



Open Evening – Medical Careers Pathway

This helpsheet hopefully explains a little about the BHASVIC offer for aspiring Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry applicants with regard to the Early Application process, and touches on the cross-over with some Medical Careers such as Nursing and Paramedic Science which will have similar expectations (although usual UCAS January deadlines). BHASVIC has a history of significant success against a national figure of 1:10 for Medicine. Around half of our medics secure spaces (over 60 in the last three years) and Veterinary and Dentistry have similar success.

What subjects do you need to study for Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry?

In the main students **MUST study Chemistry** and would be **disadvantaged in the number of courses they can apply for if they do not study Biology at A level** (although there are a few options).

The third choice can be any subject but as medical degrees are exam-assessed it is strongly suggested to study A levels rather than a BTEC. This can be English, Textile Design or Maths. Key subjects are Chemistry and Biology. Medical Schools, Veterinary and Dentistry courses are quite transparent in their entry requirements. If in doubt we would suggest that students research using [TheUniGuide](#).

Skills and Attributes

Common range of skills and attributes that are essential to everyone working within healthcare:

- Good communication skills
- Team work
- Care, compassion and empathy
- Honesty and professionalism
- Time management and organisation

Students must have an interest with working with people from a wide variety of backgrounds.

MedSoc

Students can sign up for MedSoc which is our A1 and A2 enrichment programme for aspiring Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry applicants at interview, enrolment, our Freshers Fair and anytime through the first year. Key discussion points are around the History and Values of the NHS, content of degree courses and many other discussion points to support students. MedSoc gives valuable information, advice and guidance around applications, work experience and entry requirements. It is usually held at lunchtimes to ensure students can attend. BHASVIC has strong links with BSMS, our local Medical School and also ex-students and specialists.

Medics Tutorial Programme

During February of A1 students can opt into the Medics pathway. This supports the Early Application process (more details later in this booklet) and provides information about admission test, interview advice, the general UCAS process as well as sessions on Student Finance and Living Independently.

Students apply to a maximum of 4 Medicine; Veterinary and Dentistry choices and the tutorial pathway also supports guidance towards a 5th choice and alternative medical careers. These might be: Biomedical Sciences, Biochemistry, Biological Sciences, Neuroscience, Biomedical Systems Engineering, Medicinal Chemistry and many more.... Experienced tutors are on hand for advice and guidance.

Work Experience

Work experience is vital for any competitive healthcare application. Our careers advisors are on hand to help and support students as they source placements and voluntary work.

Why is gaining experience important? It is important to remember why medical schools look for work experience in an application; this in turn can help you think of the numerous ways that you can demonstrate that you have acquired relevant experience. They want to see that you understand what a career in medicine involves. Work experience, and other related experiences, are only as valuable as the way you talk about them. While you will be expected to show some understanding of what it is like to be a doctor, part of this involves demonstrating that you know what it is like to work in a responsible role, particularly with the public.

Work experience is any activity or life experience that helps you to prepare for medical school. This means any activity that allows you to demonstrate that you have had people-focused experience of providing a service, care, support or help to others, and that you understand the realities of working in a caring profession. You have developed some of the values, attitudes and behaviours essential to being a doctor such as conscientiousness, effective communication and the ability to interact with a wide variety of people. The values that medical schools are looking for are set out in the NHS Constitution and explained in MSC guidance on the Core values and attributes needed to study medicine.

Are there a range of Medicine courses?

Standard Entry Medicine - This is usually 5 years long, but in some institutions, it is 6. It can have different abbreviations, such as MBBS or MBChB, but all result in a degree in medicine.

Graduate Entry Medicine - This is open to application from those who already have a degree. Many universities accept a degree in any subject, but some require the previous degree to be science - or health-related. It is a 4-year accelerated degree in most cases, but in some universities, it is a 5-year course.

Medicine with a Preliminary Year - This course takes the form of a 5-year Standard Entry Medicine with an additional year at the start, making a 6-year course. This course is designed for those who achieved highly at A level, or equivalent, but did not take required science subjects.

Medicine with a Gateway Year - These medical degrees are designed for those who are of high ability but who may be coming from situations where they have had barriers to their learning. The courses can take this into account in different ways, for instance by using 'adjusted criteria' to change the entry requirements for applicants from low participation areas. Often these are six-year courses, with the first year being a foundation year. Some schools offer a standalone foundation year, which allows progression onto a standard medicine course.

