

School of Medicine
Undergraduate Medicine (MBChB)
Admissions Process
2026-2027

MBChB Admissions Process 2026/27

Introduction

The Academic Lead for Admissions, Recruitment & Marketing is responsible for overseeing the MBChB admissions process to ensure that it is fair and free from discrimination. The process is reviewed annually by the School of Medicine and Global Student Recruitment & Admissions (GSRA).

Principles of Selection

The aim of our admissions process is to select medical students who will become safe and effective doctors. We therefore seek to identify applicants who have demonstrated potential to acquire the required professional knowledge and skills, and to develop appropriate professional values and behaviours, in line with the standards published by the General Medical Council (GMC) in [Outcomes for Graduates \(2018\)](#) and [supplementary guidance](#). In common with other schools recruiting prospective UK healthcare professionals, we are committed to the principle of values-based recruitment and to selecting students who demonstrate commitment to the values of the National Health Service as defined by the [NHS Constitution](#). We adhere to the Medical Schools Council's [Statement on the Core Values and Attributes Needed to Study Medicine](#) (2018 update) and use the GMC's [Good Medical Practice: Guidance for Medical Students](#) to inform decisions.

The School of Medicine follows the University's Admissions Policies listed at <https://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations/> and [additional medicine-specific notes](#), except where specific points below indicate variation from these.

Application Procedure

All applications should be submitted to UCAS by the closing date specified by UCAS for applications for medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and Oxford/Cambridge (usually 15 October). Any applications submitted after this date – including changed choices within UCAS – will be considered only at the discretion of the University. When completing the UCAS application form, applicants will apply to Keele University (K12), course code A100 (5-year programme) or A104 (6-year programme with Health Foundation Year). The criteria for eligibility for each of these programmes are detailed on the School of Medicine web pages. Prospective applicants who do not meet these criteria but have significant extenuating circumstances accounting for not meeting a criterion should submit these to medicine@keele.ac.uk at the time of application, and absolutely no later than 31 October. It is advisable to contact the University in advance if there are complex extenuating circumstances that require consideration by the School of Medicine MBChB Admissions Group. We cannot guarantee that adjustments will be made for extenuating circumstances.

All applications meeting the minimum academic requirements (including appropriate aptitude tests) will be assessed in detail by admissions tutors. Successful applicants will then be short-listed for interview. No applicant will be offered a place without attending for interview. For 2027 entry, interviews are expected to be conducted remotely via video conference (Microsoft Teams).

Transfers and Advanced Standing

The MBChB is an integrated 5-year degree programme. Students must therefore complete all five years of study: students may not be admitted with advanced standing on the basis of accreditation of prior learning. Students may not transfer from other degree programmes at Keele and may not normally transfer from other higher education institutions, either in the UK or abroad. Exceptions may be made only for students transferring from other medical schools through formal articulation agreements between Keele University and their original host institutions or as a result of the closure of a medicine degree programme at another UK university.

Students who have previously commenced study of medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine without completing their programmes will not usually be considered for admission except as outlined above. Prospective applicants who have had to leave previous programmes on grounds of ill-health, or displacement by war or civil unrest, must present their circumstances and supporting documentation before applying as described under Application Procedure, above, and may only be considered for entry to year 1 of the MBChB programme through the standard application process.

Students who have commenced other degree programmes are expected to complete them prior to entering the MBChB programme and may therefore apply only during or after their final year of undergraduate study.

Aptitude Tests

- All applicants are expected to sit the University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) in the year of application, and to achieve a minimum score specified on the medicine course page of the university's web site.
- Graduate applicants who do not meet the A-Level (or equivalent) or science GCSE requirements specified on the School of Medicine web pages must also take the Graduate Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) prior to application; GAMSAT results are valid for up to 2 years after the test date.

The Admissions Process

The admissions process for home applicants (i.e. those with home fees status) involves three phases: UCAT/academic screen, shortlisting and interviews.

Phase 1 – UCAT/Academic Screen

Applicants with UCAT total scores below the threshold specified on the School of Medicine web pages and/or with a UCAT situational judgement test (SJT) score in band 4¹ are excluded from further consideration. All remaining applications are checked to ensure that they meet the minimum academic requirements and are taking the required qualifications to satisfy the academic entry requirements, including English language qualifications. See

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/undergraduatecourses/medicine/medicinehowtoapply/#academic-screening>.

