

# THE RIGHT FIT

A guide to university  
for students



## Medicine



# Should I go to uni?

## Why study Medicine?

- 1 To make a difference and improve people's lives.
- 2 To have a job that will always be in demand.
- 3 For great personal development opportunities and challenges.
- 4 If you love to problem solve.

## What could I do with Medicine?

There are 60 different specialities within medicine: From Cardiology to General Practice to Genenomics to Orthopaedic Surgery.

With a degree in Medicine you could:

Become a consultant in your chosen field.

Become a clinical manager.

Become involved in research.

Use your skills in the armed forces.

Be a lecturer.



For more information  
about these and many  
more jobs, visit:

[healthcareers.nhs.uk](https://healthcareers.nhs.uk)  
[bma.org.uk](https://bma.org.uk)  
[gmc-uk.org](https://gmc-uk.org)

## What about alternative routes?

It's hard to decide what you want to do when you are older. So, if you're not sure about going to university, these websites could help:

- [notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://notgoingtouni.co.uk) will help you find out about alternatives to university.
- [careerpilot.org.uk](http://careerpilot.org.uk) will help look at all your options at the ages of 16, 18 and even afterwards.
- [findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk) to find a full list of apprenticeships in the UK.
- [healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://healthcareers.nhs.uk)
- [jobs.nhs.uk](http://jobs.nhs.uk)

## Other important criteria

No matter what route you take to healthcare, it is important that you are able to demonstrate certain values and behaviours that are vital for a career in healthcare. These values and behaviours are all about how you as an individual make decisions about your actions. There are two sets of values:

### The 6 Cs:

Care  
Compassion  
Courage  
Communication  
Commitment  
Competence

### The NHS Constitution values and behaviours:

Working together for patients  
Respect and dignity  
Commitment to quality of care  
Compassion  
Improving lives  
Everyone counts

## Subject specific tip

### Entrance exams

Most medical schools will require applicants to have passed a pre-admissions test before offering applicants a place on their course. In the UK these are the UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test) or BMAT (BioMedical Admissions Test). For comparisons and more information go to [medschools.ac.uk](http://medschools.ac.uk)

## Work experience

Anyone considering a career in healthcare must have relevant work experience. Any length of work experience whether in a hospital or not, volunteering or part-time work can be useful. Always think about how you can relate your work experience to the values and behaviours mentioned here.

For more information on NHS values and work experience visit the [healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://healthcareers.nhs.uk) and [england.nhs.uk](http://england.nhs.uk) websites.

# Choosing a course

There is a lot of information out there so while you are choosing a subject keep these things in mind:

## **Entry requirements**

These will vary from course to course.

## **Course content**

Always check the modules on the course to make sure you get to study topics that interest you.

## **Teaching method**

What suits you the most: independent study, lectures, seminars?

## **Assessment types**

Do you do best in coursework, practical work or exams? Also does the course provide certifications you need?

## **Entry Requirements**

Universities publish their typical entry requirements. Some universities will also have contextual offer which are lower requirements depending on the student's background, skills or a variety of other reasons.

## **Work experience opportunities and careers help**

Does the uni you are considering have connections with employers, help with getting a job or a placement, study abroad opportunities, sandwich year, interview process training, etc?

# Choosing a university

To make choosing from hundreds of UK universities easier, **consider the following things:**

## **Size**

Some unis only have 1000 students while some might have over 30,000!

## **Location**

How far do you want to be from home? In a big city or smaller town? Up north or down south?

## **Campus or city university?**

Campus universities have all their buildings on one big campus. City universities are spread around a bustling city.

DEGREE	EXAMPLE OF UNI	ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	CAREER PROSPECTS <sup>1</sup> AFTER 6 MONTHS	
			% EMPLOYED	AVERAGE EARNING
<b>Medicine MB ChB</b>	University of Oxford	A*AA including Chemistry and one of Biology, Physics or Maths	100	£32,000
<b>Gateway to Medicine BM ChB</b>	University of Bristol	BBC including Biology or Chemistry	100	£32,000
<b>Medicine BMBS</b>	University of Southampton	AAA including Chemistry and Biology, GCSE: 6 subjects at grade 7 (A) or above	99	£32,000
<b>Medical Science BSc</b>	University of Reading	ABB including Biology and a second science	No data	No data

**These are some of the degrees for the jobs mentioned earlier.**

1 | [discoveruni.gov.uk](http://discoveruni.gov.uk)

### Cost of living and accommodation

The north is usually cheaper than the south. Cities are more expensive than rural areas. Quality and price of accommodation will vary too.

