

Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Dentistry applications

Medicine, veterinary medicine and dentistry applications have some unique and specific considerations that applicants need to be aware of. It is of particular importance that students are aware of entry requirements, deadlines and overall processes, so as they are able to plan and ensure that the quality of their application is as high as possible.

- Early deadline

All of these courses will require you to meet the early UCAS deadline. This early deadline means that upon arriving back at College after the summer break it is essential that progress has been made in terms of your application – perhaps the most important things to consider being your personal statement and, directly relating to that, your work experience, plus prep for and possibly having sat your pre-admissions test/s (UCAT or BMAT or both).

- Where can you study, for how long and how to find out more

Whether you want to be a vet, a doctor or a dentist, there will only be a limited number of universities that offer your course, and at undergraduate level you will be able to choose from three potential types of course – standard entry, medicine with a preliminary year (if you don't have the typical subject requirements) or medicine with a gateway year (this is essentially a foundation year and will typically have lower entry requirements to the standard entry requirements). The length of time that you will be studying for will range between 4.5 and 6 years depending on the specific course. Not all of these options will exist for every course or at every university. To find out more please have a look at the following links:

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2701/msc-entry-requirements-for-uk-medical-schools-2021.pdf>

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/>

- Additional tests

Medicine and dentistry applications differ slightly from veterinary medicine as there will be an additional test that must be taken: for undergraduate entry, normally either the UCAT or BMAT.

The BMAT is the less common of the two but for a few universities, is the chosen format. It is almost certain that you will sit the UCAT and then, depending on your specific choices, might also need to sit the BMAT to allow you to apply to a combination of BMAT and UCAT institutions. Although new medical degrees are sometimes added and there will be new ones created before 2025, there are currently less than 40 medical schools in the UK and the majority will require the UCAT. Due to the changing nature of admissions requirements it is essential to check on the websites of individual universities you are considering, however, as a starting point please see the links below. These links will show you the relevant key dates but for individual university requirements, it is important to supplement this by using universities' own websites in addition. In terms of both Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine, there are even fewer universities to choose from – in the case of the latter, fewer than 10.

The final of the four links below has some practice UCAT tests to help get a better understanding of the format and nature of the test:

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/ucat/>

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/bmat/>

<https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>

<https://www.ucat.ac.uk/prepare/practice-tests/>

It is important that you review dates for registration and testing as soon as possible so that you don't miss deadlines and are able to plan around the process, in particular giving yourself sufficient time to prepare. Please do not underestimate the importance of these tests to your overall application – in some cases universities will weigh the importance of your score significantly. Also remember that universities are able to set their own entry requirements, so regardless of the course please check specific university entry requirements for universities of interest and if you are unsure of anything see your tutor or a member of the Careers Team.

- **Work experience**

Work experience is an essential component of a successful application to medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine. Not only will it form a significant part of your personal statement but if you are successful past the initial stages it will be pivotal in success at interview. Once again this is something that you need to begin considering as soon as possible. Although for the three areas there are some typical or 'ideal' experiences, i.e. shadowing a Doctor, Dentist or Vet, schools understand that this is not accessible to all candidates and there are many other potential sources of work experience that are considered valuable, they also value variety and that will help you to stand out – much has to do with the way in which you as a candidate interpret your experience. Working at a care home, for example, can be an excellent experience, particularly if on your personal statement and at interview you are able to reflect on and draw from the experience and the key NHS values that you were able to witness and understand more from first-hand experience. For some universities and courses there are specific requirements (for example a list of specific settings and or the number of hours required). For this reason, it is always safest to look at the individual websites and interrogate the entry requirements relating to work experience carefully. Particularly for veterinary medicine careful attention needs to be paid to the specific work experience requirements. They have been and will likely continue to be implications regarding securing work experience due to the pandemic and below are some links to resources and ideas to help to mitigate this:

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/work-experience/>

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2636/guidance-on-gaining-relevant-experience-for-studying-medicine-in-the-time-of-covid-19.pdf>

<https://www.themedicportal.com/blog/covid-19-work-experience-tips/>

- **Choosing universities**

Choosing which medical schools you are going to apply to can be stressful and it is useful to be armed with as much information as possible. Below is a particularly useful online resource that offers a variety of information worth considering:

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/choosing-a-medical-school/>

It is worth noting that of the 5 potential university choices that UCAS will allow you to apply make, you are only able to choose 4 medical degrees – the 5th choice needs to be a non-medical degree (often for this 5th choice students will pick a related degree, i.e. biomedical science).

The earlier you begin thinking about this the easier it will be for you to attend open days – something that is strongly advised – of course in the current climate this has the potential to be virtual but can still offer very useful insight. As a medical student you will be at university for at least 4.5 years but more likely 5 and you want to do your best to scrutinise the decision. The summer break is an excellent opportunity to attend as many open days as you feel necessary - please check uni websites for dates.

- **Personal statement**

The personal statement is your unique opportunity to tell the admissions tutors your story before you get invited to interview. There are general formats that personal statements take but, aside from including certain key pieces of information, you have a certain amount of poetic licence. There are various resources online that will help you with this stage but we would certainly recommend seeking the support of your tutor, teachers and Careers.

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/personal-statement/>

- **Interviews**

All of these courses will require an interview but the format it will take will vary between and within courses. For example, not all universities format their medicine interviews the same way – some might have panel interviews and other a series of mini interviews, often back to back. This information will be provided but more broadly speaking you need to prepare yourself for the kind of questioning that is likely. This will mean reflecting on your experiences and, crucially, getting a clear picture in your head of the role and what it takes to be successful in it.

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/medical-school-interview/>