

Undergraduate

Medicine

A medical degree provides the foundation for a variety of careers within the medical profession. A Bristol medical degree emphasises early involvement with patients and focuses on developing clinical skills. The flexibility of our courses enables you to explore areas of personal interest, helping you to determine your future direction in medicine.

Undertaking a medical degree course opens up opportunities across a wide range of careers in medicine and allied subjects. Most people think they know what doctors do, but few understand the demands of the long training and career. It takes at least five years of study before you can be awarded a medical degree and another year before you can become fully registered. Several more years training and specialisation are required before you become established in practise in a hospital or as a general practitioner. Throughout your career you will be serving society and the demands of the public.

Why study Medicine at Bristol?

At Bristol your medical education is initially of a general nature gaining a scientific understanding of the human body, but involvement with patients begins in the first year of study. Progressively you will learn more about topics of disease, illness and patient management. Although the medical course is enriched by the research environment in which it is located, the main objective is to educate doctors whose principal function will be providing a clinical service. Opportunities exist to study the medical sciences in greater detail and to undertake research (see intercalation). However, if you are primarily interested in medical research, you might also consider a science degree in a medically related subject.

You will benefit from excellent facilities. The library has recently undergone a major refurbishment and two new CETL (Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) developments with state-of-the-art teaching facilities have been developed.

What will I study?

The degree of MB ChB is awarded to students who have successfully completed the programme of study in Medicine. There are three different routes that students can follow, depending on their qualifications at the time of their entry to the medical school.

Single Honours courses

MB ChB Medicine, five years	A100
MB ChB Medicine with Pre-Medical Year, six years	A104
MB ChB Medicine (graduate entry), four years	A101

MB ChB Medicine, 216 places

A100
This is the standard course that most school leavers undertake provided they have studied three subjects, to include Chemistry and at least one other laboratory-based science, through to A- level or equivalent, with a fourth subject at AS-level.

MB ChB Medicine with Pre-Medical Year, 10 places

A104
On this course students undertake a preliminary year in which they study Chemistry, Physics and Anatomical Science prior to continuing with the A100 course. This course is for applicants who have studied non-science subjects at A-level or equivalent.

MB ChB Medicine (graduate entry), 19 places

A101
This four-year course at Bristol is only suitable for applicants who have completed a degree in one of the medical sciences or professional courses allied to medicine. Other science graduates can apply to A100 and non-science graduates to A104. Overseas graduates or holders of non-UK degrees cannot apply to A101.

Course highlights

The Medical course is traditionally based. The first two years are taught principally in the medical school and revolve around a core of central lectures, practical sessions and small group tutorials. Students enjoy early contact with patients to help underpin the clinical nature of the medical sciences which form the early part of the curriculum. Other features which help to develop students' clinical interests include computer-aided learning packages which help students to prepare for practical sessions, a comprehensive human simulator, on which physiological and pharmacological principles are taught and a virtual microscope which enhances the teaching of histology and cell biology.

Within the clinical years, attachments to the undergraduate academies at regional hospitals in Bath, Weston, Swindon, Taunton, Yeovil, Gloucester and Cheltenham ensures that students encounter a broad range of pathologies and clinical practice across the region and this enhances their experiences in the North and South Bristol Academies which are based at Frenchay, Southmead and Bristol Royal Infirmary teaching hospitals.

Throughout their time at medical school, students will benefit from being allocated an individual academic mentor with whom they will have regular meetings to review progress and with whom they will develop their individual eLearning Portfolios. The ePortfolio is a reflective aid enabling students to maintain a repository of evidence of their progress throughout the course. This helps them to focus on their academic and professional development. This is a newly adopted feature within the course which will help Bristol students to become familiar with aspects of professional practice which they will adopt beyond graduation in the Foundation Years.

Course structure

The course is divided into three phases.

Phase one

This is an introductory period lasting two terms. Two units are taught in parallel; the Molecular and Cellular Basis of Medicine, which provides a basic understanding of the components of the body and introduces common disease processes that affect tissues and organs; The Human Basis of Medicine develops an understanding of how individuals behave and interact within the family and the community. It also initiates an awareness of the role of the doctor and the organisation of health service provision. In phase one, teaching consists largely of lectures, small group tutorials and laboratory work. During this period you will make regular visits to GP clinics.