### Bursaries, grants and support for you

Financial awards are different at each university. Check which university will support you most suitably.

### Sports clubs and societies you might want to join

Do you want to carry on a sport or maybe try a new hobby? Check if the uni you are looking at has the clubs you are interested in.

### Reputation

What is the university known for? Academics, sport, atmosphere, and so on.

The Higher Education system in the UK is set up so that anyone who wants to go to university, can! So don't let the finances deter you.

# Finance

When you apply for student finance you claim two different loans<sup>1</sup>;

**A tuition loan of up to £9,250/annum<sup>1</sup> for the cost of your studies** – paid in full to the university. None of the tuition fee has to be paid up front by you.

**A maintenance loan up to £12,010/annum<sup>1</sup> for living costs** – paid in termly instalments to you. This loan is income and circumstance assessed.

**Note:** These numbers change year on year so please check [slc.co.uk](http://slc.co.uk) or [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) for up to date information.

## Repayments<sup>1</sup>

As of April 2020<sup>2</sup>, repayments for student loans:

- Start the April after you graduate and only once you earn over £26,575.
- Stop if your income drops below £26,575, which means if you are not earning enough your parents don't have to cover you.
- Are taken straight out of your pay check so you never have to go to the bank to pay it.
- Are 9% of your earnings over £26,575 (see table).
- Do not affect your credit rating or your ability to get a mortgage.
- All outstanding debt is written off after 30 years.

SALARY PER YEAR	£ OVER £26,575	9% (IN £)	MONTHLY REPAYMENT IN £
£21,000	0	0	0
£25,000	0	0	0
£30,000	3,425	308	25
£40,000	13,425	1,208	100

AVERAGE GRADUATE SALARY 2019

ABOUT THE SAME AS A PHONE CONTRACT

University can be expensive, but over a lifetime with a degree you are likely to earn many times more than you will repay. If you have an ambition, a dream, or an interest in a subject, it is worth it to invest in your own future!

For more information go to [thestudentroom.co.uk](http://thestudentroom.co.uk) or [slc.co.uk](http://slc.co.uk)

# Jargon Buster

**Higher Education (HE)** The level of education that leads to a degree.

**Gap year** A year away from education to gain work experience, save up funds or go travelling.

**Undergraduate** Students studying for their first degree.

**Graduate** Someone who has completed an undergraduate course.

**Higher National Diploma (HND)** A two year work-related qualification; considered to be an equivalent of two years of HE study.

**Foundation degree** A one year course taken in preparation for an undergraduate degree.

**Bachelor's degree** Usually a three year degree course. Bachelors of Arts (BA) are for arts and humanities courses while Bachelors of Science (BSc) are for science courses.

**Master's degree** A more advanced degree, either taken after a Bachelor's degree or as an integrated Master's.

**Joint honours degree** A degree comprised of two different subjects.

**Postgraduate degree** Courses taken after your first degree such as a master's degree.

**Sandwich year** A work-placement year taken during a degree.

**Admission Team** The people who receive and consider your application.

**Halls of Residence** Student accommodation at the University.

**Campus** University grounds.

**UCAS** The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service through which you apply to university.

**Open Days** Days during which you can visit universities free of charge and be shown round.

**Prospectus** A printed booklet advertising a school or university to potential students.

**Student Loans Company (SLC)** A non-profit, Government-owned organisation who provide loans and grants to students in universities and colleges in the UK.

**Student Loan** A loan students can take up from SLC to cover living costs and tuition fees.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

**ucas.com** All things university related and the portal through which you apply to university.

**prospectus.ac.uk** Careers website with details on a huge variety of career options.

**opendays.com** A list of all the university open days in the UK.

**universitytasterdays.com** A list of taster days available at UK universities.

**discoveruni.gov.uk** Compares entry requirements, course details and prospects of UK degrees.

**thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk** and **timeshighereducation.com** University and subject league tables, helpful advice and guides on many university related topics.

**thestudentroom.co.uk** University guides, articles and question forums.

**careerpilot.org.uk** A summary of options at ages 13/14, at 16+ and 18+.

**slc.co.uk** Student Loans Company website for financial questions.

**notgoingtouni.co.uk** A list of opportunities if you do not want to pursue university.

**healthcareers.nhs.uk** The 'one stop shop' for NHS careers information, advice and guidance.

**jobs.nhs.uk** The website which advertises all NHS vacancies. Sign up for email alerts.

### Study Higher partner universities' websites

**reading.ac.uk**  
University of Reading

**brookes.ac.uk**  
Oxford Brookes University

**ox.ac.uk**  
University of Oxford

**bucks.ac.uk**  
Bucks New University