



eye

**PLANNING**

**FOR**

**Medicine**

(MBBCh, A100 or A101)

Hammer

The title 'PLANNING FOR Medicine' is rendered in a hand-drawn, colorful style. 'PLANNING' is in large red block letters, 'FOR' is in smaller purple block letters, and 'Medicine' is in large, dark blue cursive script. The word 'Medicine' has a green underline. The text is surrounded by various medical icons: several white pills with black markings, a white bandage with black dots, a blue stethoscope, and blue radiating lines. The word 'Hammer' is written vertically in a cursive font on the right side. The background features a pattern of light pink circles.

### Did you know?

You have to study medicine at a medical school to become a doctor.

### Did you know?

You and friends at other medical schools may graduate with different letters after your name (such as MBBCh, MBBS, MBChB etc.) but still do the same job when you are doctors.

### Did you know?

Medical schools are usually part of a university, although not all universities have medical schools.

### Did you know?

Some UK students get their medicine degree abroad. If you are considering this, remember that your qualification needs to be acceptable to the NHS.





# Year 9

## Homework

A doctor takes pride in their efforts to develop good work habits, e.g. hand in work on time and as good as you can make it.

## Remember your GCSEs

Remember that most medical schools will want you to have good grades in English, Maths (numeracy) and either Double Science or Single Science Biology and Chemistry.

## What hobbies and interests do you have?

Medical students are not all 'work, work, work.' The next few years will be challenging at times, so finding non-academic things that you enjoy is really important.

These will help you to relax and to build resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back when things go wrong.



# Year 10

## Think

A good doctor reflects on what they do, to avoid making or repeating mistakes that might be dangerous for their patients. Practise reflecting with friends or family: pick one thing that you have done or seen each day and discuss it in detail.

What happened? Why did it happen that way? What should have happened? Could it have happened any other way? What would you have done if you had been involved?

## Keep your eyes and ears open

Start asking people what they know about a career in medicine but remember that some people who want to be helpful may be misinformed or their information may be out-of-date.



**What happened?**  
**Why did it happen that way?**  
**What should have happened?**  
**Could it have happened any other way?**  
**What would have been done if you had been involved?**

# Year 11

## Choose your A levels with care

While all medical schools want at least three A levels, they are not all the same when it comes to which subjects: some require Biology and Chemistry but some will accept either Biology or Chemistry as long as you have another science and a third subject.

For some medical schools, a third A level can often be anything you like but others may prefer particular subjects. Many medical schools will not accept Critical Thinking and General Studies. Some may not accept certain subject combinations.

Maths or another science are generally acceptable but Drama, History, English, Law, Welsh, French, Statistics, Economics, Art, Welsh Baccalaureate and other subjects can help you to become a rounded doctor who is skilled at communicating.

Check with UCAS before you make your final A level choices. The Medical Schools Council website ([www.medschools.ac.uk](http://www.medschools.ac.uk)) will also tell you what subjects each medical school asks for.



## Can you get work experience?

If you are too young to get a place in a care home or hospital, or places are still limited due to COVID-19, consider volunteering – perhaps you could mow the lawn or walk the dog (safely) for an elderly person who struggles to do it themselves. Do this consistently, not just occasionally, and use the time to reflect on what life must be like for them.

Consider whether or not you enjoy helping them: doctors have empathy (the ability to ‘walk in someone’s shoes’), and they are altruistic (which means they help people in need and do not want anything in return). Does this sound like you?

Think about new skills and experiences and how these might make you a better doctor.

Our online resources booklet has suggestions too.



# Year 12

## Work experience

Apply at the start of Year 12. Call your local hospital to ask for information and apply EARLY. Work experience is not always possible in person but there are some excellent virtual work experience opportunities online.

Think about your learning style and whether you are someone who likes to be hands-on and independent or more theoretical.

## Not all medical schools and courses are the same

Do you want to intercalate, taking a year longer but graduating with two degrees instead of one?

How close to home do you want to be? Do you want a medical school that values both science and people equally or one that is more focused on developing you as a researcher?



## Remember

Most of the information you need is available free of charge: go to open days and medicine taster days, look at the Medical Schools Council website ([www.medschools.ac.uk](http://www.medschools.ac.uk)), read university websites carefully and talk to current medical students. Before going to open days, have a think about the sort of questions you would like to ask medical students, such as where you go on placement, when you start seeing patients etc.

The Student Room website is a useful place to ask students questions if you cannot make it to all of the open days.



## Make a spreadsheet of medical schools

Note on it what each one wants from its students, what you like about each, what worries you (if anything) and focus on the ones you can get into.

