

Deciding on Medicine

So, you're thinking of becoming a doctor?

The Medic Portal has created a free step-by-step guide to help you finalise your decision and equip you with everything you need to get into Medical School.

Studying Medicine usually involves 5 years of study at university, followed by more training years at the start of your career. So it's important to make sure that Medicine is right for you.

This page provides the headline information to help you decide, before offering a step-by-step guide on what you need to do. Don't forget to use all the subpages to make the most of the section.

What's Being a Doctor Like?

Being a doctor is a uniquely rewarding career. It is also extremely challenging. Unlike other courses you might apply to, Medicine ties you directly into a specific career path. In the UK, it also binds you to a particular employer: the [National Health Service \(NHS\)](#).

It's very important that you understand the realities of being a doctor as well as you can before committing to the pathway. This includes being clued-up on the NHS.

Medicine binds scientific challenge with human interaction. It also offers a genuine chance to make a difference to peoples' lives.

On the other hand, being a doctor is highly stressful. There are times when you won't be able to help and will be breaking bad news — often after long hours and working nights.

The best way to start getting an insight into whether Medicine is right for you is to read our case studies, get some [medical work experience](#) and follow our [blogs](#) from medical applicants and students.

What Makes A Good Doctor?

There are certain key qualities that make a good medical student and, ultimately, a good doctor.

If you're seriously considering Medicine, it helps if you possess the following traits:

- Academic excellence

- Strong scientific ability
- Commitment and tenacity
- Organisational skills
- People skills, like empathy
- Communication skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Leadership potential
- Stress management
- Desire to learn and teach

You can read more about what makes a good doctor in the General Medical Council's report: [Tomorrow's Doctors](#).

What Is The Medical School Application Process?

Applying to study Medicine in the UK is a long and challenging process. But The Medic Portal is here to help you through each and every step. In summary, these are:

1. Deciding on Medicine — making sure being a doctor is right for you
2. [Doing Work Experience](#) — finding out what it's like and strengthening your application
3. [Choosing a Medical School](#) — Narrowing down from 34 to your top four
4. [Completing UCAS](#) — Applying to four UK Medical Schools through UCAS
5. [Writing a Personal Statement](#) — writing a great personal statement for your UCAS Form
6. [Doing UKCAT](#) — Getting a top mark in this key entrance exam for most Medical Schools
7. [Doing BMAT](#) — Taking this second exam if you are applying to certain universities
8. [Passing the Interview](#) — performing well at Medical School interviews
9. Starting at Medical School!

What Is The Medical Training Pathway?

It is important that you understand what Medical School is going to be like. However, Medicine courses in the UK can be quite different.

In order to learn more about what to expect, you should read-up on the different course structures: [traditional courses](#), [integrated courses](#) and [problem-based learning](#).

Can I Study Medicine Abroad?

Studying Medicine abroad is an increasingly popular option. There are some great options, it is cheaper and it can provide an opportunity for those who don't get an offer in the UK. Read more about international options [here](#).

Are There Other Options In Healthcare?

If working in healthcare really appeals to you but you're not sure about becoming a doctor, you might be well-suited to Dentistry and Allied Health professions. Read more about those [here](#).

What You Need To Do

1. [Sign up to The Medic Portal for free](#). This will give you free access to your personal portfolio, 50+ UKCAT questions and quicker and easier checkout options.
2. Get Informed. As well as using The Medic Portal and reading up on Medicine, you should talk to your careers advisers at school.
3. Listen to Others. Speak with other Medical School applicants, medical students and doctors. Get a head start with our case study pages.
4. Get Work Experience. The best way to find out if Medicine is right for you is to do relevant work experience. Use our [work experience page](#) to learn more
5. Check Medical School Entry Requirements. Use our [Medical School Comparison Tool](#) to see what these are and to make sure Medicine is a realistic option.

Case Studies

- [Medical Applicant Case Study](#)
- [Medical Student Case Study 1](#)
- [Medical Student Case Study 2](#)
- [Medical Student Case Study 3](#)