

Pathways to Professions: Medicine

Introduction

At Dixons Sixth Form Academy, we understand that applications for medicine, dentistry and other related medical field courses at university are particularly competitive, and therefore in addition to our normal careers and UCAS support, we offer an extensive additional programme to support students thinking of applying for these subjects.

Staff from a wide range of areas of the Sixth Form work together to ensure there is a seamless programme of support to help students develop. Staff in the science department work closely with progress staff as well as careers, UCAS support and senior staff, to ensure students are well advised about their applications and receive all the support needed. Support comes in all forms; whether this be for extra individual subject support or help locating work experience, how to apply and prepare for interviews or even if it is just encouragement throughout your time with us.

Year 11 – before you start Dixons Sixth Form

Our programme starts once you have applied for a place at Dixons Sixth Form and identified that you have an interest in a career in medicine, veterinary science or dentistry, by organising a trip to a one-day conference delivered by the Royal Society of Medicine. The day covers all aspects of the application process from choosing a medical school and writing your personal statement through to improving your confidence with interview training and tips on how to get the right work experience. You will also get to hear from current medical students and professionals and gain an insight into speciality selection and life as a practicing doctor.



At enrolment, all students are interviewed and prospective medics, dentists and vets are identified at this early stage. Most students aiming for a career in these fields will be identified as part of the flyers programme and will receive additional mentoring and support from senior staff throughout the year. Momentum is important when applying for one of these highly competitive careers and we ensure this is paramount throughout your time here at Dixons Sixth Form Academy.



Year 12 – programme

In year 12 we believe the range of support that students receive is greater than at any other Sixth Form.

Fast-track WJEC Medical Science certificate

In addition to three A Levels, students interested in medicine take this as an additional course. Not only does this give students more UCAS points for university entrance, it also gives them a broad background understanding of healthcare that they can draw upon at university interviews.

The course has three modules which cover the following areas:

- Human health and disease (assessed by examination)
- Physiological measurement techniques (Internally assessed)
- Medical science research methods (Internally assessed)

Pathways to Professions: Medicine

What is PBL

This programme runs in conjunction with Hull York Medical School. It provides students with an insight into the methods of teaching at this university and allows them to develop clinical skills with trained university staff, while undertaking research into medical issues and conditions.

Medical Society (MedSoc.)

This student led lunchtime enrichment serves as a point of contact for all students interested in medical careers. Staff support the students to run their own society researching health conditions, delivering talks to each other, preparing for medical admissions tests, learning the strategy behind choosing the right medical schools, sharing experiences from open days and so much more. Students also organise their own visiting speakers through MedSoc.

University access schemes

We connect with the following local university access schemes

- Leeds University – Reach for excellence
- Sheffield University – SOAMS
- York University – Next steps York
- Hull-York Medical school – STAN

We help students apply for these programmes in specialist workshop sessions and ensure students are supported with references. Financial help with any travel may also be available if required.



University visits

Throughout the first year we run trips to carefully selected universities to explore their medical courses and what they are looking for in applicants.

Work experience

Our work experience and UCAS coordinator works directly with students to help them secure the right type of work experience for progression to medical courses and also to help students know what they should be aiming to achieve through their work experience.

The UK clinical aptitude test (UKCAT)

This is used in the selection process by a consortium of UK university medical and dental schools. The test helps universities to make more informed choices from amongst the many highly-qualified applicants who apply for their medical and dental degree programmes. The UKCAT is designed to test aptitude rather than academic achievement. It assesses a wide range of mental abilities and behavioural attributes which are considered important for doctors and dentists to possess. Workshops focusing on the skills required for these tests take place in the summer term for first year students to prepare for taking these exams and is normally sat during the summer break.



Pathways to Professions: Medicine

The BioMedical admissions test (BMAT)

This is a subject-specific admissions test taken by applicants to certain medicine, veterinary medicine and other related courses. The BMAT takes place in the autumn term of a student's second year. Workshops to help you to prepare are run both before and after the summer break.



Progress tutorial

If you are a student looking towards medicine, you will find your progress tutorial group contains many like-minded students and that by being in the same group, all our UCAS and careers information can be highly tailored to your needs. This is especially useful because your UCAS application will be earlier than many other students.

EPQ

The EPQ is a 5000-word researched project that also includes a formal presentation. Students exploring medicine are in the same group for their EPQ course. This not only means you are with a group of students with the same interests and applications, it also means that you will learn about all the specific medical topics that students in your group choose to do their EPQ on. The final presentations for students are held as an evening gala event (to which parents are invited) and this formal presentation further develops students' communication skills.

Summer schools

We advertise all the different university summer school courses for our students and support applications with tailored references and assistance with the application form.

Year 13 – programme

Personal statement support

You will stay with the same progress director from year 1 to year 2 and that enables them to give you continuous feedback and support as you develop your personal statement over the summer holidays.

UCAS-support

Students applying for these courses must submit their UCAS application by early-October which is earlier than the UCAS deadline for other courses. We deliver a bespoke UCAS service, focused on ensuring students are ready for this earlier deadline and that their application reflects the skills required for these courses. Our staff have significant experience ensuring that students put together the strongest possible applications.



Interview support

Our medical society provides students with the opportunity to practise the skills required to support their applications. Students make formal presentations to the first year cohort, debate current issues in medicine and take part in peer interviews to prepare in the event they are called for interview after applying.

We also run special evening practice mock interviews where students gain invaluable experience and feedback of both MMI type interviews and traditional interviews.

