

## **\*Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine applications\***

Medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine 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 accordingly and ensure that the quality of their application is as high as possible. The information below is broad, so consider this only as a starting point for your research and please don't hesitate to contact the Careers Team if there is anything that you are unsure about.

### **- Early deadline**

All of these courses will require applicants to meet the early UCAS deadline (this is typically the 15<sup>th</sup> October at 6 PM). Applicants also need to be aware that the college has its own internal deadline, which is in late September. 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, where applicable – there will be more information on those below.

### **- 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. Depending on the programme you are applying to, you might have other options aside from the 'standard entry' courses. Medicine, for example, has a limited number of 'preliminary' courses for students that don't have the necessary science background and for all three programmes, there are also foundation programmes (also referred to as 'gateway' courses). There are relatively few of these and they will require an additional year of study but will have more accessible entry expectations. Many of the gateway/foundation courses have additional contextual criteria that candidates must meet and it is important to check these requirements are also met, where applicable. Many providers will also have GCSE minimum requirements in addition to the Level 3 expectations, so please ensure you have carefully checked this on the website as well. The length of time that you will be studying for will range between 4.5 and 6 years, depending on the specific programme (for standard entry, courses will typically be 5 years). 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/>

<https://www.bda.org/careers/becomingadentist/Pages/Dental-schools.aspx>

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

### **- Additional tests**

For medicine and dentistry applications there will be an additional test that must be taken: for undergraduate entry, normally either the UCAT or BMAT, depending on the institution. The BMAT is the less common of the two but for a few universities, is the chosen format. For both medicine and dentistry applications it is very likely that you will be required to take 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.

Due to the changing nature of admissions requirements, it is essential to check on the websites of individual universities you are considering to ensure you have completely up to date information. The links below will show you the relevant key dates but it is important to supplement this by using universities' own websites in addition. The final of the five links below has some practice UCAT tests to help get a better understanding of the format and nature of the test:

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/making-an-application/admissions-tests>

<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.

#### - **Work experience**

Work experience is an essential component of a successful application to medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine. Not only will it be reflected on in your personal statement but if you are successful beyond the initial stages, it will be crucial in success at interview. Once again, this is something that you need to begin considering as soon as possible. Although for the three subjects 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 can be reflected on in such a way that it can demonstrate what is necessary to the admissions tutors, they also value some 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. For example, if you are applying for medicine, work experience at a care home 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 key values that connect to those of a doctor. 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. For veterinary medicine, careful attention needs to be paid to the specific work experience requirements – RVC for example, have very specific requirements. There 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 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 with regard to choosing a medicine degree:

<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 make, you are only able to choose 4 medicine/dentistry/veterinary medicine degrees – the 5th choice needs to be another subject. Most students use this fifth choice and choose a closely related subject; however, you don't have to use this 5<sup>th</sup> choice if you don't want to.

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. For these courses you will be at university for at least 4.5 years but more likely 5 or 6 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.

### *Intercalated programmes*

Although intercalated programmes are relatively rare, it is worth knowing the difference between these and other medicine programmes to ensure that you are making the right choice for you. Essentially, intercalated degrees have an additional year on top of the typical 5 years where you will be studying further in a different subject and can gain additional knowledge and possibly qualifications. For some universities offering this, it is compulsory and for others it is just an option that students have. To find out more detail, please see the link below.

<https://www.themedicportal.com/blog/myth-busting-what-is-an-intercalated-degree/>

### *Traditional VS Integrated*

There are broadly speaking two approaches to how medicine is taught and this is quite an important aspect of your decision making, as you might find you have a strong preference. Very generally speaking, 'traditional' courses separately tackle the scientific theory (this is done in the first part of the course), and then move to the clinical practice phase after, whereas the integrated programmes blend these throughout. To find out more detail and be sure that you are shortlisting universities that suit you, please see the links below:

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

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

## - **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/>

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/making-an-application/personal-statement>

<https://www.themedicportal.com/blog/how-to-structure-your-dentistry-personal-statement/>

- **Interviews**

All three 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/>

<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/interviews>