Phase 2 – Shortlisting

Shortlisting for interview is based mainly on a combination of UCAT scores and the UCAS personal statement, as detailed on the School of Medicine web pages:

¹ In the event that the reporting of SJT scores changes in the 2026 testing season, the SJT threshold will be updated on the medicine course page of the university web site.

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/undergraduatecourses/medicine/medicinehowtoapply/#shortlisting>. A ranking grade will be calculated and selection for interview will be based on this grade.

Admissions tutors will assess the personal statement for evidence of the values in the NHS Constitution using the following criteria, as defined in the person specification on the web page shown above:

- Understanding of the roles of a doctor within the healthcare team, community and society, gained through your personal research and experiences
- Awareness of the range of knowledge, skills and behaviours a medical student must acquire and why these are relevant to you
- Evidence of a skill acquired through your school/college/university studies (as appropriate) that will be important for becoming a doctor
- Ability to engage and communicate with people from a variety of backgrounds, and to help or support them
- Ability to balance responsibilities and time commitments over a prolonged period

In the event of more students being tied on the threshold ranking grade than can be accommodated at interview, the UCAT verbal reasoning score will be used as a tie-breaker.

For international applicants (i.e. those with international fees status), selection is based on total UCAT score only. Under current practice, applicants with an SJT score in band 4² or with a total UCAT score below 1,950 will not be considered. A threshold score for invitation to interview will be defined on the basis of the performance of the cohort of applicants; this threshold may, therefore, be higher than 1,950.

Phase 3 – Interview

The final decision on the offer of a place will be made on the basis of performance at interview.

It is our policy to invite approximately 3½-4 applicants to interview per available place for entry to the 5-year programme (A100). Applicants for the 6-year programme (A104) who meet both the academic requirements and the eligibility criteria specified at <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/undergraduatecourses/medicine/medicinehealthfoundationyear/> will be ranked for shortlisting in the same way as described for A100.

- Applicants are called for interview on the basis of the standard scoring systems used to shortlist applications by the admissions tutors
- Each candidate will have a similarly structured interview. The interviewers are drawn from the university (staff and senior medical students, local healthcare environment (primary and secondary care) and local community (lay interviewers); they have undergone specific training for interviewing medical school applicants
- Interviews are likely to take place in blocks during the period December to March/April

² See footnote 1 on previous page.

- After the interview, applicants will receive the university's decision via UCAS and the Keele applicant portal; successful applicants will be invited to attend an offer-holder day

Variations to Standard Process

Occasionally, the University may – subject to approval by the Department of Health & Social Care – offer places outside of standard number controls to government-sponsored students from other countries. Selection processes – and progression requirements if students are admitted via the health foundation year – for students on these routes will be defined in the sponsorship agreements.

Feedback after Application

Decisions on invitation to interview and offer of places are final. Unsuccessful applicants will inevitably be disappointed at not being offered a place. We will provide written general feedback at the time of notification that an application has been unsuccessful. More detailed feedback will be provided through the Keele applicant portal once all interviews have been completed.

University admissions staff are unable to provide further explanations for decisions, as these are based on a number of separate components. Applicants who believe their application has been handled unfairly, or that the published process has not been followed, should refer to the university admissions appeals process at

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/legalgovernancecompliance/governance/actcharterstatutesordinancesandregulations/regulationsandpoliciesindex/#section-a---student-pre-arrival>.

Exam Results and Re-marks

Owing to the Office for Students (OfS) quota of places allocated to us as a medical school, our numbers are tightly controlled. Therefore, when the A-level results are published in August we will make our decisions based on those grades. If an applicant does not meet the academic terms of the offer and subsequently decides to appeal to the examination board for reconsideration, they must advise us of this immediately in writing. While we will try to accommodate applicants whose grades meet entry requirements following review/re-mark, we may defer entry to the following year if places are not available for entry in the current cycle. Any dispute over grades must be conducted between the student, her/his school or college and the relevant exam board or accrediting body. We will not respond to requests for special consideration from students or schools/colleges who feel that grades have been awarded inappropriately.