Phase two

This stage lasts until the end of year three and is where you learn the core elements fundamental to a career in medicine. At the end of year one you will cover the Cardiovascular and Musculoskeletal Systems. The remaining systems (Respiratory, Gastrointestinal, Renal, Nervous, Reproductive and Endocrine) follow on during year two.

During the second year you are introduced to the hospital environment, spending a week after each system studying introductory clinical skills to help you understand basic science in the context of health care provision. This gives you the opportunity to start developing your clinical skills and communicating with patients and others in a healthcare setting. The University based teaching continues to include lectures and small group teaching at this stage. The anatomy teaching is conducted in small groups by medically qualified demonstrators, using cadaveric material and living anatomy – (dissection is optional). Also during year two, substantial time is set aside for Student Selected Components (SSCs) which provide you

with the opportunity to learn more about topics of your own choosing.

Year three marks a distinct shift, from now on you will be almost entirely based in hospitals and other clinical settings, undertaking bedside teaching and small group tutorials. There is a much greater emphasis at this stage on independent learning and substantial time is set aside for SSCs, enabling you to explore additional topics of interest.

Phase three

Phase three covers years four and five of the course and starts your preparation for becoming a working doctor. In year four you gain experience in speciality subjects (Reproductive Health & Care of the Newborn, Public Health Medicine & Epidemiology, Child Health, Anaesthetics, Pathology, Primary Care, Dermatology and Care of the Elderly). There are further SSC periods during year four.

Year five is split into two units, the first of which takes place before Christmas. The MB ChB Final Examinations take place in this unit immediately before the Christmas break. Unit two commences after Christmas and during this unit you will spend time preparing for professional practise, so that you will become familiar with the role of the Foundation Year one doctor, easing your transition into this role when you commence your Foundation Year one post after graduation. The elective period takes place between unit two in the Final Year and graduation. This provides you with the opportunity to work away from Bristol for the final two months of the academic year, often in foreign countries, helping to broaden your perspective of healthcare across the world.

Assessment

Throughout the course you will be assessed by a variety of methods in three core areas – knowledge, skills and attitudes. You must be able to combine all three to become a successful

doctor. A variety of types of assessment are used during the course; these include both written and practical examinations, and in some units, continuous assessment. Progression through the course requires passing all units in each year. It is usually possible to re-sit a failed examination. Successful completion of the degree also requires demonstration of satisfactory professional conduct throughout the course.

What support is available?

Being a medical student is exciting and rewarding. However, it can also be quite challenging and you may need advice on personal and course-related issues. The Medical Student Advice Service offers support and guidance on a range of issues from the practicalities of everyday living through to the complexities of the academic and clinical programme.

The Faculty Student Adviser is available to all medical students. Those students on clinical attachments also receive support from the Deans and administrators in the academies.

What's life like as a student?

The first two years are based predominately at the University campus with clinical activities based in or near Bristol. Approximately half of your teaching each year, in years three-five, will be outside Bristol. In order to maximise the educational experience, teaching takes place in Clinical Academies in Bristol and the three surrounding counties. An Academy is essentially a local 'college' providing medical education to students – they are based in hospitals but also provide teaching and access to facilities in the community.

What are my career prospects?

After graduating you will spend two years of structured training in approved hospitals via the Foundation Programme before specialising on a specific career path.

Is there any advice you can give me on making my application?

Things to consider

- Do you want to be a doctor or are you being persuaded by others?
- Have you investigated the profession by talking to doctors and reading career booklets?
- As a doctor you will be providing a service to people for the rest of your working life. Have you obtained work experience involving the public, if possible in a caring role (hospital, old people's home or with the disabled)?
- Do you have a broad range of interests which will help you contribute to medical school life and to communicate with patients?
- After registration, several years of work experience and training are required, which may necessitate moving around the country to different regions to obtain appropriate training.