What do the ones you are interested in want for GCSE grades/UCAT score\*?

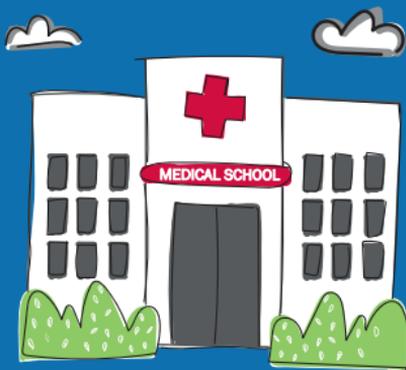
Is BMAT\* needed?

Do you have the right A levels? There are alternative qualifications\* you can study after 6th form but it will take longer to become a doctor. Should you look for medical schools with a foundation course? Which qualifications will your choices accept?

How important are your personal statement or your predicted grades?

Remember that you must meet a medical school's minimum requirements or your application will automatically be rejected; different medical schools have different minimum criteria on GCSEs and other things. Most medical schools also need you to be 18 or older on your first day.

Remember to note the UCAS code for each course (e.g. A100, A101.)\*



\*See pp21-23 for key

# EXPERIENCE

## Arrange to volunteer

Focus on volunteering that includes a care element, e.g.

- care home support groups or clubs for children with physical and or mental disabilities
- play schemes
- support groups and activity sessions for adults e.g. with dementia or MS
- children's sports coaching
- tutoring GCSE students
- mentoring other young people.

Try to do this over a significant period of time. Care home placements may take 3-4 months to arrange.

Maintain your outside interests e.g. music, sport, drama etc. This shows that you are not just focused on academic studies but are a “well rounded” individual.

Try to keep up with current news topics and developments in science and medicine.

Read an online paper (not just Facebook news feeds).

Explore scientific websites and those of the GMC and Royal Colleges of Medicine.\*

\*See pp21-23 for key

Does your school have a medicine club? Could you start one? What opportunities to learn more about medicine and science are available through Seren or public lectures?





 **M**ake sure  
to sit your test before  
applying to medical school 

Medical schools sometimes use selection tests such as UCAT, BMAT and GAMSAT to help them decide who to interview.\* Not all of them require high scores, but they might still want you to have taken the test anyway.

All medical schools constantly review how and if they use tests such as UCAT, GAMSAT etc.\* To keep up-to-date with the changes you should always look at current information on university websites.

\*See pp21-23 for key

The UCAT test can be booked from May 1st. Perhaps book a date when you are less busy and give yourself a month to prepare? Practice resources are available on the UCAT website.

If you are considering applying to a medical school that uses BMAT, register for BMAT with your test office/regional centre over summer of Year 12.

The BMAT test is in early November: early entry in September is available but you may not have enough time to prepare.\*

Once you sit the selection test, use your spreadsheet to decide which universities to apply to. UCAS lets you apply to a maximum of five courses and up to four of these can be medicine.

## Plan B

Start to develop a Plan B: what if you do not get an offer next year? Would you be willing to accept a place on another degree and apply again to medicine once you graduate? Rather than leaving your UCAS 5th choice blank, think about applying to a feeder stream course. Are you willing to have a gap year and apply again once you know your A level grades? Do you want a gap year anyway? What could you do during that time that will help you to build transferable skills and make you a better medical student?



## Personal Statement

Start writing your personal statement. Remember to look at your spreadsheet as you write your personal statement, and make sure that you cover those qualities or experiences that your preferred medical schools want in their students.

Say what you learned from your experiences. Fantastic if you have had the opportunity to shadow a brain surgeon or climb Mt Kilimanjaro but simply being there does not tell a medical school whether you will become a thoughtful, respectful doctor.



Year 13

decision time...

UCAS

Application

DEADLINE IS

October

*she*



*Summer*



# Year 13

## Keep up your volunteering

It will give you interesting and useful experiences to discuss at interview and, if you end up reapplying during a gap year, it will show that you are serious about medicine being your vocation.

Some medical schools are happy for their applicants to take a gap year, as you will apply with a year's more maturity and life experience, but remember to request it when you apply. A medical school will not be impressed if you spring it on them after they have made you an offer.



### Did you know?

Medical schools do not tell prospective students everything that will happen at an interview and they will not let private companies know either: these organisations may know what happened last year, but that does not mean a medical school will do the same thing this year.

*efh*

### Did you know?

Panel interviews are not the same as Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs) so practise the interview technique you will need for your medical schools.