Consideration of reapplication and resit qualifications is outlined at <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/undergraduatecourses/medicine/medicinehowtoapply/>.

Queries regarding admissions procedures must be submitted in writing by the applicant. We will not discuss applications with anybody other than the applicant (e.g. parents, teachers, MPs, etc.) without signed, written authorisation from the applicant.

Equal Opportunities

No student will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of actual or perceived age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. The university is committed to a programme of action to ensure that this process is fully effective.

Widening Participation

The Academic Lead for Admissions, Recruitment & Marketing, along with the Head of Global Undergraduate Student Recruitment & Access in GSRA, is responsible for ensuring that students from under-represented backgrounds have a fair opportunity to study medicine at Keele.

Keele University is committed to recruiting medical students from a wide range of backgrounds. We operate a local widening participation programme (Steps2Medicine) and offer adjusted interview selection and grade offers for prospective students from under-represented backgrounds through using contextual data such as eligibility for the UCAT bursary: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/undergraduatecourses/medicine/medicinewideningparticipation/>. The A104 programme ([Medicine with Health Foundation Year](#)) is a dedicated pathway for students from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not meet the standard entry requirements for the A100 (5-year) programme. Details of eligibility criteria and entry requirements are provided on the School of Medicine's web pages. Keele University School of Medicine also recognises widening participation programmes operated by a number of other English medical schools under the UKWPMED scheme. Details are available on the School of Medicine web pages.

Fitness to Practise/Study

Students must be certified as fit to practise and study before entering the MBChB programme.

Keele University's Occupational Health service will make judgements independently of the School of Medicine regarding health issues potentially affecting such fitness, and applicants holding offers are required to respond to requests for information from the service: this information will not be seen by admissions staff. Applicants with a disability requiring adjustments to teaching/learning environment(s) and/or assessments should declare this on their UCAS application. Applicants may be invited to discuss their disability and requirements with the School of Medicine's Disability Inclusion Tutor.

All applicants are required to undergo enhanced-level screening by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and therefore must respond to the relevant question regarding criminal records in the UCAS application. Applicants holding offers must also respond to communications from the university regarding completion of DBS registration processes.

Offers are conditional on satisfactory completion of DBS and occupational health processes, and students may have offers withdrawn or be removed from the programme if they do not engage fully with these processes.

Any relevant criminal activity identified from the UCAS application, DBS disclosure or other communication from the applicant or appropriate authorities (see next paragraph) will be investigated by the applicant sub-panel of the of the School of Medicine Health & Conduct Committee. Health and conduct committee decisions on applications are

final. In exceptional circumstances, an applicant may be eligible to submit an appeal under the [Admissions Appeals Process](#).

As previous criminal activity or misconduct might lead to refusal of GMC registration upon graduation, applicants are advised to notify the School of Medicine at the earliest opportunity if they have any convictions, cautions or warnings, and also if they have been the subject of any previous professional misconduct proceedings or safeguarding investigation.

The Medical Schools Council, Dental Schools Council and Pharmacy Schools Council maintain a database of students who have been excluded from programmes on fitness-to-practise grounds. Applicants who are listed in this database will have their applications investigated before entering the standard consideration procedure. Students enrolling on the MBChB programme will be required to consent to have their details entered onto this database in the event that they are excluded from the programme of fitness-to-practise grounds.

Eligibility to Practise Medicine in the UK

The GMC controls entry to the UK medical register, and graduates wishing to practise medicine in the UK must meet the GMC's criteria for eligibility. These will include passing national assessments, including the Medical Licensing Assessment. Students enrolling on the MBChB programme do so on the understanding that they must meet GMC licensing criteria as well as the criteria for successful completion of the MBChB degree to become eligible to practise medicine in the UK.

Student Numbers

For 2026 entry we have up to 171 available places, of which up to 10 may be taken by international students. This number is set by the Office for Students each year; the number for 2027 entry is not known at this time but there is no reason to assume it will be lower than 171.

For 2026 entry we have up to a maximum of 20 places for home students for A104. This is expected to reduce to 10 for 2027 entry.