



FIND *your* FUTURE

Current course & year: *Graduate Entry Medicine Yr 3*

Current university: *St George's University of London*

Tell us a little about why you wanted to apply to study medicine?

I have always had a desire to do something with my life that would help people or benefit the world in some way, and I also wanted to be continually challenging myself academically, so studying to become a doctor was the perfect fit.



What sort of person do you think this would suit? (i.e. personal skills, qualities and values)

I think you need to be flexible, kind, and resilient. You also need to be going into it for the right reasons, because it's important to be doing something you love, especially when the going gets tough! You also need to know how to relax and prioritise looking after yourself during stressful times. You need to enjoy speaking to people and being busy.

How are you finding the course in comparison to what you expected?

The first year of the Graduate-entry course was intense in terms of workload, but manageable as long as you stay on top of it. The course is also so much more sociable than I expected, and I've made friends for life here. You also form great friendships whilst on placement with people you've not met before.

What are the best aspects of your course and what are the most challenging?

The best aspects of my course are getting to speak to patients, feeling a real part of the healthcare team on placement, and the variety of the course; every day is different. The most challenging aspect is definitely the extent of knowledge you have to learn, which is daunting at first but gets easier as you go on.

When did you start thinking about applying for medicine as a second degree? (i.e. was it always your plan to study medicine? Did you decide whilst you were studying your first degree?)

I considered studying medicine as my first degree whilst still at school, but I decided to study Natural Sciences because I was interested in the research side of things, with the knowledge that Graduate-Entry Medicine was still an option. When I reached the end of my degree, I found the parts of science I loved the most were the clinical areas. I wanted to apply my knowledge in a hands-on and practical way. I also

preferred the idea of working in a large team in medicine, and encountering a huge variety of people in a bigger and more fast paced environment.

On reflection, are there any aspects of your first degree that you feel were of particular benefit in securing your place to study medicine?

Having a science degree was hugely useful for both the interview process, and in allowing me to talk about how much I wanted to apply my existing knowledge to a clinical environment. I actually applied for medicine at the end of my third year and was unsuccessful, so completed my MSci 4th year and applied again. I believe the extra experience in that year, although in a research environment, was hugely beneficial in securing my place. It showed I was serious about science, and had learned many transferable skills, but had discovered in that year that my passion remained in studying medicine.

How did you find the application process? (i.e. on top of your first degree, did you take time out to concentrate on your application / gain relevant experiences?)

It was quite a lot of work finding universities that provided the Graduate course and funding, and also figuring out which entrance exams I had to do and then studying for them on top of my degree at the time. I spent a lot of the summer focussing on my medical application and had help from the careers service in looking over my application. I also gained relevant experiences such as volunteering at UCH, working in a creche, and doing work experiences at clinics and GP practices that would have me. It meant I had less time for myself and at weekends, but it was manageable and experiences like these are vital to showing your commitment.

What tips would you give students hoping to apply for graduate entry medicine? (i.e. any particular skills, knowledge, experiences, volunteering, extracurricular activities, tips for application process)

Get as much experience as possible! Any kind of experience with people, healthcare related or otherwise, is so useful. It shouldn't be this way but unfortunately a lot of it is about who you know. Try and find any friends with relatives in the healthcare sector that would let you shadow them or ask doctors at your current university (if they have a medical school) if they would mind you sitting in a clinic or something. Volunteering however is the best way to get experience in my opinion and also shows you are giving up your time to help. Most hospitals have a volunteer scheme or look for community events and projects you can get involved in. Good luck!