

BHASVIC

Guide to Higher Education & Employability

Medical Careers

**Dentistry, Medicine, Midwifery, Nursing,
Nutrition, Optometry, Paramedic Science,
Physiotherapy, Radiography & medical
technology, Speech therapy & audiology,
Veterinary Science**

| | |
|---|-----------|
| What to ask on a medical career open day | 2 |
| Dentistry..... | 3 |
| Medicine | 8 |
| Midwifery | 13 |
| Nursing..... | 18 |
| Nutrition..... | 23 |
| Optometry | 26 |
| Paramedic Science..... | 29 |
| Pharmacy | 32 |
| Physiotherapy | 37 |
| Radiography and medical technology | 42 |
| Speech therapy and audiology | 45 |
| Veterinary Medicine..... | 48 |
| BHASVIC info 2020..... | 53 |
| Other routes | 55 |
| Wider Medical Information | 56 |
| Sources & Links..... | 60 |

What to ask on a medical career open day

Looking for ideas of what to ask at open days? Use these questions if you're thinking of taking a course in medical studies, like medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacology or physiotherapy...

About the course

- Is this course lecture based or is it problem-based learning?
- Does this course have a subject or systems based emphasis?
- Are my lecturers also practitioners?
- Talk me through what each year of the course entails...
- When / do I get to specialise?

Admissions

- For medicine will I have to take the BMAT or UKCAT to get on to this course? What prep should I do beforehand for this?
- Will I also be expected to attend an interview? What will you be looking for me to demonstrate during this?

Equipment and facilities

- Where can I find the reading list for this course? What books are necessary for me to buy?
- How much time will I spend in lectures? In the library?
- How much time will I be spending in labs?
- How modern or state-of-the-art are the university's facilities? Do you specialise in a particular area?

Placements and work experience

- How much of the course is clinical practice?
- How many placements will I have? Do I organise my own placements or does the university arrange those?
- Is there an opportunity to do an intercalated degree?
- Which hospitals or medical centres do you partner with?
- Am I expected to travel far to placements?

Exams and projects

- How the course is assessed – clinical assessment, exams, coursework?
- What is the weighting for each part / year of the course?
- Do I need to complete a dissertation or research-based project?

Graduate prospects

- Is it more important to get the best grade, or have a range of work experiences when I apply for this course?
- If happens if I don't meet my conditional offer this year? Can I re-take and reapply next year?
- What types of job / areas of medicine are open to me when I finish?

Dentistry courses

This five-year course is the first step to qualifying to practice as a dentist. You need to have an aptitude for science and good people skills. The course involves studying anatomy, physiology and biochemistry alongside placements to learn practical skills, such as taking a medical history, dental examinations and deciding on appropriate treatment, orthodontics - straightening teeth using braces... - and using local anaesthetic.

VOCATIONAL

- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- LOTS OF READING
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- EXAM-INTENSIVE
- MEDICAL
- SCIENCE
- BDS

Example course modules

- Patient assessment
- Oral biology
- Digestive, renal and endocrine systems
- Healthcare ethics and law
- Radiology
- Periodontology
- Paediatric dentistry and orthodontics
- Clinical skills
- Oral pathology
- Oral sciences and medicine

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about dentistry

Dentistry is demanding whichever university you choose to study at. External parties aim to maintain a uniform qualification between the country's few dental schools. This standard set is high. 9am starts are the norm. Some evenings you may even have a last lecture finishing at 6pm. The first year has limited reference to oral biology and concentrates on the body's organ systems - cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, nervous... It's a tough but interesting challenge. One day a week is spent at the dental hospital with introductory lectures and observation sessions. As the years pass, clinical presence increases.

1st year, University of Birmingham

My dentistry course has many diverse topics in the first year, including anatomy, physiology, chemistry, microbiology and genetics, and each topic jostles for position as the most crucial. Time is divided between lab work, lectures, dissection sessions and sessions in the dental hospital once a week, and you'll find you're always busy. This is a hugely rewarding course, but to keep on top of coursework, assignments and lecture notes, many evenings will be sacrificed.

1st year, Cardiff University

My course is very full-on - often it feels like having a 9 to 5 job without being paid! In the pre-clinical years there are lectures and practical classes all day most days. In the clinical years the day is split between lectures and seeing patients. It's an extremely challenging course, with regular exams and a very heavy work load, but it is also very rewarding. We are graded based on the quality of our patient treatment, and on exam papers - there are very rarely assignments that have to be completed.

3rd year, University of Dundee

Subjects you need

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- English
- Physics
- Mathematics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- October application
- Interview
- Entry test
- Work experience

See end of guide

Career prospects

Dentistry qualifications are a savvy choice if a solid and stable career is top of your priority list. It's one of the very few degrees out there able to rival medicine for the strongest employability prospects and starting salary around. The recession appears to have barely touched early career options available for new dentists - almost all graduates get dental jobs on leaving their courses.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Medical researcher
- Dentist
- Reconstructive surgeon

Other real-life job examples

- University Lecturer
- Medical instrument designer
- Orthodontist

What employers like about this subject

Studying for a degree in dentistry will give you skills in basic anatomy, physiology and biochemistry, in investigation and diagnosis of medical conditions and in the principles, practice and ethics of dental care. You will also develop useful transferable skills such as good communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Most dentists work in dental practices, but you can also find them in hospitals, the Armed Forces, or working for universities.

Personal statement advice: dentistry

You'll need great grades and a spot-on personal statement to catch the eye of a dental school and nab an interview for a place on one of these demanding courses

The good news is the dental schools themselves are pretty open about what they're looking for. For more advice about studying dentistry, see our dentistry subject guide.

1. Motivation and commitment

As the University of Liverpool's dental school says: 'applicants must demonstrate motivation and commitment to a career in dentistry'. So how can you achieve this?

One way is to explain what first attracted you to dentistry, and what, as the University of Manchester puts it, 'has sustained or confirmed this choice'.

The University of Sheffield's dental school wants you to demonstrate your knowledge of the profession, what attracts you to it, and that you've researched the possible career opportunities. Be honest about what's fuelling your ambitions (ideally that you're driven by the impact you can have on society at large, rather than the earning potential).

As well as evidence of your commitment to the profession, King's wants you to demonstrate a 'realistic appreciation of the academic, physical, and emotional demands of a dental degree programme and career', bringing us nicely on to...

2. Dental experience

Before you apply, you need to have made efforts to gain an insight into the profession through work experience or observation, especially in general dental practice. As for where and how much, here's how some dental schools view it:

- Dundee and Cardiff don't specify how much, but both expect you to take every opportunity to gain as much as you can.
- Sheffield expects it to be in a general dental practice.
- Liverpool says it should preferably be in a dental practice or hospital 'and preferably in more than one establishment'.
- Bristol ideally wants you to have experienced various fields of dentistry, such as general practice, hospital, community or laboratory.
- Manchester wants you to have had at least two weeks' experience or observation in general practice, and to state how much in your statement. If you also have additional experience in a specialist area of dentistry, all the better.
- King's adds that if you've been unable to observe in a dental establishment then, at the very least, they want you to reflect on any work experience you've had in a caring environment or in another setting where you've interacted with the general public. But clearly, they would also then expect you to demonstrate your knowledge of dentistry in other ways in your statement.

Of course, it won't be enough just to say you've had the experience. What matters is that you write about it in a way that demonstrates the insight you've gained into the role of a dentist and, as Cardiff describes it, 'an understanding of the demands of dental training and practice'.

So, within your 47 lines, outline the breadth and duration of the experience you've had but, even more importantly, describe what you've learned from it. To do this, it might be best to focus on the highlights and the key things you gained – tutors would rather read about what you learned from observing one filling than a list of all the procedures you saw. What counts is the quality of your observations and how they've influenced your understanding.

Note that both King's and Cardiff mention an awareness of the demands of the degree as well as the career – research dentistry courses in our search tool and get to an open day.

3. Leadership and non-academic achievements

Most dental schools also want to read something about you as a person and your extracurricular interests. Be selective and prioritise what you think is paramount.

Reflect on anything that genuinely shows strong teamwork and leadership qualities, like your part-time job, sport, drama, Duke of Edinburgh Award, positions of responsibility, or whatever you do that showcases them.

Demonstrate self-motivation through significant ongoing commitment to school, college or community activities, volunteering, charity work, sports teams, mentoring, and so on.

Show you have a range of hobbies and interests too, you can manage your time well alongside your studies, you're well-read, well-rounded, and know how to relax when you take a break from studying.

Show your caring attitude, a sense of social responsibility, courtesy, an interest in people and their welfare, or the ability to reassure people and put them at ease.

Demonstrate effective communication and that you can explain complex information simply and coherently.

Demonstrate logic, independent thought, goal-setting, problem-solving, organisation, reliability, conscientiousness, and that you're up for a challenge.

Give them a glimpse of you as a person, what you enjoy doing, and what you feel passionate about or excel at.

4. Manual dexterity

Dentistry admissions tutors also need to feel confident that you have the necessary fine motor skills to perform intricate tasks.

There are some subtle ways to convince them about this in your personal statement – mentioning your active involvement in arts and crafts, playing an instrument, model-making, maintaining your car or bike, or whatever else you do that requires good coordination and attention to detail.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_dentistry

Sources & Links

[Dentistry Subject Guide](#) | [Why Study Dentistry At Uni?](#) | [UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Medicine

If you are fascinated by how the human body works and have a genuine concern for the welfare of others, medicine could be for you. You'll need to be academically able with great communication and problem-solving skills and have the drive to cope with a demanding five-year course. With further study you could become a GP or work your way up from doctor to consultant in a wide range of medical or surgical areas.

- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- LOTS OF READING
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- MB
- EXAM-INTENSIVE
- MEDICAL
- SURGICAL

Example course modules

- Human reproduction
- Research project In medicine
- Core epidemiology
- Biochemistry
- Body systems
- Molecules to disease
- Behavioural sciences
- Patients, doctors and society
- Thought, senses and movement
- Nutrition, metabolism and endocrinology

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about medicine

As a medic, the course is more full-on than most courses and you will be in uni pretty much 9-5 every day (except Wednesdays for sport), with a high number of contact hours. This includes lectures, tutorial groups, anatomy sessions, clinical skills, physiology practicals, community placement time and any hospital visits.

2nd year, Durham University

The content of the course is really amazing and I think there is a great balance of topics covered. Dissection is fascinating and the other tutorials and lectures are all extremely interesting. There is a lot of work to do out of the timetabled hours and this can be extremely challenging.