### Ask for advice

Ask your school for advice and research online but remember that not all advice on the internet is up-to-date or accurate.

### Add to your spreadsheet

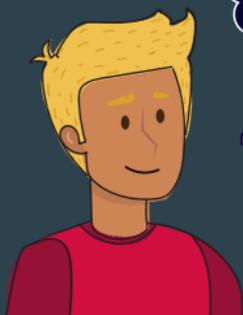
Keep adding to your spreadsheet. Make notes on your experiences in applying or at interview.

# Applications

There are more good applicants than places at medical school and every year some students who will eventually make excellent doctors walk away without offers.

Those who are resilient, as doctors need to be, will decide to use Year 13 as a learning experience and will reflect on what happened.

A well-planned re-application during a gap year, with good A levels, should be much stronger than the original UCAS application and will improve your odds of getting an offer.



How do I make my application better?



# DEADLINE

## Decision time again

UCAS\* will have a deadline by when you will need to

1. firm the offer you prefer, i.e. make it your first choice
2. make another offer, if you have one, your insurance choice, i.e. accept their offer if

you do not get the grades for your firm choice

3. reject any other offers you were made.

No offers this year?  
Time for that Plan B.

Remember

There are lots of different ways into medicine for people who are resilient and determined.

Want to know more? Take a look at our Routes into Medicine flyer



\*See pp21-23 for key



# Key



## A100, A101, etc.

Each degree has a UCAS code (see below). Two degrees may have different codes but be quite alike. Others may share an identical code but not have much else in common. Never assume that all you need to know before applying is the UCAS code.

Your degree also has a course title and maybe a name too. For example, Cardiff University's Medicine MBChB course is known as 'C21', so our medical students are called 'C21 students'.



## Feeder stream course

These are degrees that 'feed' into a medicine course if you graduate with good grades and pass the interview. Cardiff University, for example, welcomes applications to its A101 Medicine degree from four feeder stream courses, including its own Medical Pharmacology BSC (B210) degree. Feeder stream courses are worth considering if you do not get an offer in Year 13 or if you love science but are not yet sure that medicine is right for you. Not all medical schools offer a feeder stream.



## BMAT

A selection test that some medical schools want students to take before applying for medicine.

# Key



## Alternative qualifications

Students who did not take the 'right' A level subjects may do an extra year or more of study before entering medicine, being taught the science they did not do at A level. If this sounds like you, it is important to contact every one of your medical school choices for advice before you apply.



## GMC

The General Medical Council. The GMC sets standards for your future education and career in medicine.



## GAMSAT

A selection test that some medical schools want people who already have a degree, or who are in their last year of university, to take before applying for medicine.



## Minimum requirements

These are grades, skills or experiences that medical schools want from their applicants. Each medical school will have different minimum requirements. Checking these before you apply will increase your chances of getting an offer to medical school.

# Key



## MMIs

Multiple Mini Interviews. These are a type of interview that lets you talk one-to-one with many different interviewers, so that the medical school can get a fair and balanced opinion on your strengths.



## Panel interviews

A traditional style of interview, where an applicant may be interviewed by a panel of two or more people.



## UCAT

A selection test that some medical schools want students to take before applying for medicine. It used to be called UKCAT.



## UCAS

The website you use to apply to medical school. You will set up a UCAS account and use it to accept or reject offers. Medical schools will use UCAS to contact you.

- Choose your A levels with care
- Arrange volunteering
- Focus on volunteering that includes a care element
- Keep track of your choices with a spreadsheet
- Make a Plan B
- Do things that will build your resilience
- Practise reflecting with friends or family.

# REMEMBER

# Study Medicine

(MBBCh, A100 or A101)

AT

# Cardiff

UNIVERSITY

Once you apply, we look at your application step-by-step. There are lots of ways to get into medicine with us, so if your application stalls at any point, consider taking one of the alternative routes we suggest on the next page.

# What happens after I apply to medicine?

## 1. Up to October - application time

### 2. October onwards – your application is assessed

- We check you have at least the minimum grades we ask for, plus a selection test score.
- We look at your personal statement and reference.
- We then score everyone's grades and personal statements and rank all of our applications. Applicants who are a good fit for our course will be at the top of this list.

### 3. Late November – MMI invitations

- We aim to interview as many applicants as we can. If this is you, you will be sent a link so that you can choose a convenient slot.
- Alternatively, if you are not invited to interview, we may make you an offer for another course. You are welcome to reapply to us for medicine after your A levels but remember to finish any other degree you start as most medical schools will not accept transfers.

