



OUTREACH
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Useful Resources & Web links

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Information, Advice and Guidance

There are lots of things to think about when considering studying medicine and becoming a doctor. To help you navigate these choices and to support you in making an informed decision about your next steps, we've collated a number of useful online resources. To make the most of these resources, whether it's a news article, a scientific short-course, a podcast or a work experience programme, make sure you take a few moments to make some notes and think. Think about what you've read or listened to and consider whether what you've learnt. For example, is it something you didn't know before, has it changed your perception of something, what is its relevance to the study and practice of medicine? For further guidance on making reflective notes, see the [Health and Education and University of Leeds resource](#).

Disclaimer: Medical school requirements and processes often change from year to year. For the most up-to-date information, we would always recommend contacting the specific medical school.

Medical Schools Council (MSC) and Studying Healthcare

The MSC is the representative body for medical schools in the UK. Their collaborative website "Studying Healthcare" is a great starting place for building an understanding of the medical school admissions process. It has helpful webpages, info sheets and videos discussing everything from entry requirements to admissions tests to personal statements and interviews. It also explores different roles within medicine and healthcare, as well as the differences between medical schools.

Visit the Studying Healthcare website: <https://studyinghealthcare.ac.uk/>

NHS Health Careers

The official NHS Careers website has lots of useful information, not just about medicine and becoming a doctor but the huge variety of other careers in healthcare. It also includes information on the NHS values.

Visit the NHS Health Careers website: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/

Dr You

There are a lot of myths surrounding the medical school application process. Dr You – developed by Health Education England – aims to bust those myths to showcase that there is no such thing as a “typical” doctor.

Visit the Dr You webpages: <https://nhstalentacademy.org.uk/dr-you/>

The British Medical Association (BMA)

The BMA represents all UK doctors and medical students. They have produced some guidance on becoming a doctor, which includes discussing routes for those who may not be applying to medical school straight from school or college.

Visit the BMA website: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/career/studying-medicine/becoming-a-doctor>

The Medic Portal

This is a commercial enterprise with a vast number of freely accessible resources from admissions test tips to example interview questions and information on hot topics in the NHS.

Visit The Medic Portal: www.themedicportal.com/

Please note we do not endorse or recommend any commercial paid-for courses.

Healthcare News and Current Events

Medicine is a fast paced and ever-changing field. Keeping up-to-date with healthcare news and medical innovations is therefore vital for both doctors but also aspiring medics, as current topics are often asked about at interviews. We recommend having a look through the following:

- **NHS England News** - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/news/>
- **BBC News Health** - www.bbc.co.uk/news/health
- **Aspiring Medics** - <https://www.theaspiringmedics.co.uk/articles/categories/medicine-interview-tips>

The Aspiring Medics is another commercial enterprise who have produced a number of free and easy to read articles discussing a range of topics from controlling disease outbreaks to medical ethics (with real case studies) to mental health and social media.

Please note we do not endorse or recommend any commercial paid-for courses.

The next two recommendations are newspaper websites. When reading newspaper articles, you need to be aware that the facts may not necessary be reported correctly and that there may be a political leaning.

- **Independent Health and Families** - www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families
- **The Guardian Health** - www.theguardian.com/society/health

Science

Most, if not all, medical schools expect their candidates to display a personal interest for science as a subject. To do this, it is good to show evidence of wider reading, outside of your curriculum. The following websites may be of interest:

- **New Scientist:** <https://www.newscientist.com/>
- **IFL Science:** <https://www.iflscience.com/health-and-medicine/>
- **FutureLearn:** <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

FutureLearn host a variety of free science and medicine-based short courses from medicinal chemistry to genetics to anatomy to nutrition and wellbeing (and everything in between).

Tip: To access to the free courses, filter by the course subscription option “Included in Unlimited”. Once you’ve found the course you’d like to start, select the “join with limited access” option.

Podcasts

Podcasts can also offer many insights into the world of science and healthcare.