2nd year, University of St Andrews

It's mainly lectures, tutorials, symposiums, placement and anatomy sessions in the first two years. It feels like you're studying every degree at once as there are elements of biology, chemistry, physics, psychology and sociology.

2nd year, University of Southampton

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Critical Thinking

Application checklist

Here is a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- October application
- Interview
- Entry test
- Work experience

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide

Career prospects

Good news! Medical degrees have, and will no doubt continue to have, some of the best employment outcomes of any qualification in terms of salary expectations and long-term prospects. Unsurprisingly, almost all graduates go into jobs within the health sector. If you're taking a shorter pre-clinical course, you'll need to continue on to further medical training to complete an accredited qualification, which explains why a high proportion of those grads are 'in further study' six months later.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Hospital doctor
- General practice doctor
- Medical specialist

Other real-life job examples

- Health service manager
- Solicitor
- Aid Worker

What employers like about this subject

A degree in medicine will give you skills in good medical practice; in evidence-based medicine; in dealing with difficult or emergency situations and in investigating and diagnosing medical conditions. You will also gain useful transferable skills such as good communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Most doctors work in hospitals, clinics or GP practices, but roles are also available in the Armed Forces, the pharmaceutical industry or working for universities. Personal statement advice: medicine and getting experience

Personal statement advice: medicine

A degree Aspiring to join the medical world professionally? Then you'll need the right experience to be seriously considered for a place on a medicine course.

Getting experience and researching what's needed in your personal statement should ideally go hand in hand.

Hospital experience – or not?

Most medical schools are very open about the difficulty of securing clinical experience, like work-shadowing or volunteering in a hospital while still at school or college. It's great if you can, as it will give you the perfect insight into what it means to be a doctor – just make sure you take full advantage of the opportunity, observe carefully, and ask searching questions!

However, your work experience doesn't have to be in a hospital. Most medical schools state that observing or working alongside people in a caring or service role is just as valuable (especially with people who are ill, disabled, disadvantaged, or vulnerable). One medical school even goes as far as to say that such an experience is more valuable than shadowing a doctor.

However, most medical schools expect you to have:

- experienced some of the realities of providing care, support, or services to others
- understood somewhat the physical, organisational, and emotional demands of a medical career
- grabbed the opportunity to demonstrate some of the behaviours and interpersonal skills that are essential to becoming a doctor

The Medical Schools Council lays out some helpful guidelines and principles. Meanwhile, here is a selection of ways that different medical schools themselves suggest – try to use a blend of these different methods:

Eight more ways to get experience

Talk to a doctor Just talking to a doctor about their or her role can be valuable. This could be your own GP, especially as this is a specialism that a significant proportion of graduates will ultimately enter.

Volunteer Voluntary or paid work in a local care home, nursing home, or hospice can provide a great opportunity to observe how effective care is delivered. Here you can see first-hand what the needs of residents are, and how these are met by staff. You can also get involved, developing the interpersonal skills which medical professionals should possess.

Support others Working with people with disabilities, special needs, vulnerable children, youth groups, homeless shelters, and first aid charities can grant you the necessary skills and experience to work in the medical field.

Care for someone Supporting someone who is ill or vulnerable can provide useful insights and evidence too, although experience in a formal clinical or healthcare setting would usually be preferred as well.

Get a part-time job Just working in a responsible position in a service setting like a shop, restaurant, or retail pharmacy can be a good way to develop and demonstrate your ability to communicate and interact with a diverse range of people.

Take part in extracurricular and community activities Your sense of commitment and responsibility can be evidenced through your active involvement in school or college life, your local community or other clubs, societies, or organisations. Plus, any unusual interests or achievements will make your statement stand out more. If you took a gap year, voluntary work away from home or overseas would demonstrate a broader experience that the average applicant won't have and can help you stand out.

Read Reading books and other literature about medicine will widen your insights and understanding. Keep an eye out for current medical issues and ethical dilemmas being widely discussed. Some applicants get exposed at the interview stage if they don't follow the news or these happenings.

Go to uni events Attend any university events, medical conferences, lectures, or open days that you can get to. While you're there, take the opportunity to interrogate some current medical students about what studying medicine is really like, as well as picking up some tips for applying.

Keeping track of these experiences Keep a reflective diary of all your experiences as you tick them off. Don't simply record what you do or see, but also how specific moments, events, or activities impacted on you or what you learned from them. Do this while they're fresh in your memory and it will be worth its weight in gold when you're working on your personal statement or preparing for an interview later.

And finally...

The wider the range of your experience, the better – but if you're restricted by your circumstances, then just do what you can.

Just remember that to get into medicine, you've got to be the kind of student who can achieve high grades while simultaneously leading an active life and having the initiative to make things happen (something which requires good time management).

https://web.ucas.com/ps_medicine

Sources & Links

[Medicine & Allied Subjects Guide | Why Study Medicine? | UCAS](#)

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

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/deciding-on-medicine/study-medicine-a-step-by-step-guide/>

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/why-study-medicine>

See also end of guide.

Midwifery

Midwives support mothers before, during and after the birth of a child. Consider midwifery if you want to learn to combine clinical skills with understanding the needs and experiences of women from a wide range of backgrounds – not if you want to work with babies! This is a physically and emotionally demanding course requiring confidence and compassion. Midwives work in hospitals and increasingly in the community.

- BSC
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- LOTS OF READING
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- HEALTHCARE
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- HOSPITAL

Example course modules

- Communication and group working
- Foundations in postnatal care
- Pathophysiology in maternity
- Evolving midwifery practice for pregnancy and birth
- Preparation for autonomous midwifery practice
- Principles of research
- Public health and childbearing
- Delivering safe and compassionate care
- Responding to complex needs during the antenatal period
- Appreciating the research process in midwifery

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about midwifery

Midwifery is a very full-on course running right from September to August (so don't expect the long holidays that other students get). It is very interesting and also very challenging as sometimes we have to deal with emotional

or emergency situations whilst on placement. The topics we study are varied, looking at anatomy and physiology, politics and health policies, public/sexual health and sociology, as well as learning practical skills required for midwifery in the skills labs within the university.

2nd year, University of Central Lancashire

We have two days a week in uni and three days on placement. I feel that this is enough as we learn more when out in practice. The midwifery course is brilliant, although challenging, but this is expected. On my particular course, the assignments are well spaced out and are mainly essay based, with one presentation assignment in each year. Assessment takes place constantly in practice.

1st year, Edge Hill University

My course has both uni days and placement days. On placement I work all sorts of shifts. Course content is good, just everything you need to know about being a midwife. It's pretty challenging in the sense that there's so much you need to do and in terms of learning your own styles and developing on how you use information.

1st year, Edinburgh Napier University

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Biology or another science

Useful to have

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Chemistry

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview
- Work Experience

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide.

Career prospects

Nursing is the subject with the most degree graduates in 2012 - over 14,300, with many choosing to specialise in midwifery. We'll always need midwives in this country, so it's no surprise to see that the very large majority of nursing and midwifery graduates go on to become nurses and midwives, and that starting salaries are pretty competitive. That's not to say that you can't do anything else. Some nursing graduates get other jobs - usually, but not always, in health or caring professions, or management.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Midwifery
- Midwifery team leader
- Delivery suite manager

Other real-life job examples

- Adult nurse
- Care worker
- Midwife-tutor

What employers like about this subject

Gaining a degree in midwifery will help to provide you with the skills needed to supervise births, support pregnant women and care for new-born children. Useful transferable skills gained by studying midwifery include communication, team-working and time management skills, plus the ability to make decisions under pressure. Midwives tend to work for hospitals or health services.

Midwifery personal statement advice and examples

What should you write in a personal statement for midwifery, to ensure you stand out and get a place on a midwifery course?

We've asked admissions tutors to share their top dos and don'ts for midwifery personal statements, and included an example of how to write about any work experience you may have.

Some of the key ingredients you need to try and demonstrate include:

- why you want to become a midwife
- your insight and awareness of the role of a midwife and the work they do
- evidence that you've got the necessary skills like communication, time management, teamwork, organisation and empathy – and why you think they are appropriate to the role
- an understanding of diversity and a capacity for being non-judgmental – you'll be dealing with people from the whole spectrum of society

Remember that midwives enable, support, and empower women – it's not just about babies. As an admissions tutor at Anglia Ruskin University described it: 'Can you evidence strong motivation based on a realistic understanding of the nature of midwifery?'

With so many applicants chasing every place, the best personal statements will demonstrate what the University of York calls 'a real insight and current awareness that goes beyond the obvious aspects of the role or how it's conveyed on television'.

In fact, more than one university has told us, 'if you write about "One Born Every Minute", you'll be rejected'. They're not joking either.

More midwifery personal statement dos and don'ts

- Be natural: you're likely to be interviewed for a midwifery place, so make sure your personality shines through in your statement – and you can back up claims you've made with evidence.
- Avoid being too generic: as the University of Nottingham puts it, 'we need more information than "I like caring for babies".'
- Evidence everything: don't just list the things you've done without explaining why they're relevant.
- Talk about what you would bring to the profession: not what the profession would do for you.
- Show awareness of maternity care issues: the University of Cumbria asks applicants to 'demonstrate that they have thought carefully about the influences on women's health and the nature of midwifery in the UK in the 21st century'.
- Ensure your spelling and grammar is spot on: many universities won't consider any applications containing errors.

How to make a positive impression in your personal statement

Standing out as a midwifery applicant requires thorough preparation and research.

As University of York's web page explains, you will then need to articulate your thoughts and opinions in a clear and concise way in your personal statement and convey something about who you are as a person, 'as this makes your statement unique and hopefully makes you stand out'.

You may find Which? Birth Choice a useful research tool. It's another Which? website that helps expectant parents decide where to give birth. As an applicant to a midwifery course you can gain more of an understanding of a midwife's role through articles and learn how to interpret birth statistics and reference them in your personal statement.

You can also research which birth centres and labour wards you may like to do your placements on if you're accepted onto a course.

Do you need midwifery-related work experience?

Use your statement to reflect on any experience you've had of shadowing, working with, or just talking to a midwife about the role.

Reflecting on other kinds of care experience may also be relevant, especially in such settings as an antenatal or breastfeeding group, or any insights you've gained into current practice from midwifery journals, books, websites or open days.

Think about what transferable skills you have that would apply to midwifery situations. These could be demonstrated in lots of ways – whether it's the diplomacy you've needed as a customer service assistant, the empathy you've shown through volunteering, the teamwork that got you through your Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition, or the way you've balanced the demands of being a parent yourself.

