

**The importance of experience of the world of
work in admissions to Russell Group
universities: a desktop review of admissions
criteria for six courses**

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Occasional Research Paper No. 1

July 2011

The Taskforce vision

'To ensure that every school and college has an effective partnership with employers to provide its young people with the inspiration, motivation, knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to help them achieve their potential and so to secure our future national prosperity.'

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Key Points

This report contains information gathered from desk-based research that was undertaken in spring 2011 which investigated the relevance of work experience with regards to the admissions policies of undergraduate courses at Russell Group universities. It investigates whether this cohort of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) expect their undergraduate applicants to have undertaken work experience, and the extent to which work experience strengthens their application. A total of six courses – Business/Economics/Management, Dentistry, Engineering, Law, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine – were selected on the basis that they provide high wage returns typically within the professions. Research involved a review of web-based materials setting out HEI admissions criteria for each subject. Materials were reviewed to assess whether work experience (or more broadly experience of the world of work) was cited as an essential or desirable admissions requirement, or not mentioned.

Key findings are given in Part A of this study and are summarised below:

Work Experience	% of HEIs
Business/Economics/Management	
Essential	0
Desirable	21
Dentistry	
Essential	55
Desirable	36
Engineering	
Essential	6
Desirable	22
Law	
Essential	0
Desirable	37
Medicine	
Essential	22
Desirable	66
Veterinary Medicine/Science	
Essential	83
Desirable	17

Part B of this study collates relevant web-based admissions statements considered within the review, which have been extracted from the websites of Russell Group universities and are listed in alphabetical order. Illustrative quotations from websites are given below:

Business/Economics/Management:

“Your extra-curricular activities such as work experience, participation in competitions, sport or volunteering are important, particularly when they can provide evidence of useful skills such as problem solving, working under pressure and time management...” (London School of Economics)

Dentistry:

“The personal Statement is read to ensure that the applicant has knowledge of and insight in to the profession with emphasis on work experience/observation. Candidates are expected to show a range of skills and it is desirable on all dental programmes that candidates have completed a period of work experience/shadowing in a local dental or hospital and preferably in more than one establishment.” (University of Liverpool)

Engineering:

“It can also be helpful to obtain some work experience with a technical content. Such experiences should increase an applicant’s appreciation of why Engineering, Mathematics and Physics are so important in the modern world.” (University of Cambridge)

“Whilst we recognise that it is not possible for everyone to get on a Headstart course or get some engineering-related work experience, if you have managed to do this say so - and don’t forget to include what personal and engineering lessons you have learned from it.” (University of Oxford)

Law:

“Normally, you should have some direct experience of legal practice or the criminal justice system and should be able to illustrate what you learnt from the experience. It would be advantageous if you provided details of the type of work experience or “shadowing” and its duration.” (University of Leeds)

Medicine:

“It is equally important to be able to demonstrate that you are well-motivated towards a career in medicine especially through volunteering and/or work experience.” (University of Birmingham)

“The University recognises that opportunities for certain types of work experience and participation in some non-academic activities will vary according to individual circumstances, including an applicant's cultural or socio-economic background or the activities available in their local area.” (University of Cardiff)

“Medical Schools expect applicants to have a range of work experience for two reasons. Firstly, this demonstrates that you have a realistic insight to the profession – you are after all committing to a lifetime career when you apply to study Medicine. It is important that you have an understanding of the complex nature of a doctor's role, as well as being aware of the highs and lows of the profession. Work experience is also important in enabling you to develop (and to demonstrate that you have) the relevant skills and qualities that are essential to becoming a good doctor.” (University of Sheffield)

Veterinary Medicine/Science:

“Experience of working with animals is a key part of our entry requirements.” (University of Edinburgh)

The results of this study raise further questions, which will be subject of ongoing work by the Taskforce, regarding the extent to which:

- Work experience influences admissions to the full range of undergraduate courses of study offered by the Russell Group universities.
- The admissions behaviour exhibited by Russell Group universities is shared by other higher education institutions.
- The inclusion of work experience within admissions criteria serves to increase or reduce the prospects of successful admissions to courses of study for definable social groups of young people, notably:
 - By type of educational institution attended (maintained comprehensive or grammar school, Further Education College, fee-paying independent school).
 - By gender, socio-economic status and ethnicity.

