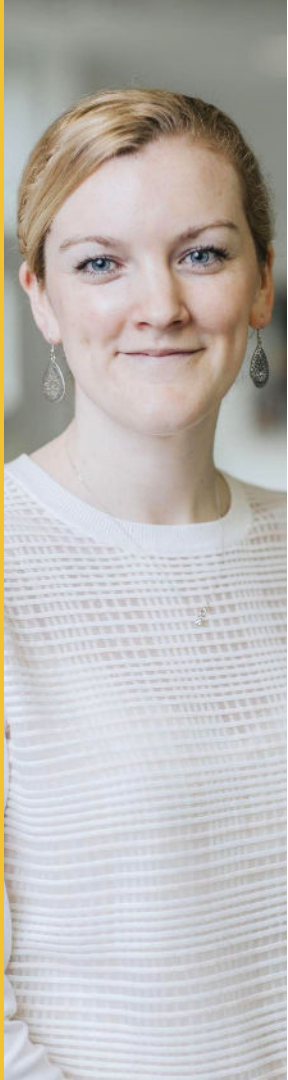


Ashbourne Medical School Programme (AMSP)

Amy Youngman

*Teacher of Biology, Head of Faculty
and Head of Sixth Form*



Amy Youngman

Head of the Medical Programme

Amy only joined Ashbourne in September 2015 but has spent the last eleven years working with medical students, guiding them through the application process.

She is Head of Faculty for the Natural Sciences and teaches biology in addition to running the Medical School programme.

Amy runs the medical sessions each week, and will be the first point of contact for all students wishing to apply to medical school.

By having a member of staff dedicated to all medical students, it ensures each student receives individual attention and assurance that they are supported throughout the entire application process. Amy is also an interviewer for UCL Medical School.



Students will be provided with:

- ✓ A thorough understanding of what a medical career will involve
- ✓ UCAT preparation
- ✓ Interview preparation: both traditional and MMI's
- ✓ UCAS help: The personal statement and how to know where to apply
- ✓ Assistance in securing work experience placements
- ✓ The opportunity to discuss medical ethics and current medical issues with other prospective medical students during weekly meetings
- ✓ The opportunity to talk to current doctors and Ashbourne alumni who are now at medical school

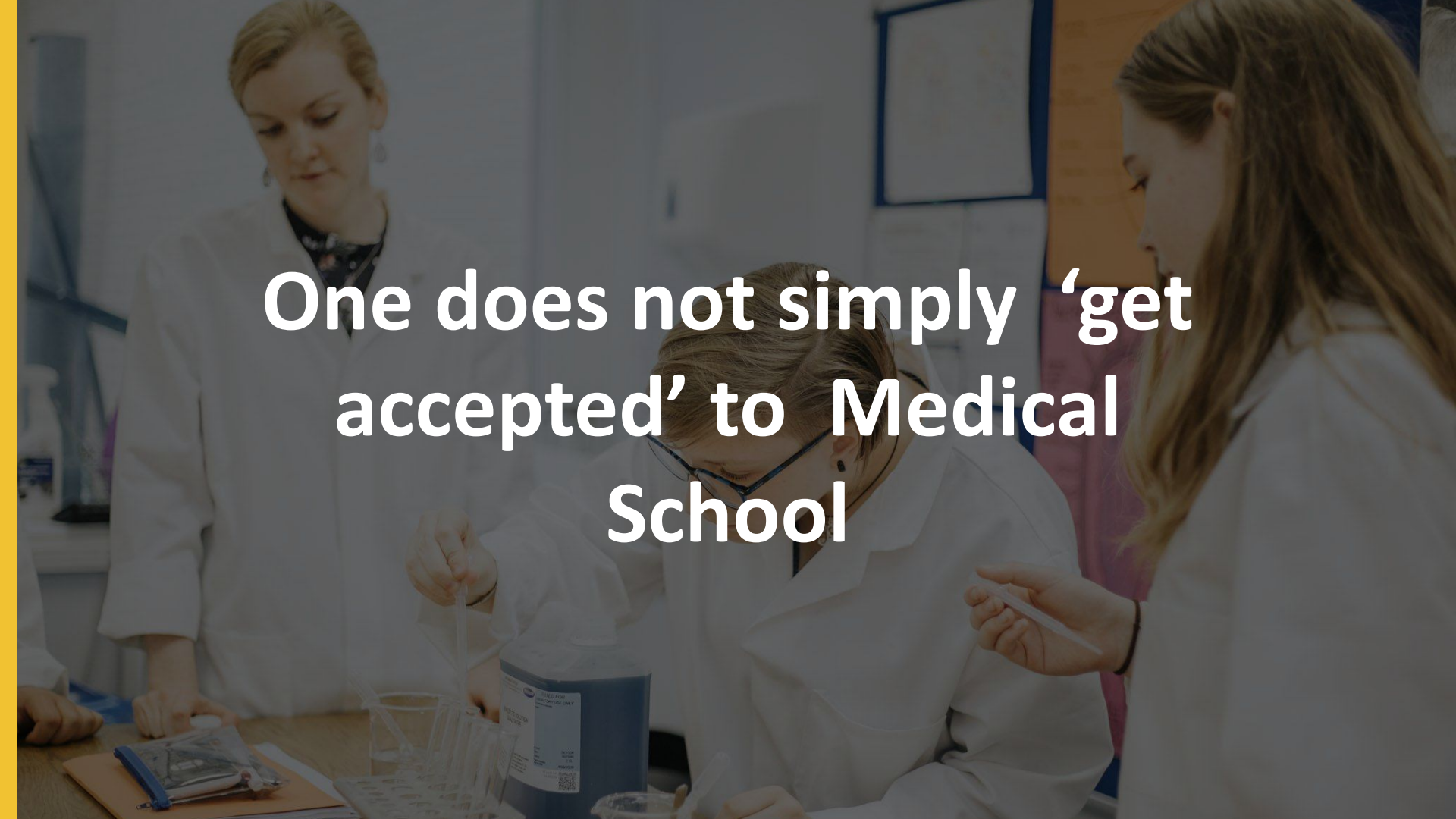
Can the AMSP help students considering Dentistry?