Insights from midwifery students

- Make sure your enthusiasm for the subject and vocation is backed up with an understanding of the demands of the course too.
- We spoke to some inspirational midwifery students from Bournemouth University who told us what it's really like:
- And as a male student said, 'It's not babies I like, it's the being there for someone who needs my help'.

- 'The biggest shock is the workload.'
- 'Delivering babies is about 1% of what we do.'
- 'Communication skills are crucial – you must be able to listen.'
- 'Time management is vital, as there's so much to juggle.'
- 'Before you apply, you must do your research.'
- 'It's a baptism of fire, but we love it!'

NHS Constitution

For all degree courses that involve training within an NHS setting, there is likely to be some emphasis on values-based selection, and how applicants' own values and behaviours align with the seven core values of the NHS Constitution.

Familiarise yourself with this while writing your personal statement.

Check out our guide on what to include in your personal statement, which covers how you should approach it, how to structure it, and more.

Check out all our personal statement advice and use our personal statement tool to get more specific midwifery tips while you're in the drafting process.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_midwifery

Other routes

Degree apprenticeship (Level 6)

- [Midwife](#)

Sources & Links

[Midwifery Subject Guide | Why Study Midwifery At Uni? | UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Nursing

If you want a course where you study the physical, psychological and social needs of patients and their families and then learn to apply this knowledge through practical community and hospital based placements, then nursing could be for you. Nurses provide a vital role in a front-line health care team and you can specialise in adult, child, mental health or learning disability nursing.

- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- LOTS OF READING
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- ADULT NURSING
- CHILD NURSING
- MENTAL HEALTH NURSING

Example course modules

- Health issues and ethics
- Work-based learning
- Personal development
- Developing skills for practice
- Managing complexities in care delivery
- Introduction to epidemiology
- Planning care for the adult patient
- Global health and sustainability
- Developing therapeutic approaches and practice
- Introduction to health and wellbeing

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about nursing

My nursing degree is split, with 50% of my time in uni with lectures, practicals, and clinical skills building, and 50%

on clinical placement. So far I have had a mixture of assignments - some 2,000 and 4,000 word reflective accounts, placements (three in all) and all very different, and two exams. I would recommend the course to any individual interested in nursing and caring for others.

1st year, Swansea University

Very full-on, full-time study, with very little rest time! A mixture of lectures, tutorials, clinical skills and self-directed study. Varied practice placements. Full attendance required. Assessments were a mixture of essays and exams and some group work.

3rd year, University of Dundee

Nursing is not a course for the faint hearted. The lectures are long and intense, and placement means "summer holidays" are a thing of the past. (writing this on my break at 03:30am on August 1st, in a cardiac ward lol) You will need to pull your weight, and get ready for a big life change. But if you are willing to put in effort, its sooo rewarding. We do clinical skills, essays, presentations and have placement in blocks of 8-10wks. If you ever find yourself struggling with any of it though, you have a personal tutor who will make time for you, and help you out.

2nd year, Manchester Metropolitan University

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Biology or another science

Useful to have

- Psychology
- Sociology
- Chemistry

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
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- Work Experience

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide

Career prospects

This is the subject with the most degree graduates in 2012 - over 14,300. We'll always need nurses in this country, so it's no surprise to see that the very large majority of nursing graduates go on to become nurses, and that starting salaries are pretty competitive. There are lots of different specialties to choose from (including midwifery), and the most common by far is adult nursing, but the typical end result for graduates is the same – they go on to become nurses (or midwives). That's not to say that you can't do

anything else. Some nursing graduates get other jobs - usually, but not always, in health or caring professions, or management.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Health service manager
- Paramedic
- Care home manager

Other real-life job examples

- Adult nurse
- Children's nurse
- Mental health nurse

What employers like about this subject

Studying for a degree in nursing will help you to develop skills in patient care, in case assessment and handling, and in multidisciplinary, clinical team-working. Other useful transferable skills that a nursing degree can provide include communication, time management, adaptability, problem-solving, and leadership. Nurses tend to work in hospitals, but can also work for GP practices, in clinics, for schools or universities, in the Armed Forces, in social or residential care homes and in the leisure industry attached to hotels or cruise ships.

Local Market Information - Nursing Apprenticeships

There were a total of 300 nursing apprenticeship degree starts in 2017/18 and 310 in the first quarter of 2018/19. Alongside this, the committee noted the fall in the number of applicants to nursing degrees – down by 17,000 since 2016 – a probably consequence of the end of the nursing bursary. The Government's response to the report was published in early March and acknowledges that apprenticeships are not intended to replace the three-year degree route.

Personal statement advice and example: nursing

Qualifying as a nurse opens up a wide and diverse range of career paths. However, the selection criteria will be quite rigorous and you need to show you fit the bill.

With this in mind, your personal statement should demonstrate a clear understanding of what the role involves, the challenges you'll face, and the kind of skills, qualities, and values required.

We've asked admissions tutors to share their top dos and don'ts for nursing personal statements, and asked a careers adviser to create an example of how to write about your work experience – here's what they told us.

Nursing personal statement basics – what to include

- To structure it, try to write clearly and reflectively about:

- how you arrived at your decision to go into nursing
- why, specifically, you want to be an adult, child, mental health, or learning disabilities nurse
- how your experience and research has contributed to your understanding of the realities and challenges you'll face
- what it is about your skills, attitudes, values, and character that make the profession right for you
- anything you feel is especially relevant about your academic studies, or maybe a project you've undertaken

Some universities will score your personal statement against their specific selection criteria. Make sure you take a look at individual university websites, as these criteria may be listed for you to refer to. Look for nursing courses in our search tool.

Writing about relevant experience

Try to build up as much experience or observation as you can. Ideally this should be in a care environment, such as a hospital, clinic, GP practice, school, residential care or the voluntary sector. Any other experience of working with people is helpful too.

Back up these experiences by carrying out some relevant background reading or research – Health Careers is a good starting point. Just talking to nurses about their work will also be valuable.

And, if possible, get to some university open days, as they're great for picking up new insights and asking questions.

Then, when you write about all this in your statement, try to explain and reflect on:

- what you've learned about some of the realities of nursing, the challenges, constraints, and frustrations you'll face (rather than the rewards), and the skills, qualities, and values you'll need
- how you've demonstrated some of those skills, qualities, and values yourself through your experience, extracurricular activities, personal interests or achievements

The latter could include the responsibility and commitment you've shown through:

- voluntary work
- the teamwork and interpersonal skills you've developed in your part-time job
- the empathy you've shown as a student mentor
- the leadership you've displayed as a guide or scout
- something specific that happened on a Duke of Edinburgh's Award expedition, and so on

Tip: Don't waste space in your statement explaining what a nurse does – they know that! But if you've found out for yourself how nurses manage, prescribe, evaluate or critically review evidence when making decisions, do reflect on that.

We know it can be difficult to articulate your experiences on paper, so we worked up an example with careers adviser, Cerys Evans, as a source of inspiration.

Focus on the field of nursing you're interested in. Most nursing admissions tutors expect you to apply for one specific field only, such as adult or child.

They'll expect you to choose between nursing and midwifery courses rather than apply to both at the same time. However, one university told us that you wouldn't automatically be rejected if you are genuinely interested in the crossover between two different fields (same for nursing and midwifery), so

do check first. Some universities also offer dual-field courses but you'll need to demonstrate a realistic understanding of the field(s) you've chosen.

For example, if you're applying specifically for mental health nursing, you might want to reflect on your ability to understand other people's perspectives or to advocate on their behalf. Or if you feel it's appropriate to reflect on your own experience of mental health then, as one admissions tutor told us, the key is to explain how this has motivated you to become a nurse yourself.

For child nursing, you might wish to demonstrate your awareness of the diverse range of children you will nurse and the kind of challenges you expect to face. Similarly, for adult or learning disability, you could reflect on what you've learned from your interactions with elderly people, or how you've supported someone with a learning disability yourself.

The key words are 'demonstrate' and 'reflect'. It's not enough just to say you understand something – you need to show what it was that led to your understanding. Then, as Moira Davies, nursing admissions tutor at University of South Wales, advises, 'highlight the skills you have that are transferable to the field of nursing you have chosen'.

Accuracy is vital

Nursing has changed and diversified in recent years. So do your research, show your unique insights into the role, and don't make any spelling mistakes. For a nurse, accuracy is vital.

NHS Constitution

For all degree courses that involve training within an NHS setting, there is likely to be some emphasis on values based selection, and how applicants' own values and behaviours align with the seven core values of the NHS Constitution. Familiarise yourself with this while writing your personal statement.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_nursing

Other routes

Degree apprenticeships (Levels 5 – 7)

- [Advanced clinical practitioner \(degree\)](#)
- [District nurse](#)
- [Health care assistant practitioner](#)
- [Podiatrist \(degree\)](#)
- [Nursing associate \(NMC 2018\)](#)
- [Occupational therapist \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Registered nurse - degree \(NMC 2010\)](#)
- [Registered nurse degree \(NMC 2018\)](#)

Sources & Links

[Nursing Subject Guide | Why Study Nursing At Uni? | UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Nutrition courses

If you have an aptitude for chemistry or biology and an interest in food and health a nutrition course could be for you. You will study biochemistry and physiology and topics such as food production, development of new foods, diet and exercise and public health promotion. If you are interested in helping individuals with diabetes or obesity or who need a special diet you may be interested in courses which include dietetics and qualify you to practice as a dietician.

- SPORT
- BSC
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- TIME IN LABS
- CHEMISTRY
- EXAM-INTENSIVE
- BIOLOGY
- HEALTHCARE
- PRACTICAL WORK
- RESEARCH-INTENSIVE

Example course modules

- Current issues for nutrition
- The chemical foundations of life
- Infection and immunity
- Scientific and laboratory skills
- Nutrition, society and ethics
- Food science
- Food safety and hygiene
- Public health and health promotion
- Biostatistics
- Nutrition and exercise science

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about nutrition

The first two years are done closely with the nutrition students, and then the last two are pretty much completely separate, as you start to study pure dietetics. There are roughly 20 contact hours in a week, so you will be in uni every day but sometimes only for a morning. Practical lab sessions are all day, but vary depending on the practical done. The course is very varied to start with, and gets more specialised as you go through. At the beginning you will learn a lot you think you will never need to use which is frustrating, but trust me, it will come in useful! When I got on placement, I was trying to remember all the stuff I thought I would never need! The work is challenging, and can get really hard, but it is also interesting. The satisfaction of cracking something hard is worth it!

