Liverpool Admissions Team Frequently Asked Questions

Medicine Admissions website: https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/medicine/study-with-us/undergraduate/admissions-information/

COURSE OPPORTUNITIES:

What opportunities are available for research on the course? Our students begin their Research & Scholarship (RS) journey from Year 1 of the course, to promote their development of research skills as evidence-based practitioners. This understanding develops further in subsequent years, culminating in the writing of a research proposal and undertaking a personal research study. For each of the RS course components, students are supported by an academic advisor or clinical supervisor.

SAMP (Selective in Advanced Medical Practice) is a 6-week placement undertaken in the final year, where students typically choose from a catalogue of options for their placement, selecting the specialty and location where they wish to undertake it. If a specialty area is not covered by the existing SAMP catalogue, students are permitted to design their own SAMP – via a school approval process - in any specific healthcare area where they would like to train. Usually these take place within the Northwest region, but we have on occasion been able to approve students with very particular interests to undertake a SAMP further afield in the UK.

Is intercalation available at Liverpool? Yes - we have a very active intercalation programme which allows those students who choose, between Years 3 and 4 of the MBChB programme, to study for an honours degree or Masters. A lot of students now take this option for exploring an extra degree - and students can choose to stay locally or go to another medical school/University for this. Numbers vary, with between 1/6 and a third of each eligible year group intercalating. Some students take programmes directly related to Medicine (e.g. anatomy or clinical practice) or choose other areas that can help develop a portfolio of interests (leadership, business, technology, engineering, ethics, education). Intercalation may help students to distinguish themselves as postgraduates in competitive processes for specialist foundation posts and training posts after FY.
Intercalation is voluntary, and we have an application process to support student success. Please consult our website for further information.

Are there elective opportunities? Yes. We have electives at the end of year 4 - this is a 4-week placement Students can travel to undertake this placement anywhere in the world that the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Development Office advises is safe, so that is a very popular option with our students. Our student doctors choose to do their elective in many diverse locations both in the UK and abroad. For each elective placement, the student is required to undertake a risk assessment to ensure it meets the University's standards of approval

Is there other study abroad opportunities in medicine? We offer both the Year Abroad and Year in China options, which are centrally run University programmes. Students in Medicine may undertake one of these typically between years 2 - 3 of our programme. This year out does not count towards the MBChB, so it acts like an intercalation year - as a year to pursue other interests. Students who choose to take up a year abroad cannot then go on to intercalate – it is either one or the other. Options include China, Canada, America, Hong Kong, Australia, South Korea and the Netherlands.

What are Global Opportunities?

COURSE QUESTIONS:

What makes Liverpool medical school unique compared to other medical schools? It's the combination!

- a curriculum designed to ensure you achieve all you need to be a great doctor, delivered in carefully considered stages, by experts in their field.
- future facing aspects to the course such as design and technology and personalised medicine and our use of exciting teaching modalities such as simulation
- surrounding us, an amazing network of nationally recognised clinical centres and a wonderfully engaged clinical teaching community of specialists and primary care practitioners.
- a vibrant student community -both academically and socially- with approximately 60 different medical student societies channeling and developing student interests in their careers and hobbies.
- all the benefits of an amazing Russell Group University Research Faculty and superb facilities, such as the Human Anatomy Resource Centre, and our School building (which has had a multimillion-pound investment) is an attractive space situated in our University campus, only a short walk away from the fascinating sights of Liverpool.
- up-to-date e-support with an e-portfolio and access to recordings of most of your lectures online.
- and a City that has won student awards. As the City also has other Universities it is a great 'University City' that is very much in tune with what students enjoy. Our students are probably best to give you a summary view - Why choose Liverpool to study Medicine? - YouTube

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What is a typical weekly timetable for Year 1 of the course? For A100, in a typical week you may have a mixture of preparatory (on-line) lectures and face-to face seminars with some small group sessions or clinical skills, anatomy or communication sessions. There is flexible study time during which you will be expected to prepare for sessions and consolidate your learning. The first few weeks include a Foundation block of learning, which covers the fundamental principles that underpin medicine to give you a head start into the curriculum. Following this, every 3-4 weeks you will study a different body system.