Part A

Is experience of the world of work considered within the undergraduate admissions requirements of Russell Group universities?

The information below summarises desk research undertaken in the Spring of 2011, collating information contained in online admissions pages for prospective undergraduates of the twenty Russell Group universities. Included in the web search were general admissions pages, course descriptions/online prospectuses, individual school and department mini-sites and admissions policy statements. Excluded were information for mature/postgraduate students and joint honours course descriptions. The following subjects were selected for the web search on the basis that they attract high wage premiums within the labour market: Business/Economics/Management, Dentistry, Engineering, Law, Medicine and Veterinary Medicine/Science. The latter three – Business/Economics/Management – were combined in the table below and include cases where these subjects are offered as single honours and as combinations/joint honours e.g. ‘Economics and Management’. Information for admissions to these undergraduate courses was examined for evidence of the desirability of work experience and other related experiences providing knowledge of/insight into/commitment to the professions related to the subject of study. Extracts from relevant admissions pages are given in Part B below.

Business/Economics/Management		
	Number	% of HEIs offering subject
Essential	0	0
Desirable	4	21
Not mentioned	15	79
Not offered at UG level	1	
Dentistry		
Essential	6	55
Desirable	4	36
Not mentioned	1	9
Not offered at UG level	9	
Engineering		
Essential	1	6
Desirable	4	22
Not mentioned	13	72
Not offered at UG level	2	
Law		
Essential	0	0
Desirable	7	37
Not mentioned	12	63
Not offered at UG level	1	

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Medicine		
Essential	4	22
Desirable	12	66
Not mentioned	2	11
Not offered at UG level	2	
Veterinary Medicine/Science		
Essential	5	83
Desirable	1	17
Not mentioned	0	0
Not offered at UG level	14	

Name of HEI	Essential requirement (named courses)	Desirable requirement (named courses)	No mention made	General admissions advice
Birmingham	Dentistry	Medicine	Business Economics Engineering Law	WXP desirable for “certain courses” related “to a particular line of work” Indication of future career ideas recommended
Bristol	Dentistry Veterinary Science Engineering	Economics Law	Medicine	“Out-of-school experiences” are taken into account. WXP essential for “professional courses”
Cambridge		Engineering Veterinary Medicine	Economics Law Medicine	“Discussing any work experience may form part of the interview process”
Cardiff		Engineering Medicine	Business Management Dentistry Economics Law	
Edinburgh	Medicine Veterinary Medicine		Business Studies Economics Engineering Law	WXP essential for some “professional and vocational degrees”

Name of HEI	Essential requirement (named courses)	Desirable requirement (named courses)	No mention made	General admissions advice
Glasgow	Dentistry Veterinary Medicine	Medicine Law	Business Business Management Economics Engineering	
Imperial College		Medicine	Engineering	
King's College		Business/Management Dentistry Law Medicine		
Leeds	Medicine	Business Dentistry Engineering Law		
Liverpool	Veterinary Science	Dentistry Medicine	Business Economics Economics Engineering Law	
London School of Economics		Economics Law Management		Applicants advised to include information on WXP "you may have undertaken that can complement your application..."

Name of HEI	Essential requirement (named courses)	Desirable requirement (named courses)	No mention made	General admissions advice
Manchester	Dentistry Medicine		Business Studies Economics Engineering Law	“WXP, and what was gained from it, should be included in the Personal Statement”
Newcastle	Dentistry	Medicine	Business Management Economics Engineering Law	
Nottingham	Veterinary Medicine	Medicine	Economics Engineering Law	WXP looked for which is “appropriate to the discipline” showing “commitment to a chosen career or area of work”
Oxford		Engineering Medicine	Economics and Management Law	
Queen’s Belfast		Dentistry Medicine	Business Management Economics Engineering Law	“Experience” may be considered as part of selection process

Sheffield	Dentistry Medicine		Business Management Law Engineering	WXP is used in assessment which shows “commitment to a chosen career”
Southampton		Law Medicine	Management Engineering Economics	“Relevant WXP should be included in the Personal Statement”
Warwick	Medicine (graduate entry only)	Law	Business Economics Engineering Management	“Relevant WXP should be included in the Personal Statement”
University College London		Medicine	Economics Engineering Law	

Part B

Quotes from the admissions pages of Russell Group universities. This includes information from general admissions and subject-specific pages and includes links to the page quoted. The review was undertaken in the spring of 2011.