### 4. December and January – interview with us

- MMIs (Multiple Mini Interviews) held. After these are finished, all interview scores are ordered high to low.

5.

**Late February/early March – keep an eye on UCAS for an offer**

- We make offers to successful interviewees and invite them to join our offer holder info activities.
- Alternatively, if you were unsuccessful, you will get feedback from us on your performance at interview and may receive an offer for another course. You are welcome to reapply to us but remember to finish any degree you start as most medical schools will not accept transfers. Remember that you can phone us for advice on A level results day if your grades are very good.

6.

**March and April – take a second look**

- If you have an offer, join us for (optional) sessions to learn more about being a Cardiff medical student.
- If you have heard back from all of your choices, consider firming your offer.

7.

**June – is C21 right for you?**

- The final date for offer holders to firm us, make us their insurance choice, or reject our offer.

8.

**August – A level results day**

- **If you meet our offer, congratulations. We will start sending you details of what happens next.**
- Alternatively, if you have an offer from us but miss the grade we asked for, we may offer you a place on another degree. We welcome applications from graduates with good A level and degree qualifications and hope you consider reapplying once you have a degree.

9.

**September**

- Welcome to medical school, or start another interesting course that could lead to medical school at the end.
- Alternatively, if you are not starting university this year, finalise your UCAS reapplication and get ready for a great gap year, widening your range of transferable skills and deepening your knowledge of medicine and what it means to be a doctor.

## Did you know?

We use UCAT, not BMAT or GAMSAT.

## Did you know?

If you apply to us but do not get an interview or an offer, we will be happy to hear from you again next year: some of our best students tell us their gap year made all the difference when it came to strengthening their application.

## Want to know more?

Take a look at our Routes into Medicine flyer.





Medicine

AT

Cardiff

University

THE

Application

Cycle



Handwritten text 'Hmmm' written vertically in white.





CARDIFF  
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL  
CAERDYDD

Study  
Medical  
Pharmacology

(BSc, UCAS B210)

AT  
Cardiff  
UNIVERSITY

The degree and how it can  
lead into medicine...

Pharmacology is the study of drugs and their effects on living systems. Have you ever wondered how drugs like painkillers or antibiotics work?

This degree will provide you with detailed answers and much more!

# What happens when I apply to Medical Pharmacology

1.

## September – January – application time

- Apply by the last Wednesday in January. (UCAS deadline).
- We check you have at least the minimum grades we ask for.
- We look at your personal statement and reference.
- We look at your exam results and predicted grades.

2.

## November – February – keep an eye on UCAS for an offer

- We offer places to as many applicants as we can.
- Alternatively, if you were unsuccessful, you will get feedback from us and may receive an offer for another course. You are also welcome to reapply to us for Medical Pharmacology during Clearing or next year. (Remember that you can phone us for advice on A level results day).

3.

## June - is Medical Pharmacology at Cardiff University right for you?

- Offer holders decide to firm us, make us their insurance choice, or reject our offer.
- Applicants who firm us will have their offer reduced by one grade.

4.

## August – A level results

- If you meet our offer, congratulations. We will start sending you details of what happens next.
- Alternatively, if you have an offer from us but miss the grades we asked for, we may still accept you or we may offer you a place on another degree. Alternatively, if you did not get an offer from us, you are welcome to reapply for Medical Pharmacology during clearing. Remember that you can also phone us for advice on A level results day.

5.

## September

- Welcome to Cardiff University!

## Did you know?

Predicted grades will also be taken into account.

## Did you know?

If you apply to us but do not get an offer, we will be happy to hear from you again next year: some of our best students tell us their gap year made all the difference when it came to strengthening their application.

## Did you know?

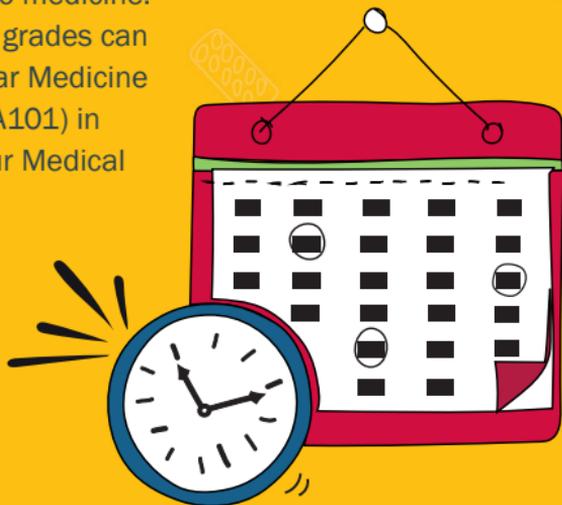
This degree can be an interesting route into medicine. Students with good grades can apply to our four year Medicine programme (UCAS A101) in their final year of our Medical Pharmacology BSc.