Admissions tests

Nearly all medical degrees use an admissions test as part of their entry requirements. There are two admissions tests. Applicants may sit different combinations of these tests according to the medical schools they intend to include in their application.

UCAT - Applicants must register for the UCAT between May and late September. After the UCAS deadline, results are sent directly to the medical schools to which the applicant has applied. Thirty medical schools use the UCAT.

BMAT - There are usually two BMAT test dates per year. The first is in early September and applicants must register for this by early August. The second is in late October or early November and students should aim to register for this by the end of September, but late registrations are possible until the UCAS application deadline. The scores of those in the second sitting are sent directly to the medical schools to which they have applied. Seven medical schools use the BMAT.

Widening Participation and Diversity

This term refers to initiatives which provide opportunities for those who would make excellent doctors but who face barriers due to their educational and/or socioeconomic circumstances.

The Medical Schools Council believes that an applicant's chance of entering a medical degree programme should be dictated by factors such as academic ability, motivation and conscientiousness. Factors like wealth or cultural background should not present any barrier to studying medicine. Removing barriers will help to build a medical profession which is diverse, highly capable and represents the communities it serves. Part of this is to present entry requirements information in the clearest way.

In practical terms this means that there are a variety of courses (Gateway) available to students without the usual grades requirement with certain criteria attached. More information is available for students through A1 MedSoc enrichment.

What's the timescale for Medics applications?

Here are the key dates for an Early application:

- **A1 all year:** Students ideally attend MedSoc enrichment sessions in A1
- **A1 February:** Students choose the Medics pathway as a tutor pathway in A2
- **June A1 half-term:** Students must complete reference activities
- **A1-A2 Summer break:** Students must complete UCAS Apply forms for checks
- **A2 Pre-enrolment:** Compulsory Personal Statement Days prior to enrolment
- **A2 Mid-September:** completion of all Medics applications
- **A2 October 1st:** deadline for Medicine applicants to register for the BMAT
- **A2 October 15th:** National deadline for Medics UCAS applications
- **A2 October 15th:** deadline for applications for the Oxbridge Graduate Course in Medicine (applicants complete/submit the Graduate Course in Medicine application form in addition to their UCAS application)
- **A2 October date to be arranged:** Deadline for students to book the BMAT through BHASVIC, taken at BHASVIC
- **A2 Late October:** BMAT Medicine and pre-interview assessments taken – in BHASVIC
- **A2 Mid-November:** interview invitations
- **A2 December:** The majority of interviews take place in the first three weeks of December (some may be a little earlier)
- **A2 January-March:** University application decisions
- **A2 May:** final Firm & Insurance decisions by students

What's the best way to prepare for interviews?

The worst way to prepare for the interview is any form of 'training' or pre-prepared answers. The interviewers want flexibility of thought and an intelligent response to the questions asked. If an obviously pre-prepared answer is given then they'll simply ask a different question. The interviewers are not after 'the right answer' but the flexible application of existing knowledge to a new situation. It is about a working through a problem with the interviewers.

Key qualities for a good interview: a student needs to listen to the question actually being asked and then articulate an informed thoughtful response. "The final piece of the jigsaw and not the final hurdle."

Alternative Medical Careers

Why not Medicine? There are many reasons students may choose not to study Medicine:

- Entry requirements and qualifications
- Competitive application process
- Duration and cost of study
- Scope of practice

There are however hundreds of alternative patient-facing careers that are accessible to a wide range of students.

- 350 different careers available in the National Health Service
- No matter the role, everyone makes a difference to people's lives every day
- Excellent graduate prospects
- Starting salary of £24,000+ for most newly qualified clinical professionals
- Opportunities to develop further once qualified

Nursing - Adult Nursing, Children's Nursing, Learning Disability Nursing, Mental Health Nursing. Midwifery, Allied Health Professions from Diagnostic Radiographers and Therapeutic Radiographers to Operating Department Practitioners and Occupational Therapists, Healthcare Sciences combining lab based and patient facing roles. Pharmacy, Psychological professions, Optometry, Social Work, Physician's Associate... Find out more - healthcareers.nhs.uk

When do students make their final university selections?

A2 May: Students keep a Firm and an Insurance offer. If they were made five offers, the student rejects three of these at this point. The vast majority of students who secure a Medicine, Veterinary, Dentistry offer put it as the Firm choice.

Any questions please email our Medics co-ordinator – Stella Coleman s.coleman@bhasvic.ac.uk