2nd year, King's College London, University of London

Classes are a mix of lectures, tutorials and workshops. The first year focuses on general nutrition, while the second and third years are much more dietetic-based and are extremely interesting and challenging. In second and third year, students are encouraged to research for their own and others' learning in case-based learning classes. This gives students a valuable experience in researching for evidence, for evidence-based practice. Exams are both written and practical. Students are examined on their communication and consultation skills in practical exams.

3rd year, University of Plymouth

If you expect to attend university twice a week, don't choose health science and nutrition. The amount of lectures a week during the last three years was surprisingly a lot. The content of course is challenging because it touches on a lot of different subjects over the years. Most of the coursework consists of essays and some practical work (a report or abstract).

3rd year, University of Aberdeen

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Physics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide.

Career prospects

This is the subject you need to study if you want to become a dietitian – an important job in the country's healthcare sector, and the single most common job for nutrition graduates. The population is becoming more aware of how important a good diet can be for wellbeing, and many people have special dietary needs, from individuals with food allergies to others with serious illnesses who need carefully-planned diets. So that's where graduates in nutrition come in – and we're likely to need more in the future.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Nutritionist
- Health information officer
- Nutritional therapist

Other real-life job examples

- Marketing executive
- Financial analyst
- Regulatory affairs officer

What employers like about this subject

Studying nutrition will help students to develop subject-specific skills in areas including physiology and biochemistry; in understanding food development; production and processing and in the interpretation and communication of nutritional information to a range of audiences. You can also develop useful transferable skills including good communication skills, team-working, project management, problem-solving, self-motivation, research and excellent numeracy skills. Nutrition graduates are employed in hospitals, GP practices, social care organisations, universities, the food industry, life science research and the finance industry.

Sources & Links

See end of guide.

Optometry courses

Are you interested in studying the science of the eye and learning how to examine eyes and correct sight problems? If so, optometry could be for you. If the idea of helping people choose glasses - advising on lenses and frames and finding the right fit - appeals, then an ophthalmic dispensing degree would be worth exploring. For both types of courses, you will need an interest in science and good communication skills.

- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- EXAM-INTENSIVE
- SCIENCE
- PRACTICAL WORK
- TECHNICAL

Example course modules

- Foundation mathematics for science
- Foundation biology
- Optics of the eye
- Introduction to ophthalmic lenses
- Communication skills in the optical sector
- Practice management
- Low vision management and assessment
- Practical methods in dispensing
- Vocational and recreational dispensing
- Ocular anatomy and contact lenses

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) | [The Complete University Guide](#) | [The Times](#)

What students say about optometry

For the 1st semester of studying Optometry I was in 5 days a week Monday to Friday and had about 15 hours of teaching time including lectures, tutorials, lab sessions and practical lessons. For the 2nd semester I had every Wednesday off, but still had about 15 hours of lesson and The content of optometry was varied and interesting. Both semesters included geometrical and physical visual optics (i.e. physics and maths), ocular anatomy and biochemistry (biology and chemistry) and theoretical and practical ophthalmic lenses. In my second semester, I had clinical optometry and interpersonal skills (my favourite - learning how to perform the tests an optometrist does in the clinic). The course is therefore very mixed in terms of subjects included and theoretical and practical approaches.

1st year, Anglia Ruskin University

I study optometry. I feel the amount of teaching and clinic work we receive is a good balance, and we always get a chance for extra practice if we need to for our clinics. I feel my course is very interesting, as there's always new information to be learnt - it was only recently a new layer of the cornea was discovered!

2nd year, Aston University, Birmingham

During the first year, we had at least one or two lectures a day, practicals a few times a week, and clinics once a week. This felt like a good balance and we had a good amount of time to work from home then. The first year is all about learning the basics, and then in the second year we will go into more detail, which I'm really looking forward to. The first year clinics were great, well stocked with lenses and high quality optometric instruments. We did a few sessions in the second and third year clinics, so I'm really looking forward to spending more time there this coming year.

1st year, Cardiff University

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Physics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview

BHASVIC information 2019

See end of guide

Career prospects

Most students in this category study optometry degrees. Don't get too worried by the salaries you see here. On graduation, the most recent ophthalmics graduates go on to pre-registration training for a year, before taking final assessments and being able to register as an optometrist. At this point, salaries jump to much healthier rates depending on whether you go into private practice with, for example, a high street opticians, or enter the NHS. This is also one of those degrees that can get you a skilled job in most parts of the country – so if you've got good grades but want to work in a particular part of the UK, this can be a good bet. Unemployment rates are low.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Ophthalmic optician
- Dispensing optician
- Optometrics

Other real-life job examples

- Orthoptist

What employers like about this subject

Students taking a degree in optometry and/ or ophthalmics can develop subject-related skills including an understanding of the scientific principles of eye care and the detection, recognition, diagnosis, prevention and management of conditions affecting the eye. Transferable skills you can develop include communication, IT, numeracy, problem-solving and critical evaluation. Optometry graduates tend to work for hospitals, specialist opticians or larger retail stores with optician departments - although some work in universities as researchers.

Sources & Links

[Optometry Subject Guide | Why Study Optometry At Uni? | UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Paramedic Science

Being the first responder to accident, injury, or distress requires a very particular set of skills. Paramedics are highly trained medical practitioners, who make life-saving decisions under pressure, but also put patients and their families at ease during difficult situations. Combining social skills with vast medical knowledge is a unique ability, and one that paramedic science students master during their degree.

- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- SCIENCE
- PRACTICAL WORK
- TECHNICAL

Example course modules

- Developing clinical practice
- Introduction to bioscience
- Trauma and advanced life support
- Diagnosis and clinical decision-making
- Ambulance placement
- Acute and critical illness
- Community placement
- Evidence-based practice

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) | [The Complete University Guide](#) | [The Times](#)

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Physics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview

BHASVIC information 2019

See end of guide

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

Most paramedic science graduates will work for the NHS, as a [paramedic](#).

Paramedic science graduates can also, with more study, move into other healthcare fields, the military, or other emergency services, such as:

- [mental health nurse](#)
- [care worker](#)
- [nurse](#)
- [midwife](#)
- health visitor
- [hospital doctor](#)
- [surgeon](#)
- [police officer](#)
- [firefighter](#)

Other routes

Higher apprenticeship (Level 4)

- [Associate ambulance practitioner](#)

Degree apprenticeship (Level 6)

- [Paramedic \(degree\)](#)

Sources & Links

[Paramedic Science](#) | [Subject Guide](#) | [UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Pharmacy

Would you like to be an expert on medicines and how to use them effectively? Pharmacists prepare, dispense and give advice about medicines and drugs, working in community pharmacies, hospitals, the pharmaceutical industry and university research posts. This four-year course involves in-depth study of pharmaceutical chemistry and medical science with hands-on-learning - either on placement or in simulated patient situations. You need to have an aptitude for sciences, particularly chemistry, and enjoy communicating with the public.

- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- CHEMISTRY
- MEDICAL
- HEALTHCARE
- RESEARCH
- PRACTICAL WORK
- MPHARM

Example course modules

- Dispensing competence
- Responding to symptoms
- Cell and molecular biology
- Pharmaceutical chemistry
- Advances in drug therapy
- Drugs discovery and delivery
- Foundations in pharmacy practice
- Inflammation, cancer and infection
- Pharmaceutics

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) | [The Complete University Guide](#) | [The Times](#)

What students say about pharmacy

The course goes in to great detail in a number of scientific areas including the biology of the human body systems, organic chemistry, drug formulations and pharmacology. There is around 21 hours of teaching each week. Approx two thirds are lectures and the other third is tutorials, practicals or workshops. Coursework is predominantly lab or test based. Final exams typically account for 80% of the overall module marks, with a small degree of variation either way.

2nd year, Cardiff University

There is usually 12 hours of teaching spread over the week. The content in first year pharmacy is fairly challenging but you will cope well if you put the study time required in. Chemistry, maths, molecular properties and physiology are the main classes of the year which require a range of essays, practical lab work, reports to complete throughout the year. With written and multiple choice exams to be taken at the end of semester one and two.

1st year, University of Strathclyde

My course (pharmacy) is one of the more intense courses you can study with around 20 hours of contact time per week. This includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, labs and dispensary, but does not include time for private study or coursework. The course is more challenging than I thought it would be due to the fact that there is more maths and physics related content than I expected. I find the course very interesting but it is a lot of work! For the Pharmacy Practice module, you are required to make a portfolio over the year to see your progress in certain skills, such as team work or time management. For this you also have to write a reflective essay and an up to date CV. The chemistry module involves lab work. From this you record your results, analyse the data and write up a lab report including why your results may have been wrong, and what your findings showed. You also have to pass labs in formulations. This involves making creams and ointments to a high enough standard that they could be given to the public.

1st year, University of East Anglia UEA

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Physics
- Mathematics

Application checklist

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview
- Work Experience

Examples of degrees and combined degrees for BHASVIC student's 2019 entry

- Pharmacy with a Foundation Year
- Pharmacy
- Pharmacy (4 years)
- Pharmacy with Integrated Foundation Year

Career prospects

Although there have been some concerns expressed about whether opportunities have kept pace with a subject that has rapidly increased in popularity, unemployment rates for pharmacy grads are ultra-low and over 95% of working pharmacy graduates had jobs as pharmacists (mostly as retail pharmacists) six months after they left their courses; telling you that these are degrees in demand.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Quality assurance scientist
- Packaging engineer
- Regulatory affairs officer

Other real-life job examples

- Retail pharmacist
- Analytical scientist
- Pharmacologist

What employers like about this subject

A degree in pharmacy will help you to develop a range of subject-specific skills including an understanding of the principles, design and manufacture of medicines; the law and ethics of the supply of medicines and knowledge of pharmaceutical analysis. Transferable skills a pharmacy graduate will develop include communication, data evaluation and commercial awareness. Pharmacists are usually employed in pharmacy stores, either as a part of retail chains, or (less common than in the past) as their own business, for hospitals, for medical practices, and in the pharmaceutical industry.

Personal statement advice: pharmacy

If you aim to study pharmacy, then your personal statement will be a crucial factor in your application to make you stand out in this competitive field. Check out our top tips below.

Pharmacy applicants will be up against tough competition, according to the University of Manchester: 'Competition for places on the MPharm course is fierce, and only the best students are invited for interview.' It's a message echoed by Cardiff University: 'Application to the degree is highly competitive, with approaching 1,000 applications for 120 places.'

Research pharmacy as a subject

Standing out from the crowd when it comes to pharmacy means doing your research and really demonstrating your suitability, commitment, and enthusiasm in a convincing way.

It's a professional course you're applying for here, and it's essential that you've gained an insight into the profession itself, ideally through a combination of background reading and, if possible, some personal

experience too – even if it was just talking to a pharmacist, or learning about it through visits to university open days or relevant events.

