



Entry routes

Did you know?

There are over 8500 medicine places available for UK students every year. Each medical school has different entry requirements and routes for people wishing to study medicine.

Useful stuff

Standard entry is the route that most medical applicants take. The course is usually five years. In some institutions it can take six years if students are required to undertake a period of additional academic study leading to a separate qualification which is called an intercalated degree. Some students on five-year courses may also choose to undertake an additional intercalated year.

If you already have a degree you can apply for **graduate entry medicine**, or the **standard medicine** programme. If you apply for graduate entry medicine it is usually four years of study. If you think you may apply for graduate entry medicine in the future then choose your undergraduate course with care. Many medical schools will wish to see the first degree in a science-related course.

Many medical schools have **alternative entry** routes into medicine. These routes involve an additional year. Alternative entry routes come in two main types:

- For students who have done well at A level but did not take the required science subjects. This is often known as Medicine with a Preliminary Year. Science training is provided for students to progress to medicine. It does not act as a booster for those who have taken science subjects and not achieved the grades required.
- For students who have the potential to succeed at medicine but are from backgrounds where they have experienced educational or social disadvantage. This is often known as Medicine with a Gateway Year.

These alternative entry routes will either be embedded into the medical programme or a stand-alone year (requiring a pass to proceed to the medical degree). Sometimes these alternative routes are referred to as foundation years. This should not be confused with the Foundation Programme, which is a period of practical training following graduation.

Key dates

Alternative entry routes may have the same deadline as for standard entry in October.

What you should do...

Not everyone's route to medical school is the same. While many medical students start straight from school or college, there are a variety of ways you can enter medicine and become a doctor.

All medical schools publish their entry routes and the requirements. First you should check whether you meet the academic requirements. For some routes additional information may be required, such as whether you are first in the family to attend higher education or if you have spent time in local authority care.

Top facts

- Since 2014, eight new medical schools have been established.

Be aware

Some alternative entry programmes commence at the start of your post-16 studies, so make sure you investigate your options early.

What they say...

"If you don't get in at your first attempt and medicine is your dream do not give up. I gained entry at age 35."

Wayne Crawford, third year graduate entry medicine, Newcastle Medical School.

More help & advice

The different entry routes medical schools offer is listed in the Entry Requirements for UK Medical Schools: www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/applications/entry-requirements

Test yourself

Think about the three types of entry route into medicine:

- What route(s) interests you the most?
- What route(s) are you eligible for? Check individual medical schools' entry requirements.
- Do you need to join a university outreach scheme or register to be eligible for a specific course?