## Did you know?

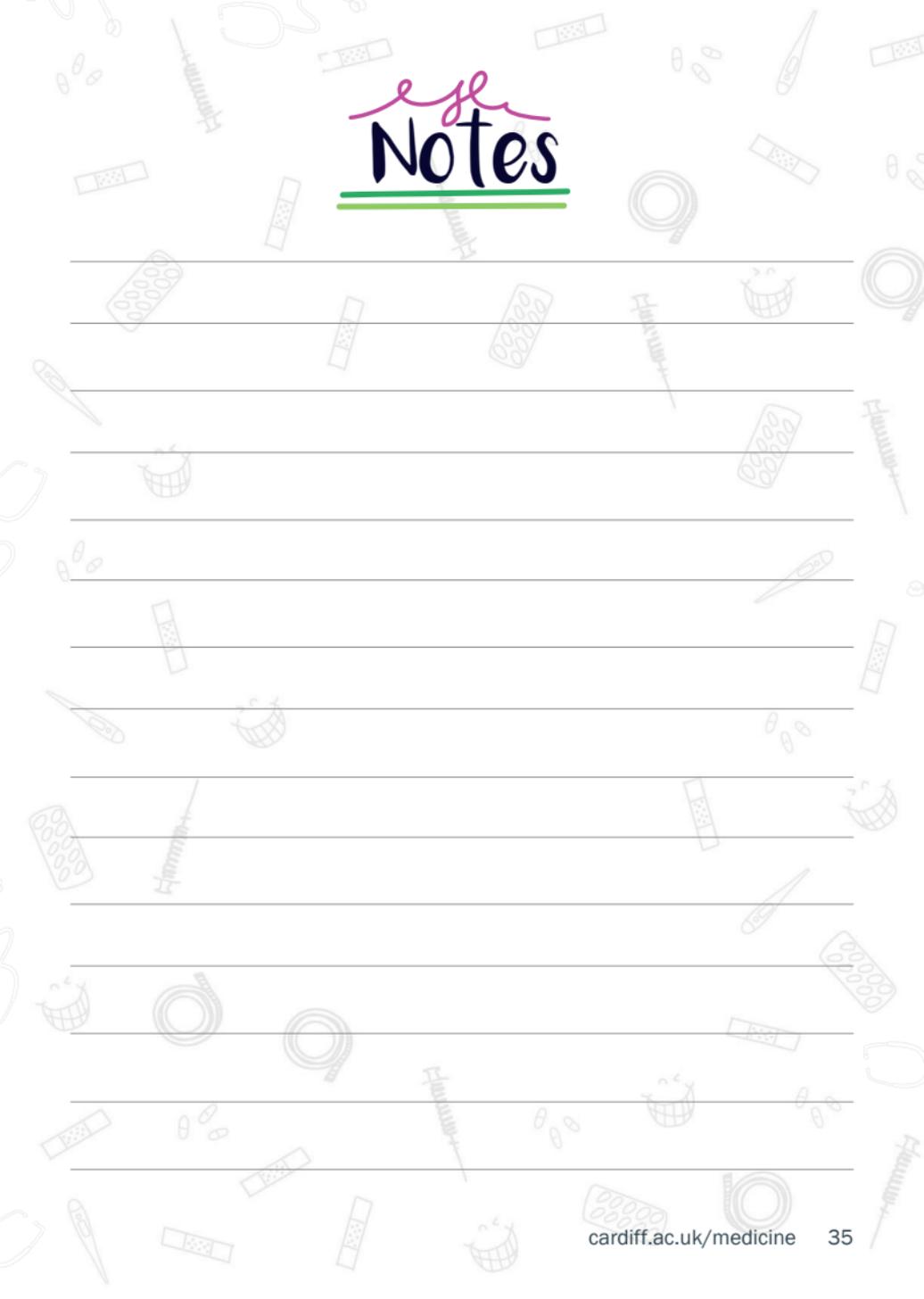
Our application deadline is always the last Wednesday in January but you are welcome to apply earlier.

We might not consider new applications made after the UCAS deadline.

## Want to know more?







# eye Notes

CARDIFF  
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL  
CAERDYDD

School of Medicine  
Ysgol Meddygaeth

Good  
Luck

[cardiff.ac.uk/medicine](http://cardiff.ac.uk/medicine)

*see*

05 2023

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