- ✓ Yes!
- ✓ Although less common, we still get a small handful of students wishing to apply for dentistry each year.
- ✓ These students will attend all the AMSP sessions and will also need to keep up to date with what is going on in the world of dentistry.



Why are so many applicants unsuccessful?

- UCAT scores may not be high enough
- Not enough work experience
- A poor interview
- Weak personal statement
- Applying to the wrong universities
- Lack of extracurricular activities



One does not simply 'get
accepted' to Medical
School



How can the AMSP help?

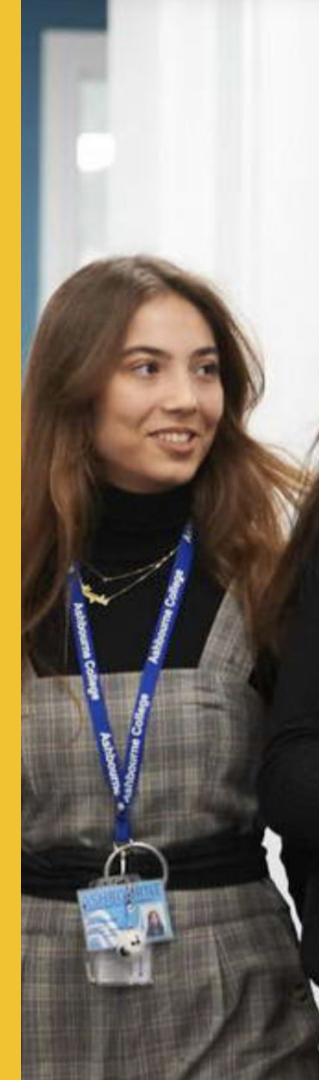
- ✓ By attending weekly sessions, students will be provided with all the information necessary for a successful application.
- ✓ All potential medical students are identified when they interview at Ashbourne. This ensures that they are given guidance right from the start.
- ✓ The AMSP guides students through the entire application process, from drafting the personal statement to accepting an offer.

Weekly sessions



Typical timetable (weekly sessions)

Week	Topics discussed
1	Introduction to Medicine
2	How to write a powerful Personal Statement
3	Where will the NHS be in 5 years' time?
4	How to decide which medical schools to apply to
5	How to secure work experience
6	BMAT preparation
7	UCAT preparation
8	Previous successful applicants: how did they do it?
9	Advice from real doctors
10	The Traditional Interview: typical questions
11	Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI's): typical questions
12	The 5th choice: how to make it wisely





Benefits of weekly sessions

- ✓ The weekly sessions give students the opportunity to improve their non-academic skills.
- ✓ Debating current medical issues allows students to consider arguments from both points of view.
- ✓ Presenting information about important topics such as euthanasia or abortion also allows students to improve their public speaking.



