



Thinking of a Career in Medicine?

We may be biased but it's a good choice. Medicine is an exciting and highly rewarding career with a huge variety of possible jobs to choose from. The university courses are vocational and practical but tough to get into. NHS Western Isles would like to help you with that.

Work Observation

We can arrange for you to spend some time observing a doctor's work. It may also be referred to as 'shadowing'. The term Work Observation is used to help you to have realistic expectations of this type of work experience. You will not be able to participate in any clinical work. Periods of Work Observation typically last for up to one week. In some cases an intensive day or two may be sufficient for you to get an insight into medical life. Please email your details to:
kirsty.tait@nhs.scot

Work Observation is one practical way for you to get information about a medical career. However, you should find out as much as you can from other sources such as: talking to careers advisors and doctors, reading the various guides to medical life and perhaps undertaking some voluntary or paid work in a health or care setting, e.g. hospitals, hospices, nursing or residential care homes. Included is a short list of references including books, films and television series which you may find useful.

You may also gain more general experience working with the public outside the healthcare sector through working in a shop or other similar 'holiday job'.

Alternatively, other Boards run programs for experience and NHS Highland hold places for Island pupils in their Doctor's at Work program. Applications are accepted March/April each year through your school (visit: <http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/Careers/MedicalEducation/Pages/DoctorsatWorkProgramme.aspx>).

'Reach'

Medicine is one of the most competitive courses to get into at university. Minimum entry grades are set at five As or four As and two Bs at Higher by the end of S5. Applicants also need to pass the UK Clinical Aptitude Test and interviews are often necessary. Despite these challenging entry requirements there are still at least ten applications for every place available in Scotland.

Traditionally, students from the poorest 40% of neighbourhoods have been less likely to be studying medicine, and the other 'professional' courses like law, veterinary medicine and architecture, than any other course at university. Rural areas are included in this group.

Aware of the extra barriers to studying medicine, universities run an initiative specifically focused on access to medical degrees called 'Reach'. It is a national initiative supported by funding from the Scottish Funding Council. It has increased the number of pupils from the most deprived and rural areas applying to medical schools by 60 per cent over the last five years. The number of students from these areas accepting a place to study medicine has grown by 50 per cent in the last five years. For more information visit: <http://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/bite-size-briefings/widening-access-to-medicine>

Book List

Title	Author	Film List
So you want to be a Brain Surgeon?	Eccles, S	Red beard, Kurosawa
So you want to be a Doctor?	Sanders, S	Contagion, Soderbergh
Learning Medicine: how to become and remain a good doctor	Richards, P	Crimes and misdemeanours, Landau
Complications: A surgeon's notes on an imperfect science	Johnson, M.H	Arrowsmith, John Ford
The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine	Fanu, J	Death in Venice, Visconti
The Other Side	Granger, K	Amour, Haneke
Mom's Cancer	Fies, B	Patch Adams
A Long Walk Home	Clark, R	One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
Medical School Interviews	Lee, G	Awakenings (in the book section too)
Get Into Medical School: write the perfect personal statement	Pickard, O	Something the Lord made
The Woman with a Worm in Her Head	Nagami, P	Cardiac Arrest (DVD series)
All by Atul Gawande, especially 'Being Mortal'		Green wing (TV comedy)
Hot Lights, Cold Steel	Collins MJ	
A Fortunate Man	John Berger	Other
The House of God	Samuel Shem	Reith lectures on iplayer: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/
Awakenings	Oliver Sachs	
The Diving Bell and the Butterfly	Jean-Dominique Bauby	
Suburban Shaman	Cecil Helman	
Max Pemberton series (for early med career)		
The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down	Anne Fadiman	
The Emperor of all Maladies	Siddhartha Mukherjee	
Cancer Ward	Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn	
When Breath Becomes Air	Paul Kalanithi	
Your Life in my Hands	Rachel Clarke	

Museums, etc

- Welcome collection, London <http://wellcomecollection.org/>
- Surgeon's hall, Edinburgh <https://museum.rcsed.ac.uk/>
- Anatomical Museum, Edinburgh University <http://www.ed.ac.uk/visit/museums-galleries/anatomical>
- Hunterian Museum, Surgeon's Hall, London <http://www.hunterianmuseum.org/>
- The Old Operating Theatre, London <http://www.thegarret.org.uk/historyofmed.htm>
- Bedlam <http://museumofthemind.org.uk/>
- European anatomy museums: <http://www.atlasobscura.com/categories/anatomy-museums>
- Vienna has an amazing anatomy/medical museum in an old Bedlam.

Careers advice and University applications

Becoming a Doctor

Each university has a process to satisfy themselves that entrants have the academic and attitudinal abilities necessary to benefit from the course.

Being a doctor involves a lifetime of learning, both formally and informally. Doctors have to update their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. Courses that teach you how to learn will stand you in good stead throughout your career. From studying medicine at undergraduate level, progressing within structured training, to being appointed as a senior doctor, it can take 10 years to be a qualified GP and 12 years to be a senior hospital doctor (Consultant).

Career Path

Medical Degree (usually 5 years)

The undergraduate course provides students with some exposure to the different specialities within medicine. It involves basic medical sciences and practical clinical tasks and seeks to develop attitudes and behaviours appropriate to the medical profession, as well as the skills of independent learning.