For A101, the mix of taught delivery is much the same, but at greater volume to ensure the combined core elements from levels 4 and 5 (i.e. years 1 and 2 of A100 studies) are provided in a single year of studies.

Am I right in thinking that there are no placements in 1st year? That's correct for A100 - no formal NHS placements in Year 1, but there is patient related contact and our communication in clinical practice and clinical skills strands are delivered from Year 1. There are also smaller bitesize 'health in the community' placements, where you work within e.g. a health charity setting. It is one of the most powerful experiences of understanding healthcare 'at the sharp end'.
Specialist clinical placements start from Year 2 to help build up confidence and experience in the NHS and then move to a mostly full-time level in Years 3-5, interspersed with academic weeks on campus.

For A101, there is a 2-week block of hospital placement at the end of the first academic year that incorporates the same learning outcomes and experiences as those delivered to year 2 students from the A100 programme.

For A100, what are the advantages of starting clinical placements in 2nd year rather than 1st? One of our students said the following about this:
"In first year, there is a taster placement day in the community which was great where we got to know the community a bit better and allowed us contact with patients. Personally, I found that I wouldn't have had the knowledge to put into practise on clinical placement during year one. This year of knowledge sets a foundation to help us when we are placed on the wards in second year."

What format are lectures in? Based upon student feedback, we have taken a hybrid approach to lectures - that is with 3 – 4 a week being delivered face-to-face (referred to as seminars) and the rest pre-recorded. Our approach allows students to learn new content at their own pace and then join face-to-face sessions where this learning will be contextualised, consolidated and more deeply explored. While all of our other taught content remains face-to-face, this hybrid lecture model helps our students feel like they are having a more 'normal" university experience in the first 2 years of A100, with some flexibility built into the timetable to do other activities, while still having the benefits from coming together as a full cohort 3 – 4 times a week.

How much clinical exposure do you get in Year 1? In Year 1 of A100, clinical teaching on history taking and initial skills practise is provided on campus to prepare students for placements in Year 2. A day in a community placement is usually timetabled in semester 2 of Year 1.

In year 1 of A101, there is an immersive 2-week block of hospital placement at the end of the academic year in preparation for extensive clinical learning during the final three academic years of A101.

Which hospital placements are students placed at? Here at Liverpool, we are in a unique and privileged position to have access to a wide variety of specialist centres, such as Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital, Liverpool Women's Hospital and Walton Centre for Neurology, as well as a great range of teaching hospitals and GP placements across the North West. While many of our placement providers are in the Merseyside area, our patch extends north to Blackpool, south to Chester and to a lesser extent across North Wales. Our students rotate around different placements to ensure they are provided with the breadth of experience required that allow them to meet the General Medical Council's Outcomes for Graduates, and to become well-rounded doctors.

How is placement training arranged? Clinical placements begin in Year 2 of the A100 course, with 4 enjoyable weeks spread over the year. Over years 3 and 4, students cycle through blocks of 4-week long placements throughout the full year, rotating between specialties and including GP, and the placement blocks are interspersed with university-based 'academic weeks' that prepare you for each of these placements. In Y5, we focus on preparing you for the new doctor role that is ahead of you, giving you access to a range of acute clinical practice before the chance to work, in the same way as a new doctor, in a ward environment. Over the course, you will cover a very broad range of clinical specialties and are normally expected to experience different clinical settings and teams across the geographical patch.

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How are clinical skills taught? We have a fantastic Clinical Skills Resource Centre, which provides our students with the teaching and practise of relevant skills they will need for each year of study. Students then develop their skill in these further on clinical placement, using their personal electronic portfolio to guide them and chart their progress and supported by the help and supervision of practising clinicians. Students can also develop their confidence in these skills further by accessing the "Learning Zone", in the clinical skills centre on campus, which is open every weekday for the independent practise of examinations and clinical procedures, such as venepuncture (blood taking on models) and ECG (heart tracings) recordings and interpretation.