Work Experience

Work experience is absolutely essential.

- When to apply



Volunteering

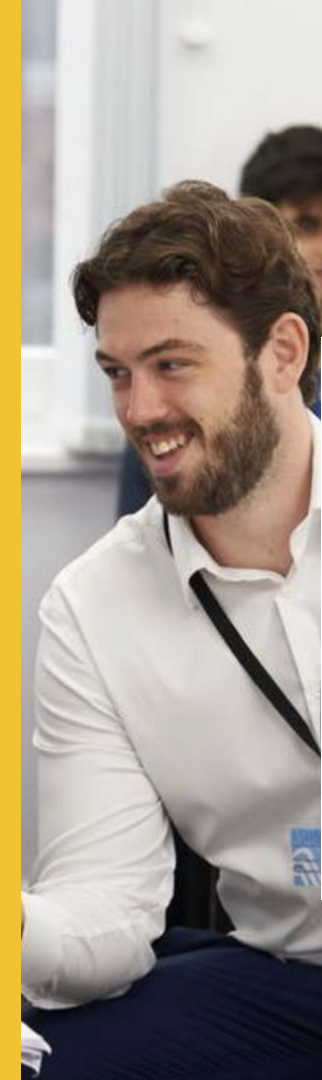
“In addition to high academic achievement, medical schools look for applicants who are genuinely concerned for others. Some time spent volunteering is not only a good way to enhance your experience, but it also demonstrates your empathy and committed to a career in medicine.”

NHS consortium

Admissions Test for Medicine: UCAT

- **UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test):** It helps to ensure that candidates selected have the most appropriate mental abilities, attitudes and professional behaviour required for new doctors and dentists to be successful in their clinical careers. It is used in collaboration with other admissions processes such as the UCAS application and academic qualifications. The UCAT does not contain any curriculum or science content. It focuses on exploring the cognitive powers of candidates and other attributes considered valuable for healthcare professionals.





UCAT:

Sat at an external centre (July to September)

The UCAT is changing. In 2025, Abstract Reasoning will be withdrawn from the test. The test will comprise 3 cognitive subtests (Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making and Quantitative Reasoning) alongside the Situational Judgement Test.

In 2025, the standard exam will have the following structure and timings:

Subtest	Questions	Subtest Time	Scoring
Verbal Reasoning	44	22 minutes	300-900
Decision Making	35	37 minutes	300-900
Quantitative Reasoning	36	26 minutes	300-900
Total Score			900-2700
Situational Judgement	69	26 minutes	Bands 1-4

Cognitive Subtest Scoring

As the number of questions varies between the three cognitive subtests it is not possible to make a direct comparison of the raw marks between these subtests. Raw marks are therefore converted to scaled scores for each subtest that share a common range from 300 to 900.

Cognitive Subtest	Questions	Scale Score Range	Marking
Verbal Reasoning	44	300 - 900	Questions are worth 1 mark each.
Decision Making	35	300 - 900	Single answer questions are worth 1 mark. Multiple statement questions are worth 2 marks. 1 mark is awarded to partially correct responses on the multiple-statement questions.
Quantitative Reasoning	36	300 - 900	Questions are worth 1 mark each.
Total score:		900-2700	

Situational Judgement Scoring

Scores for the Situational Judgement Test are expressed in one of four bands, with band 1 being the highest. Alongside your band, you are given an interpretation of your performance:

Band 1	Those in Band 1 demonstrated an excellent level of performance, showing similar judgement in most cases to the panel of experts.
Band 2	Those in Band 2 demonstrated a good, solid level of performance, showing appropriate judgement frequently, with many responses matching model answers.
Band 3	Those in Band 3 demonstrated a modest level of performance, with appropriate judgement shown for some questions and substantial differences from ideal responses for others.
Band 4	The performance of those in Band 4 was low, with judgement tending to differ substantially from ideal responses in many cases.

Within the Situational Judgement Test, full marks are awarded for a question if your response matches the correct answer and partial marks awarded if your response is close to the correct answer.