Use your statement to reflect on:

- your perceptions of what the profession is about, and where you can see yourself within it
- the skills and qualities that will be required, both to study pharmacy and to practice it as a profession
- evidence of situations or activities where you've displayed some of these skills and qualities yourself

If you can express all this in what the University of Manchester calls 'a creative statement that demonstrates enthusiasm and commitment for the subject,' then, provided you've got what it takes academically, you should be in with a good chance of success.

What unis are looking for in pharmacy students

Interpersonal skills: 'Being a good pharmacist involves more than academic excellence. You need to be good at interacting and communicating well with people from diverse backgrounds. Anything that demonstrates this ability looks good in your personal statement,' according to Dr Karen Ball, principal lecturer and admissions tutor at the School of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences at University of Portsmouth.

Understanding of the profession: tutors at University of Bath expect you to demonstrate:

- your enthusiasm and interest in pharmacy
- evidence of your understanding of the role of a pharmacist

This doesn't mean telling them what a pharmacist does, but reflecting on what you've found out for yourself through your research and any relevant visits, volunteering, or work experience. What did you learn and how might you apply this knowledge to your future study?

Awareness of the skills you'll need: on its website, Aston University offers some examples of how the emphasis of a pharmacist's role has changed, and mentions some of the key skills for which you might want to show evidence in your statement. That's the kind of information you'll be expected to know.

Your wider reading: University of Reading reinforces that the best way to stand out from the crowd is through the way you explain what interests you about pharmacy, your comments on the relevant reading and research you've done, and/or the experience you've had.

Commitment to the profession: Cardiff University's selectors are looking for evidence of this and will assess your suitability by the way you demonstrate and evidence your 'knowledge of the science and practice of pharmacy' through your 'background reading or work experience.'

Clear language: this is a field where clarity and accuracy are essential, so reflect this in the way you approach your personal statement. It needs to be logical and easy to understand. Don't try to stand out by being too flash or overcomplicated.

Relevant work experience: admissions tutors at Keele University are keen to hear about any relevant experience, what you feel you've gained from it, and how it has helped you to understand more about what your future career in pharmacy might involve. See our guide to making your work experience count for tips on how to do this.

Relevant skills: reflect on any relevant skills you've gained in academic, social, or work settings, whether it's teamwork, communication, leadership, caring for others, or how you balance work with relaxation.

But don't exaggerate this. Be mindful that tutors will also read your reference to see if it fits with what you've said about yourself in the statement.

Medicine/dentistry applicants: is it ok to put pharmacy down as a fifth choice?

Not without great care! Several universities make it very clear on their websites that they will not consider you if pharmacy is a second option. They expect you, and your statement, to be 100% committed to pharmacy. But if this is a strategy you are considering, do your research with individual universities. There may be certain circumstances where this is possible.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_pharmacy

Sources & Links

See also end of guide.

Physiotherapy courses

Physiotherapists treat patients with muscle and skeletal injuries, neurological problems and breathing problems. They help people rehabilitate and regain movement after an illness or injury. Most work in hospitals or in private clinics, while some may work for sports clubs or the armed forces. Physiotherapy is a popular option and you'll need good grades to get a place on a course, particularly in a biological science. Courses typically combine theory with learning practical diagnostic and treatment skills.

- SPORT
- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- HEALTHCARE
- EXERCISE
- PRACTICAL WORK

Example course modules

- Applied anatomy and biomechanics
- Clinical skills
- Physiology in the context of physiotherapy
- Cardiorespiratory physiotherapy
- Cardiovascular health
- Critical thinking and enquiry
- Exercise across the lifespan
- Foundations in health, social care and professional practice
- Musculoskeletal management and rehabilitation
- Neurological physiotherapy

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about physiotherapy

The workload is reasonable. It can be difficult to gauge how much study to do, as most of it is self-directed study. My course is challenging because it is very diverse. There is a lot of emphasis on communication and professional behaviour. I like the fact that we have practical classes.

1st year, Robert Gordon University

The course content is varied as we have different modules covering different things. They are taught through lectures, seminars, tutorials and practicals. They are assessed using a variety of ways including essays, practicals and exams. Practical especially are good as we have a chance to practice them as formative before having two summative ones that contribute to our final grade. This gives us chance to have feedback which is done in a standardised way. We have our own building which means we see familiar faces, but also have the chance to integrate with students from the other professions.

1st year, University of East Anglia UEA

On my physiotherapy course the amount of hours and type of teaching sessions each week are excellent. Expect to be in lessons about 15-20 hours a week in the first year increasing to about 30 in second and third years. Although it can be a challenging course, as a whole the content is extremely interesting. If you study this particular course, you'll be required to complete essays, written exams, VIVA exams (oral) and the dreaded OSCEs (practical exams - don't worry you'll be fine after the initial nerves), as well as a couple of presentations of the course of the three years with great feedback available from the staff.

3rd year, University of Hertfordshire

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Biology

Useful to have

- English
- Chemistry
- Physical education
- Physics
- Mathematics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview
- Work Experience

BHASVIC information 2019

See end of guide

Career prospects

Physiotherapy is a popular subject, and the graduates of 2012 had a slightly lower unemployment rate overall than related subjects such as anatomy and physiology, having seen job prospects improve significantly in the last 12 months. Physiotherapy graduates mainly go straight into work, and a majority got into physiotherapy roles within six months of graduation in 2012, either in hospitals or private practice. If you fancy working for yourself, physiotherapists are rather more likely than the average graduate to start their career self-employed.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Physiotherapist
- Veterinary physiotherapist
- Biokineticist

Other real-life job examples

- Rehabilitation therapist
- Prison officer
- Sports coach

What employers like about this subject

As part of a physiotherapy degree, you would expect to gain subject-specific skills in areas such as the professional practice of physiotherapy and in investigating and diagnosing health issues; in the principles and ethics of evidence-based health practice and in the principles of rehabilitation. Transferrable skills you can develop include good communication skills, problem-solving, team-working and decision-making. Physiotherapists tend to get jobs with hospitals, specialist physiotherapy practices, gyms, sports clubs, the Armed Forces, in welfare organisations and in education (particularly universities).

Personal statement advice: physiotherapy

Writing a personal statement for physiotherapy? Find out more about what will impress admissions tutors, and why talking purely about sport is a no-no.

You'll impress them by reflecting on your experiences and understanding of the profession, talking about how you've demonstrated relevant skills, and by showing your awareness of the breadth of what physiotherapists actually do.

That's what admissions tutors told us when we asked them what they're looking for – here are some more of their dos and don'ts.

Show you know what physiotherapy involves.

This is a competitive field. To have a good chance of being selected you will need to demonstrate a realistic understanding of the role and show that you're 100% committed to it.

It's important to show that you've researched the career – the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is a good starting point. You should also back this knowledge up with your experience – but what experience?

Firstly, experience of observing or at least talking to physiotherapists is highly desirable. It's even better if you can do this in more than one setting, whether it's in hospitals, private practice, GP surgeries, schools, residential homes, sport centres, or clubs or out in the community. Although it's increasingly difficult to obtain formal work experience, try to plan ahead and use your initiative to secure this in time.

The next best thing is general experience or voluntary work in any health or care setting. Take the opportunity to observe how staff communicate and interact with people, especially vulnerable individuals such as children, the elderly, or people in distress.

What to include in your statement

There is no one-size-fits-all way to structure your personal statement, but here are some pointers:

Check what specific universities want Some universities provide information about their selection criteria on their website, and some actually score your statement against those criteria. It may give you a handy framework to base your statement around.

Explain your motivation Why do you want to be a physiotherapist specifically? How did you arrive at the decision that it's the right fit for you? Convey your enthusiasm and determination. Don't just say you want to be in a caring profession – be specific!

Show you understand the scope of physiotherapy There's a tendency for some applicants to be drawn to the profession through their passion for sport, with a view to becoming a sports physiotherapist. But the reality is that you will probably work with a range of patients with a wide variety of conditions, not necessarily sports-related.

This partly explains why one admission tutor's top personal statement tip was 'don't mention sport!' It's important to realise that sport isn't representative of the profession as a whole. For instance, sports physiotherapy is predominantly concerned with musculoskeletal conditions in patients who are likely to otherwise be healthy and motivated.

So do show what you've learned about the diverse range and backgrounds of patients you will be treating or the kinds of situations these patients may also be dealing with. Reflect on the challenges this creates for the physiotherapist, such as how to motivate patients to manage their own long-term recovery when they are also having to cope with other conditions, illnesses, or struggles (such as depression, dementia, or family circumstances).

Reflect on the skills and qualities required Don't simply list what you saw in any experience or placements – they want to know how what you observed changed your perceptions or understanding.

Similarly, it's not how much experience you've had that matters, it's the quality of your insights and how you reflect on them.

Referring to your own experience as a patient may also be helpful, but only if you've gained a real insight through it.

Demonstrate that you have these qualities The final piece in the jigsaw is to provide evidence of how you've personally demonstrated some of the important qualities you've observed.

Pick out your key observations and be explicit in explaining the links with your own skill set. For example, 'on placement I noticed that physiotherapists needed skill X... I demonstrated skill X myself when I...'

Physiotherapists have to talk to, collaborate with, and counsel people, so do include how you've demonstrated these 'softer' caring, helping, or listening skills (this can be in or outside of school).

Other relevant qualities to talk about might include problem-solving, coping with pressure, being non-judgemental, leadership, and working in a team.

Values based selection We spoke to a member of the admissions team at one of the universities who score your personal statement against their selection criteria. One of her key messages was that they assess your suitability for the career as a whole, not just the course.

In fact, some of the heaviest weightings in their scoring criteria are linked to the six core values of the NHS Constitution. So make sure you're familiar with the NHS Constitution, and that you're able to demonstrate behaviours of your own that align with these core values.

Mention any ambitions This isn't essential but, if you have a clear view of the direction you want your career to take, blend this into your statement too. This could be in the opening, the middle, or as a concise concluding sentence.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_physiotherapy

Other Routes

Degree apprenticeship (Level 6)

- [Physiotherapist \(integrated degree\)](#)

Sources & Links

[Physiology, Physiotherapy & Pathology | Subject Guide | UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Radiography and medical technology courses

There are two types of radiography course. Diagnostic radiography involves learning how to use medical imaging, such as X-ray, MRI and ultrasound to help doctors make a diagnosis. Therapeutic radiography or radiotherapy and oncology courses involve using radiography for the treatment and care of patients with cancer. Both types of courses include practical placements and qualify you to work as a professional radiographer. You will gain medical knowledge and patient care skills and learn how to use technical equipment.

- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- PRACTICAL WORK
- TECHNICAL
- DIAGNOSTIC
- THERAPEUTIC
- RADIO THERAPY

Example course modules

- Academic and professional practice
- Oncology and cancer studies
- Radiotherapy in practice
- Applied skeletal imaging
- Ethical and legal issues
- Advancing radiographic practice
- The emerging professional
- Complementary image systems
- Radiography of the axial skeleton
- Imaging in care pathways

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) [The Complete University Guide](#) [The Times](#)

What students say about radiography and medical technology

My course is 50% academic study and 50% clinical placement. Assessments are essays, practicals and computerised exams. There are also assessments to undertake whilst on placement in hospital. I think you learn most on placement. I have enjoyed the first year very much!

1st year, University of Salford

There is far less 'classroom' time than I expected. For a full-time course, I think the busiest week I've had probably amounted to about 10 hours. The lecturers are really helpful and the vast majority have worked (some still do) in the field they are teaching about. This can give a great insight into what to expect when on placement. Typical of universities, you are expected to research, plan and complete work on your own.

1st year, University of Cumbria

There is a lot of teaching and lectures each week. The course content in the first year was really interesting, and whilst at first seemed quite basic, it progressively got harder until the year ended. The type of work is examinations and coursework. Course-specific facilities are excellent.

1st year, Bristol, University of the West of England

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- At least one from biology, chemistry or physics

Useful to have

- Mathematics

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide

Career prospects

The stats here mainly cover radiography graduates – and as the country is currently short of specialists in some of this area, that means good job prospects and, often, decent starting salaries. With a lot of modern medicine (and dentistry) using high-tech equipment, there are big opportunities for medical technology grads, although most early careers are spent operating these complex instruments, rather than designing or developing them. Unemployment rates are relatively low in these subjects, and 80% of graduates with jobs became radiographers

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Radiographer
- X-Ray operator
- Sonographer

Other real-life job examples

- Clinical photographer
- Medical instrument technician

What employers like about this subject

A radiography degree will teach you subject-specific skills in anatomy, physiology and pathology; the science, theory and practice of medical imaging and radiographic research methods and statistics. You will also get useful transferable skills such as good communication skills, problem-solving, evaluating and acting on evidence, and decision-making. Radiography graduates largely work in hospitals or specialist health facilities.

Other routes

Higher apprenticeships (Level 4)

- [Healthcare science associate](#)
- [Mammography associate](#)

Degree apprenticeships (Levels 5 – 7)

- [Diagnostic radiographer \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Healthcare science practitioner \(degree\)](#)
- [Laboratory scientist \(degree\)](#)
- [Prosthetist/Orthotist \(degree\)](#)
- [Technician scientist](#)
- [Therapeutic radiographer \(integrated degree\)](#)

Sources & Links

[Radiography Subject Guide | Why Study Radiography At Uni? | UCAS](#)

See also end of guide.

Speech therapy and audiology courses

Speech therapists diagnose, assess and treat communication disorders, working with adults and children in schools, hospitals and the community. Audiologists measure people's hearing, fit and adjust hearing aids (including state-of-the-art implants) and give advice on coping with a hearing impairment. Audiologists work with adults, people with special needs and sometimes children and newborn babies. For both types of courses you will need an interest in science and good communication skills.

- BSC
- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- TIME IN LABS
- MEDICAL
- HEALTHCARE
- TECHNICAL
- LANGUAGES

Example course modules

- Phonetic transcription
- Biological sciences
- Lifespan psychology and language development
- Communication science and technology
- Applications of critical theory
- Investigating human development and behaviour
- Grammar and meaning
- Communication and swallowing needs
- Perception
- Cognition and learning

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) | [The Complete University Guide](#) | [The Times](#)

What students say about speech therapy and audiology

The speech and language therapy course has exceeded all my expectations. The first year of the course covers a variety of subjects including medicine (anatomy and physiology, ENT, paediatrics), phonetics and phonology, grammar and meaning, clinical studies, psychology, and placements in health care settings. All these are actually interesting to learn about. The most interesting assessment in year 1 for me was the child development assignment. This involved observing a child twice a term in their own home as they develop speech for the first time. My university has its own NHS speech and language therapy clinic on campus where you can sit on the other side of an observation mirror and watch therapy sessions without the clients knowing you're there. This is a vital role in understanding how your learning can be used to help those with a speech, language or communication impairment.

1st year, University of Reading

I study speech and language therapy, and so the teaching varies between lectures, seminars and work-based placements. The practical side of the course involves going into the community and gaining experience related to the profession. In my first year, we participated in a six-week block of nursery placement, where we spent one morning in the nursery a week.

1st year, University of Sheffield

The course is challenging and you'll probably feel like you have a lot more work to do and more teaching hours than your friends on some other courses. The course is very varied. Modules include psychology, biology and child development. Placements are very rewarding and help you grow as a speech therapist.

3rd year, De Montfort University

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Biology
- English language

Useful to have

- Psychology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Modern foreign language

Application checklist

Here's a guide to what to expect from the application process - also check individual university entry requirements, as these may differ.

- January application
- Personal statement
- Interview

BHASVIC Sept 20 entry information

See end of guide.

Career prospects

This subject covers a group of related subjects, like audiology and speech science. The most common job for graduates from this group is speech therapy, and about a quarter had studied audiology. There are not many audiology graduates each year in the UK, and they usually go on to jobs as – you guessed it – audiologists (mostly in hospitals). Speech science or therapy graduates often go straight into speech therapy jobs when they graduate, although you don't absolutely have to be a speech therapist if you take the course. Graduates from last year in this subject went into a surprisingly wide range of jobs – but were largely in health or childcare roles.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Speech therapist
- Audiologist
- Clinical researcher

Other real-life job examples

- Welfare support officer
- Medical technician
- Special needs teaching specialist

What employers like about this subject

A speech therapy and/ or audiology degree will provide you with subject-specific skills including the physiology and biology of speech and hearing; communication with individuals with difficulties in speech and/ or hearing; the principles of speech and language development, and an understanding of clinical research methodology and how to conduct and interpret clinical research. Transferable skills you can gain from a speech therapy course include excellent communication skills, problem-solving and making decisions under pressure. Graduates from the discipline tend to work in schools, hospitals, specialist health practices, social care organisations and healthcare regulators.

Veterinary medicine

This very popular five-year course, only offered by a few universities, qualifies you to practice as a veterinary surgeon. You'll first learn about the structure and functions of healthy animals before tackling the diseases that affect them, how to manage these and the surgical know-how needed to treat domestic, farm or zoo animals. You need a passion for animal welfare, an aptitude for science and great communication skills. Vets work in private surgeries, for animal charities, for government departments and in biomedical research.

- VOCATIONAL
- PRACTICAL PLACEMENTS
- TIME IN LABS
- PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING
- EXAM-INTENSIVE
- TIME ABROAD
- SCIENCE
- PRACTICAL WORK
- BVSC
- ANIMALS

Example course modules

- Animal health science
- Animal disease
- Animal husbandry, welfare and health
- Veterinary musculoskeletal systems
- Clinical management
- Animal health and handling
- Neurobiology and animal behaviour
- Public health, epidemiology and welfare
- Veterinary practical techniques
- Lymphoreticular cell biology

Teaching hours / week

The time you'll spend in lectures and seminars each week will vary from university to university, so use this as a guide.



League tables for this subject

[The Guardian](#) | [The Complete University Guide](#) | [The Times](#)

What students say about veterinary medicine

The course is very challenging and interesting with high lecture content that is complemented by many practical sessions. The facilities are good with a wide range of practical sessions available e.g. histology/ histopathology sessions, lab sessions, anatomy sessions and clinical skills. The only disadvantage is that student numbers in a practical session can be too large for each individual to be able to make full use of the facilities available e.g. number of histology slides and microscopes are limited.

2nd year, University of Liverpool

I'm studying veterinary science - the course is pretty intense. I'd say it averages about 15 to 20 hours per week of lectures. We have lectures, histology sessions, dissections, the clinical skills lab and some practical visits. The course is very interesting and my first year has been challenging, but I'd say more because of the quantity rather than the actual content. Some of it has been a bit of a follow up on A-level biology and chemistry content.

1st year, University of Liverpool

I am studying veterinary medicine, so the course is very challenging. We have on average 30 timetabled hours a week, which includes a mix of lectures, practicals and group work. The course is arranged into body systems based modules (e.g. 'musculoskeletal', 'urinary'), and I find the content very interesting and challenging. Assessment is predominantly by exams (online multiple choice, written short answer paper and practical assessments) in January and June. A few modules are partly assessed by coursework.

2nd year, University of Nottingham

A-levels (or equivalent) usually required

- Chemistry
- Biology

Useful to have

- Physics
- Mathematics

Application checklist

- October application
- Personal statement
- Interview
- Entry test
- Work experience

BHASVIC information 2020

See end of guide

Career prospects

Some encouraging stats for would-be vets! Most graduates get jobs – as vets – on graduation and starting salaries are much higher than average. From time to time, there are concerns that there are

shortages of vets in some parts of the country, or in certain areas - not many graduates go on to academic research, for example - but the UK is currently producing a few hundred graduate vets every year. Not surprisingly, they work in mainly rural areas, and are much less likely than most other graduates to work in London.

Transferable skills

Teamwork, IT & Technology, Problem solving, Social Skills, Organisation, Numeracy, Communication, Attention to detail, Analytics, Project Management, Leadership, Social Care

Jobs where this degree is useful

- Veterinary surgeon
- Veterinary investigation officer
- Research veterinarian

What employers like about this subject

Students taking a veterinary science or medicine degree can expect to learn skills in animal health and nutrition; the investigation, diagnosis and treatment of animal conditions; understanding of animal behaviour and the principles of animal welfare. You will also gain useful transferable skills such as good communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Most veterinary science graduates work in general practice, but they can also get jobs with a range of government directorates and inspectorates, with the Armed Forces and in natural sciences research for private companies or at universities.

Personal statement advice: veterinary medicine

The competition is tough for aspiring vets – so along with good grades, you'll need an impressive personal statement that sets you apart from the crowd. Here's how to do it...

The University of Liverpool's veterinary science department gets straight to the point when it comes to making an application to its veterinary science department: 'the competition is fierce.'

This is where a good personal statement can be an asset. 'Most applicants will have good predicted grades and references, so your personal statement is your main opportunity to set yourself apart from the rest,' the Royal Veterinary College adds.