How is anatomy taught? The curriculum for the early years blends understanding of anatomy around teaching blocks on each body system and then extends this into understanding of the relevant radiology and specialist procedure anatomy in the later years. Our Human Anatomy Resource Centre (HARC) has been developed to support superb anatomy teaching for all our clinical disciplines. HARC teaching is supported by specially trained expert demonstrators. Time spent in HARC is now also complemented by several online resources, including videos of detailed practical class instruction and a drop-in learning zone.

Is pro-section or dissection used to teach anatomy? At Liverpool we provide pro-sections of human material for our students to study and learn from. Because human material is so precious, our anatomists prepare this so you can learn about the areas you need to, based on the human system that you are studying. Our students find this way of learning anatomy very helpful. It allows them to focus on what the material is showing them, rather than losing time trying to find what to see. The curriculum for the early years blends understanding of anatomy around teaching blocks on each body system and then extends this into understanding of the relevant radiology and specialist procedure anatomy in the later years. This is further supported by anatomical models and Anatomage tables, which enable 'slice-by-slice' orientation within genuine cadaveric images. Our Human Anatomy Resource Centre (HARC) has been developed to support superb anatomy teaching for all our clinical disciplines, meaning that HARC teaching is supported by specially trained expert demonstrators. Time spent in HARC is now also complemented by several online resources, including videos of detailed practical class instruction and a drop-in learning zone. For students who want to extend this experience further, intercalating in Anatomy at Liverpool is also popular.

What type of course is medicine at Liverpool? We are both a "traditional" style and "integrated" course. "Integrated" as in we teach in system blocks, blending the relevant anatomy, physiology, pharmacology etc. that are related to body systems. We also assess in an integrated way – we don't split exam papers into different topics, to reflect the reality of working in medicine as a resident doctor. The "traditional" teaching means that we use what you might expect to see in a university - lectures, seminars, workshops, and practical sessions for clinical and communication skills and anatomy. Most face-to-face lectures are recorded and made available for review later and we have a range of additional resources on our online platforms. We also use CBL (case-based learning) all the way through the course to ensure all content is contextualised with a patient/practice focus.
CBL involves groups of students exploring cases together and then joining a larger group with an expert to facilitate the discussion of the cases in detail. This involves scientists and clinicians in the first two years of the course, and clinicians from year 3 onwards. This gives students a chance to build several skills including group work, communication and investigatory skills. Much of the teaching in the first 2 years comes from lectures, but there is at least one CBL session per system block and a range of other small group sessions. Over the course we steadily introduce learning through clinical placements, and we also complement this with simulation scenarios, especially in Y5.

How does the spiral structure course work? In simple terms, we revisit topics in subsequent years. For example, in the A100 programme we start in year one with basic anatomy, physiology etc. of the different body systems, in year two we look at the same systems but now focusing on pathology etc. As we go into year 3-5 we focus on treatment and management of conditions, drawing on the knowledge from the earlier years.

Is it mostly lectures and small group sessions? We use a mixture of learning opportunities - lectures, seminars, workshops, and practical sessions for clinical and communication skills and anatomy. Most face-to-face lectures are recorded and shared for review later and we have a range of additional resources in our online platform. We also use CBL - case-based learning, all the way through the course.

I understand that Liverpool used to be a Problem Based-Learning (PBL) course, could you tell me the difference between PBL and Case Based-Learning (CBL) please and does the course now contain more lecture led learning? Liverpool switched from a PBL mode of delivery to an "integrated" mode of delivery in 2014. This integrated delivery blends several hundred lectures, online resources and small group teaching to provide learning that suits a variety of learning styles. While PBL provided students with a case from which to make their own learning objectives, CBL provides our students with pre-determined learning objectives from a specific case. This helps them to know what to study and discuss with a small group of other students. These groups then come together in a slightly bigger group for a facilitated discussion. The facilitation for CBL is also different from PBL. CBL requires the facilitators to be clinicians or/and

an academic who are specialists within the field of the case, so they can direct the group's learning and answer case-related questions to help develop understanding at the level required.