Universities requiring UCAT for 2026

University of Aberdeen

Anglia Ruskin University

Aston University

University of Birmingham

University of Bristol

Brunel University
(International students only)

Cardiff University

University of Dundee

University of East Anglia

Edge Hill University

University of Edinburgh

University of Exeter

University of Glasgow

Hull York Medical School

Keele University

Kent and Medway Medical School

King's College London

University of Leeds

University of Leicester

University of Lincoln

University of Liverpool

University of Manchester

Newcastle University

Norwich Medical School (UEA)

University of Nottingham

Plymouth University

Queen Mary University
London

Queen's University Belfast

University of Sheffield

University of Southampton

University of St Andrews

St George's, University of
London

University of Sunderland

University of Warwick

Academic Requirements

It is no secret that the entry requirement for Medicine is high.

- Typical offers range from A*A*A to AAA.
- It is absolutely essential that students achieve all A grades at AS in order to guarantee that they are at the academic standard required for medicine.
- With such small classes and individual attention at Ashbourne, this is perfectly achievable with complete dedication and hard work from the student.

Different medical schools use different teaching methods

The Traditional Approach

- Long-established
- Lecture-based style
- Becoming increasingly less common
- A definite pre-clinical/clinical divide
- Oxford, Cambridge, St Andrews

PBL (Problem Based Learning)

- Problem-based learning
- Becoming popular
- A patient-oriented approach
- From year 1 onwards, students are heavily involved in clinical scenarios, with the focus on the student to demonstrate self-motivation and proactive, self-directed learning
- Designed to get away from previous, traditional spoon-fed' approach.

The Integrated Approach

- A compromise between a traditional course and a PBL course
- They have patient contact from the start BUT there is a huge variation in the amount of contact from school to school
- Basic medical sciences are taught concurrently with clinical studies

Knowing where to apply

- It can be overwhelming for students when deciding where to apply.
- The AMSP talks students through all the different teaching methods medical schools use in order to help them make their choices.
- It is also crucial for students to look carefully at the entry requirements. For example, some medical schools require students to have a minimum score of 600 for the UCAT. This is why the AMSP ensures students feel thoroughly prepared for this test.
- Attending open days is also crucial.

Preparing for the different types of interview

The Traditional Interview



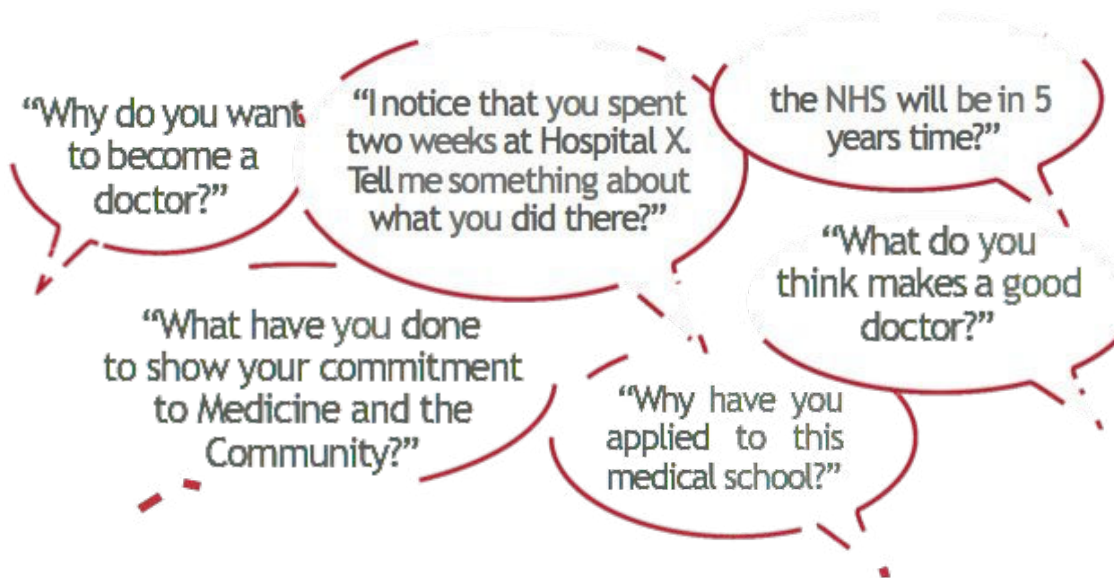
Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI's)



Nearly all Medical Schools now use MMI's

The Traditional Interview

- Typically lasts between 20-30 minutes
- There are usually 3 members of staff on the panel and occasionally a medical student. Typical questions include:



Multiple Mini Interviews

- A multiple mini interview consists of a series of short, structured interview stations used to assess non-cognitive qualities including cultural sensitivity, maturity, teamwork, empathy, reliability and communication skills.
- Prior to the start of each mini interview rotation, candidates receive a question/scenario and have a short period of time (typically two minutes) to prepare an answer.
- An example of an MMI question “Tell me about a time where you later regretted a decision you made. What would you do differently?”