Veterinary work experience: do your research

Normally, you will need to have a range of relevant work experience before you apply and to reflect on this in your statement. The quality of your insights into the profession is crucial.

You also need to be clear about what individual veterinary schools expect, because it varies. For instance, Liverpool requires a minimum of ten weeks' experience, while most others require a minimum of four or six weeks. The range of experience typically needs to include:

- at least one veterinary practice
- working with large domestic animals on a livestock farm, especially dairy or lambing
- other animal experience such as stables, kennels, catteries, zoos, wildlife, or rescue centres, pig or poultry farms, or something more unusual

- A day at an abattoir may be especially beneficial and observing research in a veterinary or biomedical laboratory could be valuable too.

Do note that the University of Cambridge's requirements are slightly different, as they are more concerned about your interest in 'the scientific principles that underlie both the health and disease of animals.' They do require you to demonstrate a commitment to the profession and say that some experience will be useful, but they don't want you to give up on your other extra-curricular interests for the sake of gaining extensive work experience.

It's essential to research this in detail beforehand. Check out department websites and, where possible, attend open days or events.

Getting the balance and flow right

With the required experience under your belt, the next step is to achieve the right balance between brevity and detail in your statement, and to gear it to what your chosen universities are looking for. It will probably be a challenge to condense it all down to 47 lines, but here are some key points you could include:

Motivation: show what has motivated you to follow this career path. Be specific, and make it current or recent. What aspects are of special interest to you? Where do you hope the degree will lead? Reflect on what it is that's driving you now, not something out-of-date.

Experience: provide some detailed evidence that shows you're realistic and informed about the challenges you will face. Describe some of your experiences and observations, both of veterinary practice and from your wider animal experience. Get the balance right. They want you to show the breadth of your experience, but they want depth as well. Try to write briefly but reflectively about some of the highlights and what you learned from them. Also, try to include something that demonstrates your understanding of why interpersonal skills are crucial.

Academic interests and wider reading: give them a glimpse of your current academic and scientific interests, whether it's from your studies, a project or issues you've come across in journals, books, blogs, events you've attended, and so on. If Cambridge is amongst your choices, it's especially important to demonstrate your intellectual curiosity and your passion for science.

Extra-curricular activities: demonstrate your resilience, initiative, self-motivation, compassion, or other relevant transferable skills. This could be through the contribution you have made to school, college, or community activities, volunteering, your part-time work, or any wider interests, personal achievements, or responsibilities. Again, be specific!

Then consider the flow of your statement. Tell them enough to engage them and win yourself an interview, but leave enough unsaid that can be discussed in more depth at the interview itself. Remember that everything you write could be used as an interview starting point.

https://web.ucas.com/ps_veterinary

Other routes

Apprenticeships

There are a range of Advanced/Level 3 apprenticeships (equivalent level to A levels).

Animal welfare apprenticeships offer specialist pathways to choose from, including:

- animal care and welfare
- zoos and wildlife establishments
- dog grooming
- pet care and retail
- animal training

Veterinary nursing apprenticeships enable you to train for job roles such as:

- veterinary nurse – small animal
- veterinary nurse – equine
- head veterinary nurse
- head equine veterinary nurse

Sources & Links

[Veterinary Science Subject Guide | About Vet Science At Uni | UCAS](#)

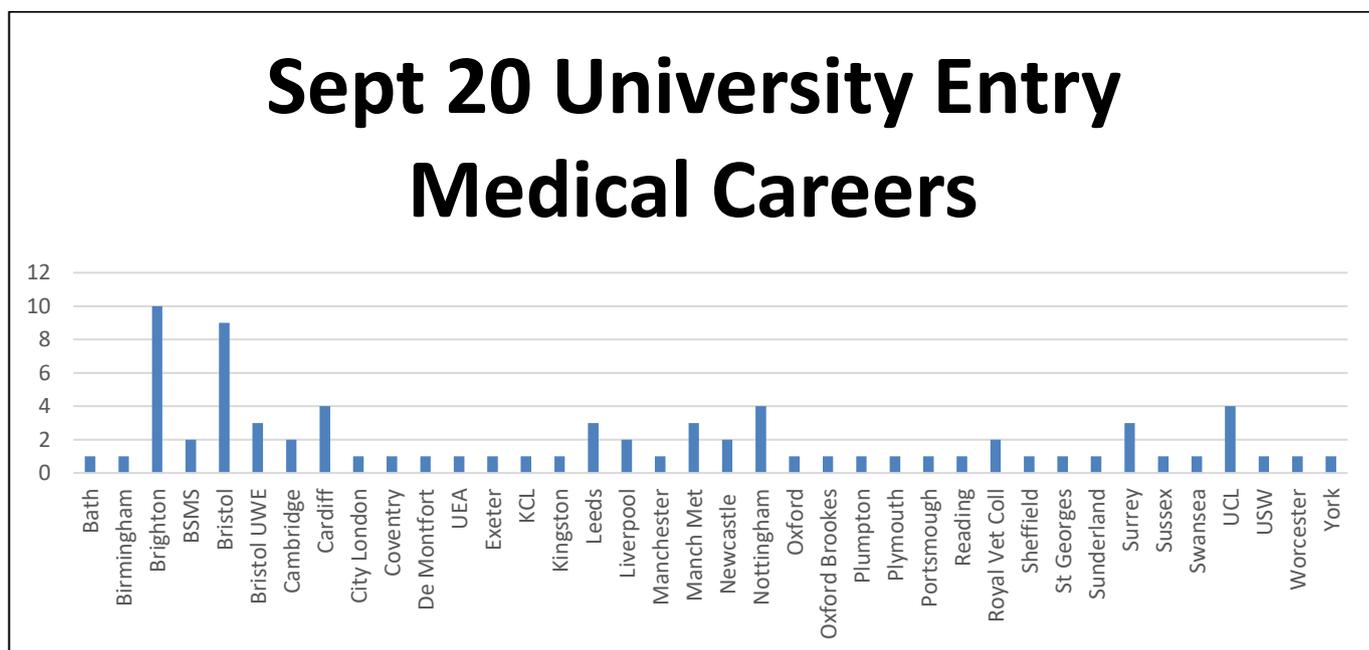
[Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons \(RCVS\)](#)

[British Equine Veterinary Association](#)

See also end of guide.

In Sept 2020, 77 BHASVIC students began Medical-related degrees at 36 different universities.

In addition, 9 students went onto study veterinary science & related degrees, and 19 students went onto study medicine.



Top 10 Universities for Medical Careers – Complete University Guide 2020

- **Oxford, Cambridge, Glasgow, Swansea, UCL**
- **Queen Mary's, Newcastle, Bristol, Sheffield** – all very high student satisfaction scores
- **Aberdeen, Exeter, BSMS, Cardiff** - all with 100% top graduate prospects

Examples of degrees and combined degrees for BHASVIC student's 2020 entry

- Diagnostic Radiography
- Pharmacy with Integrated Foundation Year
- Adult Nursing
- Midwifery
- Physiotherapy Medicine - MBChB Standard entry (5 years)
- Medicine - MBChB Standard entry (5 years)
- Medicine and Surgery
- Medicine (5 year)
- Medicine (Phase One)
- Medicine (6 years)
- Medical Sciences
- Applied Anatomy
- Physiotherapy
- Osteopathy
- Children's Nursing
- Nursing (Child)

- Adult Nursing (September) with Foundation Year
- Paramedic Science
- Podiatry Veterinary Medicine
- Veterinary Medicine
- Veterinary Medicine and Science
- Veterinary Gateway Programme
- Animal Behaviour and Welfare (Clinical)

Higher apprenticeships (Level 4)

- [Associate ambulance practitioner](#)
- [Healthcare assistant practitioner](#)
- [Healthcare science associate](#)
- [Hearing aid dispenser](#)
- [Mammography associate](#)
- [Nursing associate \(NMC 2018\)](#)
- [Oral health practitioner](#)
- [Rehabilitation worker \(visual impairment\)](#)
- [Technician scientist](#)

Degree apprenticeships (Levels 5 – 7)

- [Advanced forensic practitioner \(custody or sexual offence\)](#)
- [Arts therapist \(degree\)](#)
- [Bioinformatics scientist](#)
- [Clinical trials specialist \(degree\)](#)
- [Diagnostic radiographer \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Dietitian](#)
- [Environmental health practitioner](#)
- [Food industry technical professional \(degree\)](#)
- [Healthcare science practitioner \(degree\)](#)
- [Laboratory scientist \(degree\)](#)
- [Midwife](#)
- [Occupational therapist \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Operating department practitioner \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Paramedic \(degree\)](#)
- [Physiotherapist \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Podiatrist \(degree\)](#)
- [Prosthetist/orthotist \(degree\)](#)
- [Psychological wellbeing practitioner](#)
- [Regulatory affairs specialist \(degree\)](#)
- [Registered nurse - degree \(NMC 2010\)](#)
- [Registered nurse - degree \(NMC 2018\)](#)
- [Research scientist](#)
- [Sonographer \(degree\)](#)
- [Speech and language therapist \(integrated degree\)](#)
- [Therapeutic radiographer \(integrated degree\)](#)

Medical Careers – wider information

Every year a lot of students who apply for Medicine are unsuccessful. They are often very capable students who would have been very successful if they had made a well-researched application for anything else. So here is a selection of other degree courses you could do that are directly or indirectly connected to the medical sciences, healthcare or welfare. *Those marked with an asterisk may attract bursaries.

Adult Nursing*: Managing the care and treatment of adult and elderly patients in hospitals, residential care and the community; nurse practitioners are increasingly taking on some of the responsibilities previously ascribed to doctors such as clinical supervision, prescribing and performing minor surgery.

Mental Health Nursing*: Managing the care and treatment of service users who have mental health conditions either in hospitals or in residential care or community teams and also supporting their carers or families.

Children's Nursing*: Managing the care and treatment of children who, in many cases, will have serious, chronic or life-threatening conditions; also providing support and reassurance for the children's families.

Learning Disabilities Nursing*: Managing the care and treatment of people who, since childhood, have had learning disabilities that impair their intellectual and social functions and cause physical, sensory or mental health problems.

Midwifery*: Supporting women, their partner and families through each stage of pregnancy, labour, delivery and the early stages of post-natal care.

Dental Hygiene and Therapy: Provision of preventative dental treatment and advice on dental health and the carrying out of a range of procedures including oral assessment, scaling and polishing, applying fluoride and fissure sealants, taking radiographs and undertaking basic restorations and therapy treatment.

Physiotherapy*: Using physical means to help patients recover from illness or injury and assisting them in rehabilitation after operations by restoring muscle and other functions. It isn't just about sports injuries - you are more likely to work with the elderly than with elite sports people!