How many people are in the small group teaching sessions? This depends on the type of teaching and works best for each type. Communication for Clinical Practice (CCP) teaching is in groups of 6-8. CBL is in groups of 15-20 and a few classes, e.g. students in clinical years having pre-placement teaching with specialists from the placement are in groups of 40.

How is Communication for Clinical Practice (CCP) taught? CCP is taught from Year 1 in small groups of 6-8 and offers our students the opportunity to practise their communication skills, using role-play with simulated patients (specially trained actors). Students reflect on each interaction with the help of feedback from the group, their tutor and the simulated patient role-player, to allow them to hone the appropriate skills required to support patients (and their families/loved ones) in a variety of clinical situations.

How do you know when to stop learning about a particular section of a topic in medicine? Students quickly establish the best balance that suites them; you can't know everything. You will be guided by content in lectures, in case-based learning sessions and through reading. There are learning objectives that will help you focus on the key areas and level of knowledge you should be aiming for and in the clinical years, your personal electronic portfolio will help you know what to see in each placement and to chart your progress.

It's important to know enough about each topic to be able to discuss it with your peers in sessions, such as CBL, and to be able to understand your application of it during Clinical Skills, Anatomy and Communication for Clinical Practice sessions. As you progress through the course, this becomes easier to gauge, and your academic advisor and student buddy will also guide you.

How are you assessed throughout the course? Assessment at Liverpool is much more than a measurement of your progress. Our aim is for assessment to support your understanding of what you have learned and consolidate your learning, throughout the year, not just at the end of each year. After each system block across the early years, you will have the opportunity to take a self-directed assessment to check on your understanding. Similar 'assessment for learning' opportunities are provided across the clinical years. At the end of each year there is an 'assessment for progression' that helps draw all of that understanding together, but you will already have had the opportunity to assess yourself against questions and learn from the feedback as you've gone through each part of each year. And we take a similar approach to clinical skills assessment, building in the concept of 'structured clinical examinations' from an early point, and offering several additional 'assessment for learning' opportunities in these. Students find this layering of expertise in the examination format, helps them feel well-prepared for important assessments in the later years of the course.

What is involved in the medical licensing assessment (MLA)? When are Liverpool final exams? Students entering year 5 are required to sit and pass assessments in both Clinical and Professional Skills and Applied Knowledge. These components between them are recognised by the General Medical Council to form the "medical licencing assessment". All year 5 students are also required to complete other assessments (an e-portfolio, a selective in advanced medical practice (SAMP) and a test of their prescribing skills) to graduate.

How well prepared are international students at Liverpool after graduation to do residency in Canada/America? We are a UK medical school, and our curriculum is mapped to UK regulatory requirements. However, we do have students who successfully go and work in North America after gaining their Liverpool degree. We train our students to ensure they are well-prepared for their UK foundation training programme, through the core principles of medicine – the knowledge and skills gained are transferable to many other countries around the world.

How do students cope with the course workload? Doctors are good at juggling lots of different tasks, and students training to be doctors quickly master the art of planning their time. Using a timetable to consider what you have coming up in the school, when to study and when to relax and do other things outside of Medicine helps with a good work/life balance. We encourage our students to take advantage of our university facilities and the many University societies that can help them pursue their hobbies, try something new and to make new friends. Indeed, the quality of medical student activity in these areas, such as music, drama and sport (even at international level) shows how well our students can make the course work for them and maintain a work/life balance.

How easy is it to maintain a work-life balance? Remember that University is more than just about medical school - so grasp every opportunity to take advantage of being part of a wider, brilliant University life. Most people build great friendships with non-medical students, which can be another great way of managing the work life balance too! Ultimately, the course (and supporting structures) is

designed to support you in achieving this balance - and about positive ways to keep well and achieve things outside of Medicine. It's not all about work!

Are there bursaries available for medicine? Scholarships and bursaries are available, and you may wish to review this page on our website: Scholarships and bursaries Scholarships and bursaries- Undergraduate - University of Liverpool There is an NHS bursary available to undergraduate students after 4 years of study NHS Bursary Funding https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-bursary

Does Liverpool help students get on-campus jobs (including internationals)? There are plenty of opportunities to work on campus in your time here. This can be either for the medical school or the university itself. Some students have helped to move first years into halls, and others have supported medical school interviews, our widening participation programme and open days/applicant discovery events. There is a dedicated team at the University that can help with employability.