- **BBC Inside Health:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b019dl1b>

Inside Health discusses and demystifies a wide variety of topical health issues

- **BBC All in the Mind:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9>

All in the Mind explores many areas relating to mental health, with several in-depth, psychology-focussed, episodes exploring the human mind and behaviour.

- **BBC The Life Scientific:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b015sqc7>

This podcast features leading scientists, from a number of different disciplines, who discuss their life so far and the importance and application of their work and research.

- **The British Medical Journal (BMJ) Sharp Scratch:** <https://www.bmj.com/sharpscratch>

Sharp Scratch- led by current medical students and recently qualified doctors – asks and discusses the questions that medical school don't often answer and delve into the realities of what it's really like to be a UK medical school student.

- **Past Medical History:** <https://open.spotify.com/show/2Dr5xdXVb5NtNtzqCOkH8W>

Past Medical History is a podcast series created by Evie O'Rourke (a current BSMS student) that explores what life is like after medical school with BSMS Alumni.

- **The Royal Society of Medicine Digital Health:**
<https://open.spotify.com/show/0z9vxYvGgTXCwsS8aQJwXU>

RSM Digital Health features leaders at The Royal Society of Medicine who discuss the benefits, challenges and considerations of utilising technology and data to transform the NHS and improve health outcomes.

- **The Kings Fund Podcast:** <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/the-kings-fund-podcast/id1363947403>

The King's Fund podcast discusses topical issues within the NHS, social care, and all things health policy and leadership.

- **Everyday Emergency:** <https://podcasts.apple.com/nz/podcast/everyday-emergency/id1114040904?mt=2>

Everyday Emergency is a podcast from Doctors Without Borders which tells stories of the people on the frontline of humanitarian emergencies across the world.

- **Bedside Rounds:** <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/bedside-rounds/id919579524?mt=2>

Bedside Rounds looks at the history of medicine and the role it plays in society and culture.

- **The NHS Frontline:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000h5l1/episodes/downloads>

The NHS Front line features recordings with frontline staff on the wards at Bradford Royal Infirmary, as they managed the Covid-19 pandemic.

Documentaries

If you haven't had many opportunities to speak with a doctor, it can be difficult to find out exactly what it is like working as one. There are lots of interesting medicine-related documentaries, which you can access on demand from various channels.

- **The Wonders of Medicine:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p0717lg5>

A collection of programmes exploring multiple facets of medicine from both those who provide healthcare and those who receive it. Titles in the collection include:

- Surgeons: At the Edge of Life
- Junior Doctors on the Front Line
- Ambulance
- Children's Ward
- **24 Hours in A&E:** <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/24-hours-in-ae>
- **GPs: Behind Closed Doors:** <http://www.channel5.com/show/gps-behind-closed-doors/>
- **Hospital: Road to Recovery:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08w8ktc>

This episode explores the challenges currently facing the NHS, as trusts implement their recovery programme to manage the impact of Covid-19.

- You can also watch [interviews with healthcare professionals](#) who worked at the Royal Free Hospital during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Reflective Tip: For each documentary, note three skills that you notice being used by the healthcare team. Think about why they had to use those skills and what impact they had on the patient(s).

Online Work Experience Resources

Defined by the [Medical Schools Council](#) “work experience is any activity or life experience that helps you to prepare for medical school”. Activities that provide a realistic insight into medicine and/or support your development of core values and attributes essential to being a doctor, such as those listed below, could therefore be considered relevant*. For any such activity to be of value in a medical school application however, it’s important to reflect on what you’ve learnt about the medical field and/or yourself as a result of engaging with the resource. It is this reflection that medical schools will be looking for, not merely a list of what’s been completed.

*Some medical schools may stipulate work experience requirements and therefore we would always encourage you to check medical school specific websites before applying.

- **Brighton and Sussex Medical School Virtual Work Experience:**

<https://bsmsoutreach.thinkific.com/courses/VWE>

A free online resource introducing you to the NHS before exploring the roles and skill sets of six different medical specialists. Along the way, you will also consider some of the challenges and wider issues doctors face. Scenarios of patients are presented within the presentations, videos, quizzes and interactive activities.