Interview Practice on the AMSP

- All students will be provided with both a mock traditional interview and a mock MMI interview during their AS year. This allows them to see how they are able to cope under pressure and which areas they need to improve upon.
- Upon being offered an interview in their A2 year, students will again, be offered practice interviews with both Amy and other members of staff in order to fully prepare them for the real thing.
- This crucial practice can make the difference between an offer or a rejection.



Extracurricular Activities

- Medical Schools like to see that students have interests outside of academia.
- Luckily, there are various extra-curricular activities students are able to get involved with at Ashbourne. This will not only make their application look more impressive but will also demonstrate their ability to work as part of a team.

Advice from the Experts



Dr. Laura

Medicine, Imperial College
working in the States



Dr. Rebecca

Medicine, Imperial College
working as GP in
Birmingham



Dr. Charlotte

Medicine, King's College
working as an obstetrics
registrar in the midlands

Advice from the Experts



Sadly a career in medicine is far from the glamour of ER, Gray's Anatomy and even Scrubs (although that's probably the closest). If you are prepared to sacrifice nights out to study, your weekends and nights to be in the hospital dealing with blood, poop and pee, spend half your days telling people to stop smoking, drinking, doing drugs, reassuring them that their pain does not need narcotics because it's being caused by constipation, and live for the few moments of glory when you do make a difference, then sleep for a few hours before you have to get up and do it all over again, then you might just be able to make it as a doctor (or a nurse, pharmacist, physiotherapist, social worker).

There are several great books you can read to find out more, "In Stitches" by Dr Nick Edwards, "Confessions of a GP" by Dr Benjamin Daniels, and a quick search on Amazon will find many more. Anything written by Atul Gawande is worth a read too. Try and get some experience in a GP office or a local hospital. Volunteering at a nursing home is good for you too and looks great on your application.



Dr. Laura

*Medicine, Imperial College
working in the States*

Advice from the Experts



Dr. Rebecca

Medicine, Imperial College

working as GP in
Birmingham



I would advise people to think about where they want to study with regards to how they teach the course as this can make a lot of difference in the university experience.

I think the important thing is to be prepared for the fact that it may be challenging and different from a typical student experience.

However the overall experience is rewarding, you come out with an almost guaranteed job at the end and you get to make a difference to people's lives.

Advice from the Experts



You need to do medicine because you really want to, not because your parents think it's a good idea or you have the right grades. Gone are the days where it is really easy to make a lot of money and you are the most respected person in the town. It involves a lot of hard physical and mental work, there is no overtime pay, you will finish late a lot, patients shout, relatives can get angry, and I'm not sure how much longer we will have the NHS as we know it now for.

However, it is such a rewarding job, it's incredibly social (I feel like my day is one long social event) and offers so many diverse careers - there really is something for everyone. Medicine also offers the opportunity to work abroad so is not limiting to the UK. I don't ever remember a day where I've woken up and thought 'I don't want to go to work today' - mostly because I don't really think of my job as work, it's part of my life and I love it.