Applying for Medicine

Entry to all courses is via UCAS and the deadline for applications is 15 October. We do not accept late entries or transfers from other courses or medical schools. The Medical degree course is academically demanding: we are looking for well-educated and well-motivated students who have a genuine interest in medicine. Selection for interview is made on the basis of academic performance at GCSE level, predicted A2 grades and the UCAS personal statement. Interviews are currently conducted by two trained members of the Medical Admissions Committee and last approximately 15-20 minutes, although the nature of the interview may be subject to change in the future. All applicants must be available for interview between November and March as no offers are made without an interview. If three A-levels are offered, the choice of subjects should avoid undue overlap of content eg Biology and Physical Education; Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

Entry data

What is intercalation and can I intercalate my degree?

Depending on your academic performance, you may have the opportunity to intercalate a year of study leading to the award of an additional degree. Most students choose a Medical Sciences degree but other options are available including Bioethics, Medical Humanities and International Health. Students normally intercalate between years two and three of the course.

Are there any health issues I need to be aware of?

Certain health problems and disabilities may be incompatible with careers in some branches of medicine. If you have a health problem or disability you will be requested to provide further information if invited for interview. Screening is undertaken for all prospective medical students in relation to Hepatitis, HIV and Tuberculosis, in line with GMC guidelines. Students found to be infectious carriers will be given further guidance by Occupational Health.

Do I need to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check?

Medical practice requires the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. You will need to disclose any criminal convictions when you apply. All medical students are required to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. All medical students are also also required to sign up to a Student Code of Practice. For further information please visit bristol.ac.uk/secretary/legal/disclosure/students.html.

Typical offer for MB ChB Medicine

Please visit bristol.ac.uk/ug13-medicine for pre-year, graduate entry and other qualifications

A-levels Typical Offer AAA (contextual offer AAB[†]) to include Chemistry at grade A and one other lab-based science. Subjects should avoid undue overlap of content eg Biology and Physical Education; Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

AS-levels Minimum four subjects excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking, minimum grade C in fourth subject

IB Diploma 37 points (contextual offer 35[†]) with 6, 6, 6 at Higher level (to include Chemistry and one other lab-based science)

Access Not accepted. A104 only

IELTS 7.5 with minimum 7.0 in each part

GCSE Minimum five GCSEs at grade A to include English Language, Mathematics and two science subjects

Selection UCAS form and interview.

Applicants must be available for interview from November to March

Part-time study No

Deferred applications Welcomed on application, but later deferral is not usually accepted

[†] The University assesses applications on their individual merit and in accordance with a set of clearly defined principles as described at bristol.ac.uk/ug-admissions-principles. Admissions statements for all courses are available from bristol.ac.uk/ug-admissions-statements. A contextual offer (UK only) might be given when the educational context of the applicant is taken into account. The University is committed to ensuring that it attracts highly motivated students from a wide range of backgrounds. Our definition of educational disadvantage is reviewed annually and each case is considered on an individual basis.

Contacts

School information

For more information about the Medical School, please visit:

bristol.ac.uk/medical-school/prospective-students

Useful contact information

Admissions

Undergraduate Admissions Office

Tel: +44 (0)117 928 7679

Fax: +44 (0)117 331 7391

Email: med-admissions@bristol.ac.uk

Accommodation

Accommodation Office

Tel: +44 (0)117 954 6640

bristol.ac.uk/accommodation

Disability Services

Tel: +44 (0)117 331 0444

Fax: +44 (0)117 331 0456

bristol.ac.uk/disability-services

Student Funding Office

Tel: +44 (0)117 331 7972

bristol.ac.uk/studentfunding

University guide to the city of Bristol

bristol.ac.uk/citybristol

International Advice and Support

Advice and Support for International students

Tel: +44 (0)117 954 5788

bristol.ac.uk/international/studentssupport

Useful websites

UCAS

www.ucas.com

British Medical Association

www.bma.org.uk

General Medical Council

www.gmc-uk.org/education/index.asp

NHS Careers Information

www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/medical.shtml

Bristol Medical Student Society

www.galenicals.org.uk

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Tel: +44 (0)117 928 8623
Email: ug-publications@bristol.ac.uk

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