Foundation Year Programme (2 years – F1 and F2)

This is undertaken by all doctors and specific defined competencies need to be achieved. Doctors rotate through 6, four-month positions in basic clinical training; sometimes one of these may be in General Practice

Time out (“FY3” or “FY2+”)

There is an increasing tendency for doctors to take time out of the rush to final qualifications, and seek to do something else, such as *medecins sans frontieres*, or work in another health care system. This can be a useful time to clarify ideas for future careers.

Specialist Training

This is a period of specialist training in an area you have chosen. By the end of this stage, you should have completed the relevant medical Royal College exams and followed the relevant College curriculum for your chosen speciality and ultimately will receive a Certificate of Completed Training (CCT) in that speciality i.e. General Practice CCT is GPCCT.

Hospital speciality training will take at least 5 years. General Practice training takes at least 3 years to complete. In year one, six months are usually spent in a general practice with 4x three month hospital jobs in posts approved for GP training (eg Accident & Emergency/Medicine for the Elderly). There is then a final year in General Practice when the main parts of the Royal College of General Practitioners exams are undertaken, although as mentioned above, the RCGP GP curriculum is followed for the entire 3 years of training.

Senior Doctors

- Consultant (Specialists generally working in Secondary and Tertiary Care Hospitals)
- Other Senior Staff Grade Doctors
- General Practitioners (“Expert Medical Generalists”).

Entry Requirements to Scottish Medical Schools (as of 2016)

All applicants wishing to apply for medicine must complete the UK Clinical Aptitude Test. For further information visit: www.ukcat.ac.uk

University	Highers	Subjects	S6	Other Requirements
Aberdeen	AAAAB	Chemistry + 2 of: Biology/Human Biology, Maths, Physics	Prefers 3 full academic studies	Grade 3 in English & Maths required. Biology & Physics recommended. A combination of credit passes is expected across your SG subjects
Dundee	AAABB - Widening Access AAAAB – Standard	Chemistry + another science plus standard grade or Int 2 Biology	At least 2AH + 1 new Higher to be completed.	NQ5: AAAAC can be considered if C is not Higher Chemistry.
Edinburgh	AAAAB - standard AAABB - Minimum requirement	Chemistry + 2 of: Biology, Maths & Physics	At least 2 AHs Biology and Chemistry most relevant. Missing subjects may be taken in S6.	Credit or Int 2 B in Biology, Chemistry, English and Maths
Glasgow	AAAAA or AAAABB	To include Chemistry & Biology/Human Biology and either Maths or Physics	AB at advanced higher Chem and Bio. Missing subjects can be 'crashed' in S6.	Int 2 English or SG Grade 2 English
St. Andrews	AAAAB	Chemistry (A grade) + 1 of Biology/Maths/Physics at Higher	AH Chemistry and Biology recommended, but other subject combinations not disadvantaged	SG credit/Int 2 B English. Biology and Maths at SG Credit or Int 2 if not offered at Higher

The following link covers entry requirements for Scottish students to all UK medical schools:
<https://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/university/courses/medicine/medical-school-entry-requirements-for-scottish-students>

ScotGEM (<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/study/ug/scotgem/> or <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/medicine/scotgem-mbchb/>)

4 year graduate program with 55 funded places – fee free for Scottish and EU residents NHS “bond” offered via a bursary.

Scottish Medical Schools Contact Details

University of Aberdeen

University of Aberdeen Medical School, Polwarth Building, Foresterhill, Aberdeen AB9 2ZD

Tel: 01224 437 923. Email: medadm@abdn.ac.uk

Website: www.abdn.ac.uk/smmsn/undergraduate/medicine/

University of Dundee Medical School Office

School of Medicine, University of Dundee, Level 10 Ninewells Hospital, Dundee DD1 9YS

Website: <http://medicine.dundee.ac.uk/admissions>

University of Edinburgh Undergraduate Admissions

College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine, 2nd Floor Chancellor's Building, 49 Little France Crescent, Edinburgh EH16 4SB

Website: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/medicine-vet-medicine/undergraduate/medicine>

University of St Andrews (Medical Science BSc only)

Medical Admissions Office, The University of St Andrews, Admissions Application Centre, St Katherine's West, The Scores, St Andrews KY16 9AX

Tel: +44 (0) 1334 463599. Email: medicine@st-andrews.ac.uk

Website: <http://medicine.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

University of Glasgow

Medical School Office, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ

Tel: +44 (0)141 330 6216. Email: med-sch-admissions@glasgow.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/medicine/contact/>

These websites contain various essential links to show you through the universities admissions process, and advice for prospective students. The universities each have their own ethos and style of teaching, and it is a good idea to read up on this before applying.

Useful websites

- The General Medical Council www.gmc-uk.org, http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/undergraduate_faqs.asp
- Careers website www.planitplus.net - A guide through lifelong learning and the world of work, providing detailed case studies on careers in Law, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine.
- BMA website has a good section on 'how to become a doctor': <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/career/studying-medicine/how-to-become-a-doctor>
- "Guiding Principles for the admission of medical students" The Medical Schools Council, revised 2010: <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/GuidingPrinciplesfortheAdmissionofMedicalStudents.aspx>
- "Considering Medicine" NHS Medical Careers: http://www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/considering_medicine/introduction.aspx
- RuralGP website: <http://www.ruralgp.com>

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website feedback section at:
www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 708069 or 07814 071868 Monday-Friday between 9am-5.30pm.