

# Surgery

You may think of surgery as a glamorous profession. When you hear the word 'surgery', what do you think of? 'ER' and 'Casualty'? In reality, a surgeon does:

- **ward rounds** – a daily visit to check on the progress of each of their patients
- **the operating theatre** – working on pre-booked operations and/or emergency cases as part of a team which will include other surgeons, anaesthetists, technicians, nurses and administrators... all working together.
- **out-patient clinics** – meeting the patient (and possibly their family) before the operation, to decide the best course of action for their condition, explain procedures and risks, take tests, arrange X-rays, etc and meeting them again after the operation, to monitor their recovery
- administrative work – as with every job, there's paperwork to be done.

Are you cut out for it?

**Surgery requires a fine mix of:**

- specialist knowledge
- good communication skills
- extensive experience
- a bright, eager mind
- manual dexterity

There are nine surgical specialties.

1. cardiothoracic
- 2 ear, nose and throat
- 3 dental
- 4 general
- 5 orthopaedic
- 6 paediatric
- 7 plastic
- 8 urology
- 9 neurosurgery

## What's medical school like?

Every medical school and every curriculum is different. At some schools you'll study the body systems in a logical sequence, while others involve more personal research and problem-based learning.

Basically, you'll spend the first two years in lectures on anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, etc and have seminars on everything from ethics to computer skills.

After that, you'll spend time in clinical placements, being taught by junior doctors, registrars and consultants in small groups at a local hospital. These will prepare you for your first house job once you've graduated; you'll be part of a hospital team in a department such as general surgery, obstetrics or cardiology – expanding your knowledge and learning about the impact illness has on patients and their families.

You can also do an elective – spending several months overseas studying medicine.



### Further Information

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Pre entry experience

**-Work observation** will help you decide whether the medical profession is really for you. You'll be able to observe the daily work of doctors, though you won't be able to assist in any clinical work

**- Healthcare placement** shadowing a GP or hospital doctor is invaluable also try to gain some paid or voluntary experience in a healthcare setting such as a local nursing home.

**- Interviews** Try to be yourself, prepare well and remember it's a good chance for you to find out whether it's the med school you'd like to spend the next few years.

**- Talk to as many medics as you can...** and listen to what they have to say, especially about topical areas and ones which may come up in the interview (such as proposed changes in the NHS, current ethical issues etc)

**- Attend a conference or a summer school.** Take every opportunity offered.

Entry requirements :  
Qualifications

The majority of medical schools require A levels in science subjects including Chemistry and Biology but all have different conditions and potential students must check the entry requirements with each medical school individually. For candidates without science subjects at A Level it is possible to undertake an additional 30 week Pre-Medical Year in chemistry, physics and biology at some universities.

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