MBChB

Career Advice for Students Leaving the MBChB Programme
Students leave the medical course for a variety of reasons. Not everyone is suited to medicine and sometimes life circumstances prevent you achieving your initial goals.

It is often hard to see life in perspective when you have to leave one part of your life behind. However, you must look forward and be determined to find the right path for yourself.

Who can I talk to?

A good starting point is to visit the University Career Development Service. You can find them on the ground floor of the Percy Gee (Students' Union) Building, on the east corner, next to Santander. They are open 9.00 am - 5.00 pm, Monday-Friday and offer one to one guidance and support on a wide range of areas. Each appointment is 15 minutes long and you can drop-in on the day or pre-book an appointment up to a week in advance. All the face to face appointments take place in the Career Development Service in the Percy Gee building and can be booked on https://mycareers.le.ac.uk, in person at the Career Development Service, or by calling 0116 252 2004.

Can I transfer to a different degree in Leicester University?

In certain situations it will be possible to transfer to a different degree, but this is not automatic. If your academic record is weak other departments will be concerned as to whether you will manage the workload. It is wrong to assume that other degrees are ‘easier’ than medicine and that they automatically welcome someone with good A level grades. Biological Science degree course admissions tutors will be keen to see evidence of good basic science performance and will be less interested in your interpersonal skills. Admissions tutors for one of the maths degrees may, by contrast, feel satisfied with a good A level grade in maths, amongst others. All admissions staff will be keen to assure themselves that your chosen course is one for which you have genuine enthusiasm. Typically students who are allowed to transfer have progressed well on the medical course for a couple of years before something happened which prevented their progress. This might be a medical problem or a personal problem. Such students are able to demonstrate that they should be able to progress well on an alternative course.

If you would like to be considered for a transfer you should contact the admissions officer for the course you would like to do. Contact details will be on the course site (http://www.le.ac.uk/study/).

Can I apply for a degree at the University of Leicester or another University?

Yes.

For all students leaving the medical course we strongly advise you to think about gaining an additional qualification. This is true whether or not you are entitled to a B.Med.Sci. degree. You will need something else to show an employer that you have the competence and commitment to develop your career.

You may assume that the only option is to do a science degree. This is one option, but there are many others. There are bound to be areas that you have not even considered. We have had students go off and do business degrees or qualifications linked to public administration. Some have gone on to do a teaching qualification. Once you have found a degree or course that interests you the next step is to contact the admissions office to clarify the admission process. Explain your situation and ask for their help and advice.

You have an advantage if you choose to apply for a course at Leicester, or at another university, through the UCAS clearing system. This arises because universities receive new candidates’ A level results a few days before the candidates themselves receive them. This enables the institutions to calculate what places they have, if any, for clearing, before they are deluged by calls from candidates who have not attained the grades they were offered. There is thus a one to two day window in which you can phone your chosen courses’ departments, to check on availability before most other applicants.
know their results. University departments will give you advice on when to phone if this is a course of action you wish to take.

**Am I entitled to a B.Med.Sci. degree?**

Students who have satisfactorily completed three years of the medical course are entitled to the award of a B.Med.Sci. degree. This is a non-classified degree and is awarded to reflect the work and progress made on the course.

**Will the Medical School provide a transcript of my results so far?**

The Medical School will provide you with a transcript of your results. You should contact the School Office if you require a transcript. You should note that the transcript will simply record the outcome for the summative assessments. We do not rank students and so cannot provide more detailed information.

**Will the Medical School give me a reference?**

There are some situations in which another institution requires a reference. If you require a reference you must inform the medical school beforehand so that staff are aware that a reference may be required. Note that staff have an obligation to provide an honest reference.

If you want a reference from an individual such as a tutor, then you must approach the tutor directly. The tutor has no obligation to provide a reference but will often gladly do so. They will provide an honest reference. This is likely to only be possible in the 6 or so months after you have left the medical school. Beyond that time it is increasingly difficult for an individual to be able to provide accurate up-to-date information.

**How can I make use of the knowledge and skills I have already gained?**

A first step is to look at your strengths and weaknesses. A meeting with the University Career Development Service will start this process. The skills gained during the medical course are very generic (e.g. communication skills, problem solving, etc.). That is why you might consider an area very different to medicine.

If you would like to stay in the Health Services you can consider a practical area such as Physiotherapy, Audiology Services, Nursing, Radiology, Pharmacy, Neurophysiology or Clinical Psychology.

All of the laboratory services offer a career structure which is varied and interesting. This includes genetics, haematology, biochemistry and pathology.

The NHS also promotes a career structure in administration and management. If you are good with numbers then doing a degree in finance could well lead to a role in one of the many NHS departments.

**I feel like giving up. Is it worthwhile bothering with anything else?**

It is hard to make decisions when you are feeling negative. If you are overwhelmed with such feelings we strongly advise you to contact your GP. Your GP will be able to access appropriate counselling services. It sometimes takes a while to get over the feeling of disappointment.

You must remember that you have many good qualities and abilities. If you are having difficulty in identifying these, or in acknowledging them, then talking with staff in the medical school’s Student Support Unit may well yield dividends. You were able to get into University in the first place. Those abilities remain. The task is to find a situation in which you can use them and develop yourself as an individual. Having a complete break for a while is sometimes helpful. It is likely to enable you to start afresh and tackle the task with enthusiasm.

February 2016