How should students prepare for starting the course at Liverpool? Is there a reading list? For our offer holders, we would recommend that you concentrate on your Level 3 studies or degrees and maintain focus on achieving the grades you are hoping for. We will supply you with all the necessary information you need once you start the course. However, we can provide a general reading list to offer holders who request this.

What would you recommend we do from the beginning of the course that lots of people don't realise they should adopt until later on?
We would suggest several areas to help you both settle in and establish good practice for the rest of the course, but you are likely to discover other things that work for you:

- Connect with students in higher years for guidance on their experiences and how they deal with them.
- Join societies to meet other students, from both Medicine and other courses, to develop a network of friends and opportunities.
- Develop your time management skills by creating a timetable to ensure there is space for study, work, exercise/hobbies and spending time with friends and family.
- Learn about the different study skills that work for you, and think about being flexible with these. The techniques that get you through your A-levels will not necessarily be the same ones that get you through the medicine course because the volume of material we cover is so much larger – remember this is now about your life-long learning and building good habits for that
- Register with a Liverpool-based GP; you'll be spending more time in Liverpool than you will at home.
- Check emails/School communications daily to ensure that you're up to date with what's going on.
- Get to know your surroundings and explore the city – there's plenty to enjoy!

ACCOMMODATION:

What accommodation is available to students at Liverpool? Liverpool has a range of accommodation to suit every budget. Most students tend to live in university accommodation when they start their studies and often move to shared house in later years. Please click on this link to view our student accommodation pages: https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/accommodation/

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION:

I am an international student wanting to study in Liverpool. Can you provide me with any advice on fees, obtaining a visa and settling in? Moving to a different part of the world can be an exciting time, but can also bring its challenges, as things may be different here than in your home country, so being prepared is a very good idea. Our International Advice and Guidance team have a range of different support services to help our students settle in to life at Liverpool, and these can be found on the following webpages: https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentsupport/international/prospectivestudents/

There are two types of IELTS examination, IELTS academic and IELTS UKVI academic. Which IELTS examination should be taken by international students for Medicine A100? Either are suitable for VISA purposes.

Must the IELTS requirements be met on the first attempt or are re-sits accepted? We can consider IELTS resits. Proof of meeting the English Language qualifications must be held in our office by the time of A-level confirmation each year. The admissions team will be happy to advise students of this date each year and applicants are advised that we will be unable to consider English Language qualifications that are submitted after this date.

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SUPPORT & WELLBEING:

Can you tell me about the Academic Advisor programme? All our students are allocated an Academic Advisor (AA), with whom meetings are arranged to discuss and support their progress and welfare. Currently, in Years 1 & 2, students have the same AA, who is experienced in both welcoming students to the School of Medicine and knowledgeable of these academic years. As our students move to their more clinical years of study, they are allocated a senior clinician, such as a consultant or GP tutor, as their AA.

What support is available to students, both from the School and the University? Our School is proud to offer its students a dedicated wellbeing team who will be happy to meet with you throughout the week to discuss any issues that you may have, without prejudice. Meetings (including in the evening) can be arranged with a member of the team by phone, email or just drop in! Alongside this, we have an excellent relationship with the University's central support team and can refer you to them for more specialised support, should this be required.

In addition, complementing the Academic Advisor support provided throughout the course, there is a student "buddy" scheme to help you settle in, and in the clinical years, a senior clinician educational supervisor will meet with you weekly to support your placement learning.

I'm classed as having a disability. Should I declare this? You are advised to declare your disability should this apply to you**,** to ensure that we are able to support you in the most practical way possible. The University's Disability Advice and Guidance Team are here to offer focused support and understanding for all types of disability and may create an individualised support plan to be shared with the School of Medicine's Disability and Dyslexia Contact. They will contact you to discuss how any plan could be implemented to support you with your studies.