- **Royal College General Practitioners – Observe GP:** rcgp.org.uk/observegp

A free interactive video platform providing insights into the role of a GP and the wider primary care team through eight pre-recorded patient consultations. Themes of the videos include long

term condition management, self-care, and person-centred care. Key terminology and activities appear on screen to reinforce learning and prompt reflection.

- **Springpod - Healthcare and Medicine Virtual Work Experience:**

<https://www.springpod.com/>

A variety of virtual work experience opportunities providing insights into careers in healthcare.

- **You Can Be A Doctor - Clinical Work Experience:**

<https://youcanbeadoctor.co.uk/clinical-work-experience/>

An interactive online work experience programme providing the opportunity to learn about the day to day role of a doctor. There are two sessions which focus on clinical assessment and the management of severe infections and heart attacks

- **The NHS Explained: How the Health System in England Really Works:**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/the-nhs-explained>

An e-learning course that discusses how the NHS in England is structured, funded and how its performance is monitored. It also encourages thought on the challenges that the NHS is and will face, as well as the resource required to maintain a health population.

- **Caring for adults:** <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/social-care-social-work/caring-adults/content-section-overview?active-tab=description-tab>

Caring for adults is an introductory course that aims to develop knowledge and skills that are required for providing person-centred care. There are five different modules explore topics such as communication, mental health, palliative care and self-care.

- **Mullany Social Mobility charity – A day in the life of a GP:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAsvpWSqjCA&feature=youtu.be>

- **General Medical Council (GMC) and NHS England – Patients Journey to GP practice:**

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/about/what-we-do-and-why/learning-and-support/e-learning-resources/patient-journey-to-gp-practice>

Follow Mrs Thomas and her son Jack in their encounters with a receptionist, doctor, nurse, and pharmacist gaining insight into how a GP practice in the UK operates from a patient's perspective.

- **Medic Mentor Work Experience: Intensive and Critical Care:**

<https://wexlibrary.yourmedicfamily.org/courses/medic-mentor-work-experience/>

This programme follows six different patient pathways, providing an overview of healthcare from the medical, surgical and general practice perspectives.

Outreach Programmes

There are many universities, organisations and charities that run medicine-focused programmes, which maybe provide further insights into medicine and/or support with various aspects of the medical school admissions process. Please note some programme may have specific eligibility criteria.

- **Brighton and Sussex Medical School – BrightIdeas:**

<https://www.bsms.ac.uk/about/info-for-schools-teachers-parents/widening-participation-to-medicine.aspx>

- **Social Mobility Organisation – Aspiring Professionals**

Programme <https://www.socialmobility.org.uk/programmes/#programmes>

- **University of Oxford: Uniq:** <http://www.uniq.ox.ac.uk/>

- **The Sutton Trust – Pathways to Medicine:** <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-programmes/pathways-to-medicine/>

Social Media

There are a number of useful social media accounts providing regular insights, advice and guidance.

- **#Wearemedics :** <https://www.instagram.com/wearemedics/?hl=en>

Medical students from the University of Birmingham's Widening Access to Medicine Society (BWAMS) provide information and insight into different medical specialties, tips and advice on interviews, admissions tests, and what to consider when applying to medical school.

- **@CU_wamms:** https://www.instagram.com/cu_wamms/

Medical Students from Cardiff University regularly provide insights into various medical specialities and the undergraduate medicine programme in their "day in a life series". They also post top tips for medical school applications and run a number of online events.

- **@BSMSOutreach:** <https://www.instagram.com/bsmsoutreach/>

Wider Healthcare Team

Doctors work with many other healthcare professionals, as part of a multidisciplinary team (MDT). To ensure a realistic understanding of what a doctor does on a day-to-day basis, we'd recommend taking time to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between different careers within the NHS.

- **NHS Health Careers:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles>

Explore over 350 NHS health-related careers. Remember, even if you are only interested in becoming a doctor, it's important to understand how healthcare professionals work together to care for patients.

