

Liverpool Admissions Team Frequently Asked Questions

Medicine Admissions web-site: <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 journey from Year 1 of the course with Research & Scholarship 1 (RS1), to promote their understanding and the value of research. This understanding develops further in Years 2 & 3 (RS2 & 3), culminating in the writing of a research proposal and undertaking a personal research study. For each of the RS modules, students are supported by an experienced academic or clinical supervisor.

What are the study abroad opportunities like with medicine? We offer the Year in China option which is the centrally run programme. Students in medicine typically undertake this between years 2 - 3 of our programme, although we can consider applications after year 3. The 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 in China cannot then go on to intercalate – it is either one or the other. We also have electives at the end of year 4 - this is a 4 week placement. Students are able to travel to undertake this placement anywhere in the world that the foreign office advises is safe, so that is a very popular option with our students, who go to study all over the world.

Is intercalation available at Liverpool? Yes - we have a very active intercalation programme which will be focused between Year 3 and 4 of the MBChB programme for students 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. Over 50% of the last eligible year group intercalated. 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 is voluntary. Please our [website](#) for further information.

Are there elective opportunities? Yes. Our student doctors spend 4 weeks at the end of 4th year on their elective. Our student doctors choose to do their elective in many diverse locations both in the UK and abroad. Each elective placement is required to undertake a risk assessment to ensure it meets the University's standards of approval.

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.
- our use of exciting teaching modalities such as simulation <https://vimeo.com/332455529/b03eff5152> and leadership training with the army.
- superb facilities, such as the Human Anatomy Resource Centre, and our School building which has had a multimillion pound investment, is a really attractive space and is also situated in our University campus and a short walk away from the fascinating sites of Liverpool and all the benefits of an amazing Russell Group University Research Faculty.
- up-to-date e-support with an e-portfolio and access to all your lectures online.
- a surrounding amazing clinical 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 over 30 different student societies channeling and developing student interests in their careers and hobbies.
- 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 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjyZe7Mw-pY&list=PL45W8yW3tH7SvXpokXWoTN2wmZti56I98&index=11>

What is a typical weekly timetable for Year 1 of the course? The first 6-7 weeks is 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 weeks you will study a different body system. In a typical week you may have a mixture of lectures with some small group sessions or clinical skills, anatomy or communication sessions. There will be 'free time' in which you will be expected to prepare for sessions and consolidate your learning.

Am I right in thinking that there are no placements in 1st year? That's right - no formal NHS placements in Year 1, but there is patient related contact with our communication in clinical practice and clinical skills strands too right 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'.

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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.

Are lectures recorded? Yes, all lectures are recorded so you can revisit them to aid with your revision and understanding. Usually, lecture slides are available prior to their actual delivery, to help you prepare for the session.

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.

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

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. 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. Clinical placements begin in Year 2 of the course, with one week following each 3 week system block of study. During Years 3, 4 & 5, exposure to clinical placements increases.

Please view our web pages for further details: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/medicine/why-liverpool/specialist-clinical-teaching/>

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 can develop their confidence in these skills further by accessing the Learning Zone, 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 radiology and specialist procedures 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 demonstrations and a recently increased ratio of tutors to students. 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 prosection 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.

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For students who want to extend this experience further, intercalating in Anatomy at Liverpool is also really 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). 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. All lectures are recorded for view later as desired 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.

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This involves small groups of students exploring cases together, and then coming together with a larger group and 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 a number of 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.

Over the course we steadily introduce learning through clinical placements and we also complement this with simulation scenarios, especially in Y5.

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 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. Communication for Clinical Practice (CCP) teaching is in groups of 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 approximately 8, and offers our students with the opportunity to practise their communication skills, using simulated patients (actors). Students are provided with feedback from their tutor following each interaction, 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? It's about finding a balance; 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. 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.

How do students cope with the course workload? Planning your workload is important. 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 Guild societies that can help them pursue their hobbies, try something new and to make new friends.

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 a number of areas to help you both settle in and establish good practice for the rest of the course, but you are likely to discover others 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.
- Register with a Liverpool-based GP; in more normal circumstances you'll be spending more time in Liverpool than you will at home.
- Check emails/School communications, at least 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!

How easy is it to maintain a work-life balance? This is important not just in medical school, but particularly for your professional career going forward. So it's really important to build ways of relaxing, taking time for yourself and others, and switching off from work - and helping friends and colleagues do this too. Lots of students manage this well - through continuing interests and activities that they have before University. Don't give up these interests - but develop them whilst you're here! Other approaches might be to join University clubs, societies and groups and explore something new and different.

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Remember that University is more than just about medical school - so take 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) are designed around you achieving this balance - and about positive ways to keep well, and achieve things outside of Medicine. It's not all about work!

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

Are there bursaries available for medicine? Scholarships and bursaries are available, and you may wish to review this page on our website: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/finance/scholarships/>

There is an NHS bursary available to undergraduate students after 4 years of study, and to graduate entry students from their second year of study: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-bursary-students/medical-and-dental-students>

SUPPORT & WELLBEING:

Can you tell me about the Academic Advisor programme? All of our students are allocated an Academic Advisor (AA), with whom dedicated meetings are arranged to discuss their progress and welfare. In Years 1 & 2, you will have the same AA, who will be either a clinical or academic member of staff, and will be experienced in both welcoming students to the School of Medicine and knowledgeable of these academic years. As our students move in to their more clinical years of study, they will be allocated a practicing clinician 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 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.

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 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 make contact with you to discuss how any plan could be implemented to support you with your studies.