



# Preparing for medical school



## Did you know?

The NUS estimates student living costs (outside of London) to be around £12,000 per year. When preparing for medical school, check if you are eligible for any scholarships or bursaries. You can do this by checking the relevant finance pages on the university's website.

## Useful stuff

When you have a confirmed place at medical school, it can feel as if the hard work is over.

All medical schools require their new students to undertake health screening. For some medical schools this may start with a health questionnaire that is completed online before the course starts. Medical schools will have specific vaccination requirements. The health requirements differ so check with your medical school. You may need to acquire your vaccination record from your general practice surgery and submit this to the medical school, if requested. Typically, medical schools ask for vaccinations in measles, mumps, rubella, tuberculosis, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, meningitis and haemophilus influenzae b. At medical school it is likely that you will be given the hepatitis B vaccine. You will also be required to have tests for HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and tuberculosis before you can take part in specific activities. If you test positive, you will still be able to train as a doctor but some activities may be limited.

## Be aware

Pick up any textbooks for the course when you arrive at medical school instead of before, because once there you will have a better idea of which books you will find most useful and you may be able to get them cheaper.

## Key dates

**Term will start in the autumn, with welcome and introductory activities.**

This information is endorsed by all 41 publicly funded undergraduate medical schools in the UK who are members of the Medical Schools Council. The information relates to UK medical schools only. It is correct and accurate at the time of publication (July 2020), and relates to the 2021 admissions process. It will be updated annually but we advise you to check individual medical school websites.

## What you should do...

Everyone's experience of medical school is different. It is hard work, but also enjoyable, interesting and highly rewarding. Being organised is key. Before you start medical school, do some preparation before you go in order to make your transition as smooth as possible.

We would encourage you to:

- **Learn how to cook.**  
You will need to keep yourself healthy.
- **Think about the extracurricular activities you would like to undertake.**  
These can help you integrate in the medical school and wider university.
- **Find out what support there is available.**  
The support may include study skills classes, counselling services or peer support.
- **Speak to a few medical students about their experiences at medical school.**

Before you go it is important that you sort out your **finances**. Finalise your student finance forms (if you have not already). Open a student bank account, taking time to consider which bank has the best deal. Think about whether you wish to use a bank that has a branch on or near to campus. Part-time work may be possible, but finding time to work whilst studying medicine is challenging. Develop a weekly budget to help your money last.

Finally, read the enrolment instructions so you know what you will need to do in the first week.

## What they say...

"Medical school is very different to high school; university in general is a massive transition. It's important to realise that you are enrolling on a course that is very demanding, and you might find it tough sometimes. But at the end of the day, medicine is the most amazing thing to study at university – there's never a dull moment. As clichéd as it sounds, you're not just studying any degree, but learning how to save someone's life."

**Kay McGillivray, second year medical student, St Andrew's Medical School.**

## More help & advice

Medical student finance advice:

**[www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-finances-and-protection/medical-student-finance](http://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-finances-and-protection/medical-student-finance)**

How to manage your finances: **[www.moneysavingexpert.com/students](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students)**

Advice from doctors to medical students: **<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/studying-medicine/first-year-medical-students/dear-medical-student>**

More information about health requirements and fitness standards are available from Higher Education Occupational Physicists/Practitioners (HEOPs): **[www.heops.org.uk](http://www.heops.org.uk)**

## Test yourself

**Before you go think about how you will organise your time. Think about how you will find time to:**

- Study
- See friends
- Take part in sport clubs or societies or engage in other interests.