Dr. Charlotte

Medicine, King's College

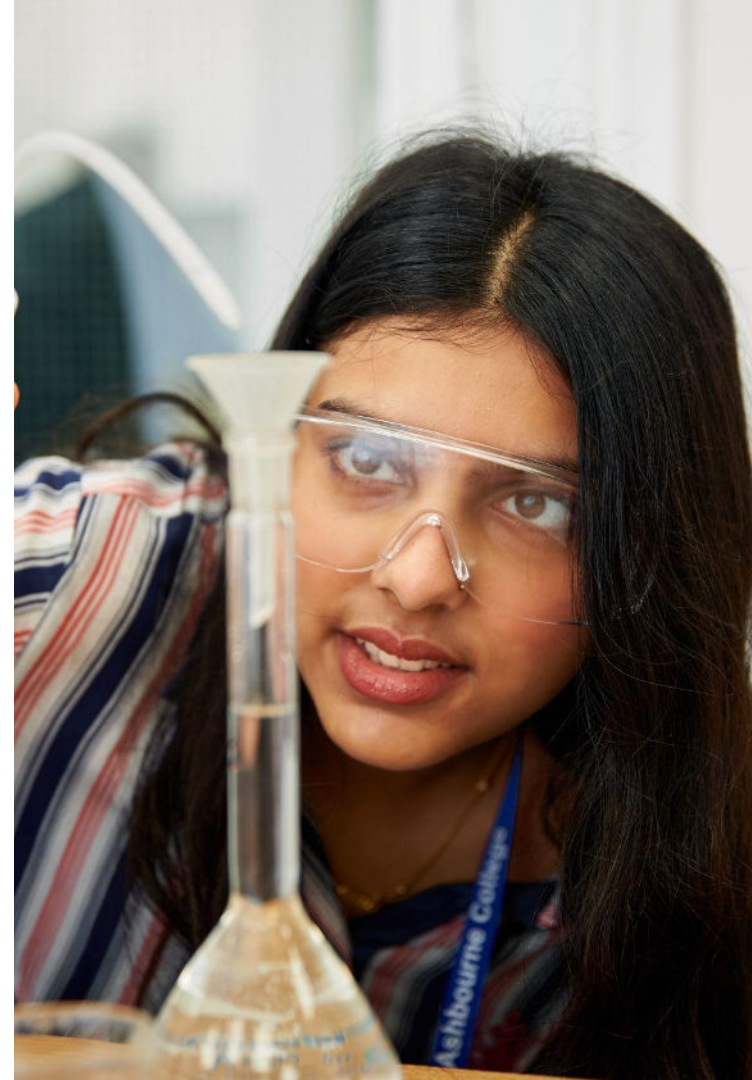
working as an obstetrics registrar in the midlands

To do list for prospective medics

- Book a meeting with Amy to discuss all things Medicine.
- Sign up to the medic portal for lots of free online resources for medicine:
<https://www.themedicportal.com/sign-up/?reason=portfolio>
- Securing work experience is vital but it can take months. Start contacting local hospitals for availability ASAP.
- Make sure that you are up to date with what's going on in the world of medicine. Start with the BBC News, The Guardian Newspaper and New Scientist.
- Look at the UCAT websites and start having a look at past papers/practice questions.
- Start looking at the websites of the different medical schools in order to gather more information.
- Look at the specifications for all your A level subjects. Start looking at the recommended books in order to make a head start.

Ashbourne's Statistics:

- In 2026, **86%** (6 out of 7) Ashbourne medical applicants were offered a place.
- From 2016-2022, **76%** of Ashbourne medical applicants were offered a place.
- Our students have gone onto study Medicine and Dentistry at: **UCL, King's College London, University of St. Andrews** and **St. George's Hospital Medical School**, amongst 13 other UK and international Medical Universities.



Tomi

Graduated from Ashbourne in Summer 2023.

Biology **A***

Chemistry **A**

Psychology **A**

Reading Medicine at University of Central Lancashire.

Kian

Graduated from Ashbourne Summer 2023.

Biology **A***

Chemistry **A***

Maths **A***

Persian **A***

Reading Medicine at Keele University School
Of Medicine.

Baseera

Received offers from University of Bristol and St.George's Hospital for Medicine.

Graduated from Ashbourne in Summer 2022.

Biology A*

Chemistry A

Psychology A

Reading Medicine at St.George's Hospital Medical School.

Kenny

Received offers from UCL, Queen Mary, and Birmingham University.

Graduated from Ashbourne in Summer 2022.

Biology **A***

Chemistry **A***

Maths **A***

Currently reading Medicine at Imperial University.

Hanna

Received offer from Imperial, UCL and UEA for Medicine, and Kings for Biomedical Science.

Graduated from Ashbourne in Summer 2019.

Biology A
Chemistry A
Maths A*

Currently reading Medicine at Imperial College London.

Lilian

Received offers from King's and UEA for
Medicine, and Kings for Biomedical Science.

Graduated from Ashbourne in Summer 2019.

Biology A
Chemistry A
Maths A*

Currently reading Medicine at King's College, London.

A photograph of students in a library or study area. In the foreground, a young woman with long brown hair is smiling and looking towards the camera. To her right, another student is partially visible, also smiling. In the background, other students are studying, with one looking at a laptop and another at an open book. Bookshelves filled with books are visible in the background.

For any queries, please contact us at
admissions@ashbournecollege.co.uk