

Studying Medicine

INTRODUCTION

Students that wish to study medicine will have to make some early decisions about where they want to pursue this study. Additionally, their grades in High School, especially in the sciences, will have to be at or near the top. This is not a field to pursue lightly, as it will place the highest demands on a student as they compete with other academically-talented and like-minded students from around the world. Some of the countries where CAISL students have gone to study medicine have limited international spots, and in the ever changing geopolitical landscape, yesterday's information can quickly change.

The student must ask themselves why they want to pursue medicine, and if they are really interested in medicine or in the sciences. Being aware of their true interests and what would be the best fit for their studies are important questions to discover the answers to.

****Important note, unless the student is an American citizen, pursuing medicine in the United States is not suggested as they rarely accept international applicants for their Pre-Med degree programs.**

YEAR BY YEAR PLAN

GRADE 9 AND 10

Students in grade 9 with an interest in Medicine should demonstrate excellence in the Physics 9 and Biology 9 semester courses. In Grade 10, similar results will be needed in Chemistry 10 and Biology 10, and it is advisable to take Physics 2 as one of their electives. The rationale for this decision is explained in the sections below which refer to their last two years in High School.

When the prospective medical student is deciding on their Diploma Program choices, they will need to have started planning on where they will attempt to enroll to study Medicine. It is strongly suggested that any prospective medical candidate chooses to enroll in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) as it will keep the most avenues of study available.

When choosing their IBDP subjects, Grade 10 students should consider their target countries to study medicine:

The United Kingdom—Most UK medical universities will have Biology Higher Level and Chemistry Higher Level as mandatory requirements to be considered for admissions. Additionally, most UK Universities will require that an applicant takes either the BMAT or UKAT national exams in the year they apply (September of Grade 12).

The Netherlands—If a student intends on pursuing their studies in Medicine in this country, they will have to explore taking the irregular IBDP as they will be required to take 3 sciences—Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, in order to apply. A helpful website is <https://www.studyinholland.co.uk/medicine.html> to explain how medicine works in this country.

Spain—In order to study in Spain, there is a language requirement in addition to taking both Biology and Chemistry at Higher Level. Thus, the student will have to take Spanish B (most likely at a higher level). Some universities in Spain have prerequisites for the Biology and Chemistry results, and others require a student to take a national exam and their acceptance is based on the result in this exam.

GRADE 11

Achieving the best possible results in their IB subjects is integral from the beginning, as is it is very difficult to achieve a 7 or ensure a 6 without strong work on the Internal Assessments in their Higher Level Sciences. Almost all university requirements to study medicine will require a 6 or 7 in these subjects. Students should also explore work experience options to include in their applications for university, as well as ensure that this is a career that they wish to pursue. If a student is looking to apply to the UK, they will need to register for the UK national exam, (UCAT—University Clinical Aptitude Test) in order to access their university of choice. This exam can be done between the end of grade 11 (July) and the start of Grade 12 (October). <https://themsag.com/> is a helpful website for applying to the UK for Medicine.

GRADE 12

Besides maintaining a strong work ethic and a high level of focus in their studies, this is when they should be preparing their applications.

United Kingdom—the deadline to apply to universities there for medicine is October 15th. Thus the student should have completed their work experience, registration for their exams, as well as submitted numerous drafts of their personal statements to their college counselor. After the deadline, they will start to receive offers by December/January, with the expectation that they are available for interviews if they are being considered for an offer. Flying to the school in the UK is expected for students in continental Europe.

The Netherlands—The only two universities that allow students to study medicine in English are the University of Groningen and Maastricht University. Their deadlines are January 15th, and their programs are numerous fixus, meaning you can only apply to one. The deadlines are January 15th for their programs. Please remember, that after the first three years completing your Bachelor of Science in English, the Masters of Science and training that follows requires a high level of fluency in Dutch as the instruction and interaction with patients is in Dutch, not English.

Other European countries (Italy, Czech Republic, Hungary) all offer Medical degrees in English, and besides having the highest level of grades, students may need to take a national exam and then receive a ranking that will dictate their offer. Some helpful websites to help with searching for universities that offer medical degrees in English and how to enroll are:

www.medical.doorway.com

informationplanet is a search engine for a variety of countries if you wish to explore it.

<http://www.medicalstudyguide.com/> is a resource for studying medicine around the world.