- **AHP 360:** <https://hee-vr360.azurewebsites.net/>

VR 360 videos showing clips of Allied Health Professionals consultations with clinician voiceover explaining their role and interaction with the patient.

- **University of Leeds – Headstart into Healthcare:**
<https://www.healthsciences.leeds.ac.uk/headstart/post-16-resources/>

This collection of resources introduces the NHS before moving on to a short film which follows Josh and his grandfather, Patrick, as they navigate Patrick's health issues and Josh's future

career aspirations together. A variety of healthcare professionals subsequently provide their perspective on Patrick's care and an overview of different careers in health is given.

Medical School Admissions Tests

All the information and resource required to score highly on admissions tests for can be accessed free of charge through the respective websites. The key to doing well is plenty of practice and practising under timed conditions.

- **BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT):** <https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/>
- **University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT):** <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>

Please note there are costs associated with both tests, however both testing bodies have financial support for applicants available. You can find out more information below:

- **BMAT Reimbursement:** <https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/bmat-november/dates-and-costs/>
- **UCAT Bursary:** <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/bursary-scheme/>

Medical School Personal Statements and Interview Preparation

To prepare for a personal statement and/or a medical school interview, generally speaking, it's important you understand the role of a doctor and the realities of working in medicine – you can obtain both through all the aforementioned resources.

It is also important that you have reflected on your own personal skill set. The Medical Schools Council (MSC) has created a list of core values and attributes required to study medicine.

You can access this list here: <https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2542/statement-on-core-values-to-study-medicine.pdf>

You can then use this list and think about examples from your own experiences (they don't have to be in a healthcare settings), where you can demonstrate these skills. For the extra reflective step, think about where, and when these skills might be used by doctors.

Other resources that may help with this preparation include:

- **BrightKnowledge – What is Reflective Practice?**
<https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/what-is-reflective-practice>
- **General Medical Schools Council: The reflective practitioner – a guide for medical students:** <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/guidance/reflective-practice/the-reflective-practitioner---a-guide-for-medical-students>
- **Medical Schools Council – Entry Requirements:**
<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2951/entry-requirements-document-2023-entry.pdf>

An overview of all UK medical schools including their entry requirements, their use of personal statements and interviews.

- **Medical Schools Council: Personal Statement Info sheets:**
<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2374/msc-infosheet-personal-statement.pdf>
- **University of Oxford – Anatomy of a Personal Statement:**
<https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/study/medicine/pre-clinical/applying/anatomy-of-ps>
- **Wearemedics: Personal Statement E-book (2021):**
<https://go.wearemedics.com/Personal-Statement>
- **Work Psychology Group and the Medical Schools Council: Preparing for an online Multiple Mini Interview (MMI): Guidance for Applicants**
<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2811/applicant-guidance-online-mmis-2020-final.pdf>
- **The Medical Schools Council Interview Preparation Tool:**
<http://www.msccandidatepreparation.co.uk/>
- **Wearemedics: Interview E-book (2021):** <https://go.wearemedics.com/interview-eBook>

- **Wearemedics: Self- Service Interview Practice:**
<https://www.wearemedics.com/interview/>

Record your responses to five mock interview questions and assess your performance using the mark scheme.

- **The Medic Portal Webinar Series:** <https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/medical-school-interview/free-interview-webinars/>

This series of free webinars cover a variety of different interview topics.

Most medical schools will also publish their admissions processes (including interview format) on their website. For the most up to date information, it is always therefore best to check the websites of the medical schools you are interested in/have applied to.

BSMS

Our role at BSMS is to give advice and guidance to help people to make informed decisions about studying medicine.

Should you wish to subscribe to our monthly newsletter, for aspiring medics, that provides updates and relevant content to support an application to medicine, visit our outreach page here: <https://www.bsms.ac.uk/about/info-for-schools-teachers-parents/outreach-activity-and-resources-for-all.aspx>

Should you wish to find out more about BSMS, including about our course and admissions process, you can visit our virtual open day hub here:

<https://www.bsms.ac.uk/undergraduate/open-days/virtual-open-day/virtual-open-day-hub.aspx>