Podiatry*: Assessment and treatment of patients with foot or lower-limb abnormalities, including some specialist surgical procedures; may also work with sports injuries. There are about the same number of podiatrists in UK as there are forensic scientists, but very few students ever say they want to be one!

Speech Sciences/Therapy*: Study of the processes involved in human communication, both normal and abnormal, and the treatment of EDS (eating, drinking and swallowing) and communication disorders in children and older people.

Occupational Therapy*: Advising and supporting people who are experiencing physical, social or psychological difficulties and who need help to achieve the things they want to do in their daily lives or to lead as independent a life as possible.

Radiography*: Working with advanced technological equipment to produce high quality images that assist in diagnosis of illness or injury (Diagnostic Radiography) or to treat people with cancer or non-malignant diseases (Therapeutic Radiography or Radiotherapy).

Optometry: Primary health care specialists trained to examine the eyes to detect defects in vision, signs of injury, ocular diseases or abnormality and general health problems like high blood pressure and diabetes.

Orthoptics*: Diagnosis and treatment of abnormal eye movement such as squints, lazy eye or double vision.

Dietetics*: Applying the science of nutrition to the management and treatment of diet-related illnesses and also contributing to the general care of patients by prescribing suitable dietary solutions.

Orthotics and Prosthetics*: Treatment and care for people needing artificial limbs and the provision of support devices such as braces, callipers and splints for people needing physical support or protection.

Operating Department Practitioner*: Delivering safe, high quality care to surgical patients during anaesthesia, surgery and recovery.

Paramedic Science/Practice*: Learning the scientific, intellectual, practical and transferable skills required by a paramedic in the ambulance service; includes in-depth study of anatomy, physiology and other relevant scientific, behavioural and ethical issues.

Healthcare Science: Recently introduced as part of the NHS modernisation programme and encompasses a range of courses that normally include substantial periods of time spent on clinical placements in NHS settings:

Healthcare Science (Audiology*): Assessing, diagnosing and rehabilitating people with hearing loss or balance disorders and testing, fitting and adjusting hearing aids.

Healthcare Science (Cardiovascular): Using specialist diagnostic equipment to give essential information to cardiologists so they can make accurate diagnoses and organise appropriate treatment.

Healthcare Science (Clinical Engineering): Providing scientific and engineering support to the NHS specialising in medical or rehabilitation or renal engineering and working on diagnostic and monitoring equipment, orthopaedic devices or artificial organs.

Healthcare Science (Life Sciences): Providing a scientific and technological support role to the NHS through all life stages from prenatal screening to post mortem analysis.

Healthcare Science (Nuclear Medicine): Delivering the most advanced techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of disease utilising isotopes and radiation in its various forms.

Healthcare Science (Physiological Sciences): Investigating the functioning of body systems to assist in disease prevention, diagnosis and monitoring.

Healthcare Science (Radiotherapy Physics): Operating and quality assuring equipment and systems that relate to X-ray and gamma radiation and that capture and process images involved in diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Healthcare Science (Respiratory & Sleep Physiology): Using various diagnostic tests to investigate and examine lung function, eg cardiopulmonary exercise testing, bronchial challenge testing, allergy testing, lung volume measurement, respiratory gas exchange, blood gas analysis and response to treatment or exercise.

Osteopathy: Treating illness and injury by the manipulation of bones and joints and working with the nervous system and blood supply to alleviate symptoms of asthma, migraines, stress or digestive disorders.

Chiropractic: Similar to osteopathy but more 'musculoskeletal' and aims to improve the condition of muscles, tendons and organs or relieve pain and tension by manipulation of the spine and alignment of vertebrae.

Complementary Therapies: The practice of holistic therapies such as acupuncture, aromatherapy, homeopathy or herbal medicine.

Pharmacy: Studying the origins, chemistry, actions and uses of drugs; the preparation and supply of medicines; the provision of advice on symptoms, drug therapy and drug storage; the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices; and the monitoring of side effects; leading to work in community or hospital pharmacies or in the pharmaceutical industry.

Pharmacology: Investigating the effects of drugs on humans and animals, researching and developing new drugs to treat disease and assuring the safety of substances used as pesticides, detergents, solvents or food additives.

Anatomy: Studying how a living organism works by exploring the structure and organisation of tissues and their component cells, and their inter-relationship.

Physiology: Studying the functions of living organisms such as how they grow, develop, reproduce and absorb and process nutrients.

Human Physiology: Overview of the human body and how it functions (whereas Biomedical Science focuses in on cells and tissues)

Biology: The broad study of life and living things, centred around cells, genetics, ecology and the form and function of living organisms; it studies life in its variety and complexity, describing how organisms go about getting food, communicating, sensing the environment, and reproducing.

Human Biology: The application of human anatomy, human physiology, biochemistry and molecular and cell biology to issues like how blood pressure is controlled, what are the causes of obesity or how the systems of the human body are integrated to allow us to live in diverse environments.

Microbiology: Studying micro-organisms (bacteria, mycelia fungi, yeast and viruses) which affect humans in a variety of detrimental or beneficial ways, from causing disease to the production of antibiotics or fertilisers.

Biomedical Science: Some courses focus on the laboratory sciences associated with working in a hospital pathology department, covering haematology and transfusion science, medical microbiology, pathology and clinical chemistry; other courses (especially at universities with a medical school) may be more broadly focused on biomedical research – drawing on physiology, pharmacology, molecular biology, anatomy, genetics and neuroscience.

Immunology: How vertebrate animals react to foreign substances and how the body can resist or recover from infectious disease through an immune response.

Molecular Biology: Closely linked to Biochemistry, focusing on the very large molecules found in cells, especially the nucleic acids that control the transmission of information from one generation to the next. Is often studied in conjunction with Cell Biology, as in Molecular & Cellular Biology.

Cell Biology: Closely linked to Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Anatomy and Physiology and is a key to the study of cancer, stem cell research and degenerative diseases.

Genetics: The study and manipulation of the molecular level of DNA sequences that encode the genetic potential of all living organisms and allow the transmission of inherited characteristics from one generation to the next.

Biochemistry: Study of the chemical processes in living organisms and the structure and function of cellular components such as protein, carbohydrates, lipids, nucleic acids and other biomolecules; can also cover areas such as blood, immune systems, nervous systems, enzymes and metabolism and links back to the study of physiology, genetics and molecular and cellular biology.

Neuroscience: How the nervous system responds to incoming sensory information and organisms and how it executes its response – complicated by the need for it to take account of mood, memory, the ageing process and the effects of infection or accidental damage; draws especially from anatomy, physiology, biochemistry and psychology.

Forensic Science: The application of science to the law. This is a very popular field. The number of students wanting to study it is far higher than the number of jobs in forensic science. But it can be very interesting to study.

Biochemical Engineering: Applying the latest technology to biological materials, processes and systems to enable the mass production of products such as vaccines, foods, sweeteners or to improve sewage treatment or create the magic bullets that locate and kill tumours.

Medical or Biomedical Engineering: The fusion of engineering science with clinical medicine, which is starting to play a central role in the development and improvement of treatment across a range of diseases and medical conditions.

Medical Physics: Maintaining and improving the quality, safety and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services through the specification, selection, acceptance testing, commissioning, quality assurance and clinical use of medical devices and protecting patients from exposure to physical agents such as x-rays, electromagnetic fields, laser light or radionuclides.

Biophysics: Studying life at every level, from atoms and molecules to cells, organisms, and environments, biophysicists use new innovations in biology and physics to explore questions like: How do protein machines work?

How do systems of nerve cells communicate? How do proteins pack DNA into viruses? How do viruses invade cells? How do plants harness sunlight to make food?

Biotechnology: The use of micro-organisms, plant and animal cells, cellular organelles or enzymes to produce commercial products or processes, especially in agriculture, food, medicine, pharmaceuticals or the environment.

Biomaterials Science: Studying the properties of matter, their interactions with living cells and their application to science and engineering to produce innovative new healthcare products or processes.

Dental Materials: Combining science with manufacturing technologies and design to overcome dental and maxillofacial problems (bones of the jaw and face).

Zoology: The branch of biology that has a primary focus on animal life, evolution, ecology and physiology and that also helps us to understand animal behaviour and identify ways of enhancing animal welfare.

Environmental Health: Studying all aspects of the natural and built environment that may affect human health; leads to employment as Environmental Health Officers, usually working for local authorities.

Chemistry: The study of matter and energy and the interactions between them.

Medicinal Chemistry: Ideal if you have a strong interest in the biological aspects of chemistry; will include some pharmacology and physiology and may cover issues like drug toxicity, rational drug design and chemotherapy.

Sports Science or Sport & Exercise Science: Applying the principles of physiology, biomechanics, psychology and other science and social science themes to influence the ways in which a person can move, think, behave, recover, prevent illness, enhance lifestyle and perform to the best of their ability.

Clinical Exercise Science: Prescribing and managing exercise and rehabilitation programmes for people who may be healthy or have musculoskeletal injuries, long-term illness or disability.

Sports Therapy: The academic study of sports science and sports medicine to enable you, as part of an interdisciplinary team, to provide care, management and rehabilitation for sport and recreation participants of all ages and to help them to optimise training, preparation, injury prevention and performance.

Human Sciences: An interdisciplinary degree in which advanced discoveries in human biological function are studied in combination with the behavioural insights provided by the social sciences of psychology, sociology, human geography and anthropology.

Psychology: The scientific study of how the mind works and how biological and social factors shape human and animal behaviour; explores issues such as memory, decision-making and personality traits.

Childhood Studies: Explores how children develop from birth, how they acquire the ability to learn and think for themselves and how their development is influenced by their families and the community they live in.

Social Policy: Looks at the ways in which society handles the welfare of individuals and families; will explore issues like how scarce health resources should be allocated and how societies should provide care for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Healthcare Management, Policy & Research: Studying healthcare system delivery, innovation, safety, health policy, leadership, management, decision-making and the social science of healthcare, health services, research and data analysis.

Social Work*: Studies human growth and development, social welfare and law alongside the practical and professional skills needed to qualify as a social worker, where you may work with children, young people, families, adults, the elderly or people with disabilities or mental health issues.

Anthropology: The study of humankind and its origins, evolution, interactions and diversity; biological anthropology is focused around human evolution while social anthropology explores social and cultural differences and their determinants.

Sources & Links

[GRADUATE PROSPECTS](#)

[WHICH? STUDENT SURVEY](#)

[HESA](#) & [HEPI-HEA](#)

| | | |
|--|---|--|
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