

# The Master Checklist To Get into Medicine

It's simple – if you're at a fairly early stage, the recipe needed to get into medical school is a combination of academic excellence and extra-curricular pro-activeness! **If you're in Year 9,10 or 11 then this document is for you.** Let's break things down.

It consists of:

- 1) Academia - studies and grades
- 2) Work Experience and Volunteering – time spent in medical settings
- 3) Super-Curricular – out of classroom work relevant to medicine
- 4) Extra-Curricular – out of classroom things you do, that you find fun
- 5) Your Application – last thing you do, which brings 3-4 years of work together!

**DISCLAIMER:** This list does not dictate what you must have to get into UK medical schools. There will be many students who don't do many of these things, that still get into top medical schools. However, speaking from 6 years of experience, doing a lot of the things in this document will make you a hugely competitive candidate for any of the top medical schools. Put in the effort, rewards will fruit.

## Academia

A rule of thumb is to try and be in the top five in your class, for all the subjects you are taking. Generally keeping up such performance will naturally lead to your progression of achieving top grades at the end of year, when you are examined.

**GCSE** (Secondary/Middle School) – Highest grades achievable given your circumstance. Only the end grade counts, as performance will not be commented on in your school reference.

**A-Level/IB** (Sixth Form/High School) – Consistently high grades throughout your two years of studying towards the final exams. Performance throughout the year will be mentioned in your school reference

**Entrance Exams** – UCAT or BMAT

## Work Experience and Volunteering

### **Work Experience**

- One week in a hospital setting, in a medical ward
- One week in a hospital setting, in a surgical ward
- One week in a hospital setting, in an Accident and Emergency Setting  
A few days in a research laboratory (if applying to Oxford and Cambridge)
- One week in a General Practice/Hospital Clinics, overseeing consultations

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## **Volunteering**

This should be a regular commitment over an extended time period. Ensure this is relevant to medicine, in order to show medical schools, you have sacrificed some of your free time to surround yourself in medical settings, to develop your interpersonal skills.

- Hospital Volunteer on wards; mealtime assistant or dementia ward assistant
- Care Home, assisting during mealtimes or during activities
- Volunteering at schools for children with special needs
- St John's Ambulance, attending weekly Cadet meetings + occasional cadet-work at local events
- School Subject Mentor; helping juniors at school, in an organised fashion, teaching Maths/Science during break or lunchtimes

## **Super-Curricular**

This constitutes subject-related work, that is of a level that can be mentioned formally in your personal statement when applying to medical school.

Attending medicine-related lectures/symposiums

Regular reading of medicine-related books

Regular reading of medicine-related research journals

Regular reading of medical sections of the News

Running/Organising talks for School Medical Society

Organising medicine-related experiments at school  
(dissections/physiology/biochemistry practicals)

Olympiads/Subject Competition

Maths Olympiad

International Biology Olympiad

Cambridge Chemistry Challenge

Medicine Essay Competitions

## **Extra-Curricular**

Ensure this forms part of your work life balance. People may have multiple extra-curricular commitments depending on their interests/abilities. Of paramount importance is long term dedication and development, which you can reflect on through means of awards/prizes/grades/skills gained. Personally, I would avoid getting involved in business-orientated activities, as they are harder to make relevant in medical personal statements.

Sport

Music

Debating/Model United Nations

Drama

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## Your Application

Your application to medical school involves jumping through a variety of hoops. Other documents cover this in more detail, but below is what you can expect. The large part of arranging all these will take place in the last half of Year 12 and a large part of Year 13.

- Entrance Exams (UCAT and BMAT)
- UCAS Form Filling
- Personal Statement
- Additional 'mini personal statements' for certain universities e.g. Cambridge
- Interviews

*“It isn’t what you do, or how much you do. The experience is only as valuable as to how much you learn from it.”*