- Insiders guide to medical schools
  BMJ books
- Getting into Medical School
  Trotmans
- Learning Medicine
  BMJ books
- Passing the UK Clinical Aptitude Test
  Law Matters Publishing
Some Useful Websites

- [www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk) (esp becoming a doctor 2012 entry)
- [www.gmc-uk.org/](http://www.gmc-uk.org/) (esp. tomorrows doctors)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/health/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health/) - good resource for reading up on current issues
- [http://www.bmj.com/](http://www.bmj.com/) - British Medical Journal, read up on current issues
- [www.medschoolsonline.co.uk/](http://www.medschoolsonline.co.uk/)
- [www.unistats.ac.uk](http://www.unistats.ac.uk) (inc national student survey)
AND FINALLY - THANKS FOR LISTENING!

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