University of Birmingham

General Admissions: “We need to see evidence that your interest is genuine: If your degree is related to a particular line of work, that you have work experience in a relevant setting or can otherwise demonstrate that you understand what that profession involves.”

Recommended for inclusion in Personal Statement: “That you have an idea of what you want to do after you have graduated (this is less important for degrees which are not vocational in nature, but can be useful for Admissions Tutors).”

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/apply/thepersonalstatement.aspx>
(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Dentistry: “Work experience (approximately 14 days or equivalent) in a general dental practice is required before completing the UCAS form. You will be required to declare your commitment, involvement and understanding of the need to be working for the benefit of others. You must also demonstrate an understanding of the empathy needed when dealing with different members of society, something that gives you an insight into working with people from a different background to your own.”

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/med/dental-surgery.aspx>
(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “In deciding who to invite for interview, academic excellence is not the only criterion. It is equally important to be able to demonstrate that you are well-motivated towards a career in medicine especially through volunteering and/or work experience. In addition, we want to ensure that you possess other qualities required of a potential doctor. Therefore, extracurricular involvement is important. Activities involving significant interaction with a broad range of people that takes place outside of school (other than those directly related to the medicine application) is a relevant aspect.”

<http://www.mds.bham.ac.uk/ug/mbchb/guidance.shtml> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Bristol

Reasons for not getting into Bristol – “...if an applicant did not have, for example, a crucial element such as work experience for the professional courses, or if they did not meet the minimum entry requirements...”

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions/feedback-complaints.html>

(Accessed 21/06/2011)

“A wide range of factors is taken into account, such as your post-school and out-of-school experiences and breadth of interests.”

<http://bristol.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/2012/applying/#entrance> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Dentistry: Considered as part of application:

- “Interest, motivation and commitment to dentistry as evidenced in the personal statement
- Paid or unpaid work
- Amount and variety of dental work experience (normally expected to be an equivalent to at least 20 days. Where possible this should be within various fields of dentistry).”

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/dental/undergraduates/statement.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Economics/Management: “In reading the Personal Statement, Admissions Tutors look for evidence of many of the following items: ... (for degrees involving Study on Continental Europe) skills and interest in foreign language and culture; non-academic achievement or experience; positions of responsibility; interest in hobbies or pastimes; voluntary work; work experience.”

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/efm/prospective-undergraduates/admissions/school-admissions-2011-.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Engineering: Under ‘Personal Statement criteria’: “non-academic achievement and experience (for example, work experience in industry), positions of responsibility, team working.”

<http://www.enm.bris.ac.uk/admiss/ug/das-EMAT-2010-11.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: Under consideration at interview: “Appropriateness of the Bristol course in relation to the candidate’s declared interests and aspirations”; “Non-academic achievement and/or experience, or extra-curricular interests, that indicate the likely contribution a candidate will make to the life of the University.”

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/law/ugdegrees/ugadmissions/admissionsstatement.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: Criteria for assessing the Personal Statement

“Has the candidate:

1. A realistic interest in Medicine?
2. Informed him/herself about a career in Medicine?
3. Demonstrated a commitment to helping others?
4. Demonstrated a wide range of interests?
5. Contributed to school/college/community activities?
6. A range of personal achievements (excluding exams)?”

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/medical-school/prospective-students/entrycriteria/nonacademic/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Veterinary Science: ‘Second screening’ ranks students according to various criteria, including “Work experience in veterinary practice, on farms and in other setting”; “Non-academic achievements and extra-curricular interests; positions of responsibility; voluntary or paid work.”

<http://www.bris.ac.uk/vetscience/undergraduate/bvsc/das-d100.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Cambridge

General Admissions: Subject-specific academic interview:

“You should expect: a challenging discussion relating to your chosen course, which may include topics covered in your recent academic work and raised in your written application (i.e. wider reading and work experience).”

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/publications/docs/interviews.pdf>(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Engineering: “It can also be helpful to obtain some work experience with a technical content. Such experiences should increase an applicant's appreciation of why Engineering, Mathematics and Physics are so important in the modern world.”

“For Engineering, evidence of motivation and commitment might be shown in a number of ways that could include:

- Relevant hobbies and interests;
- Participation in STEMNET events and activities, Engineering Education Scheme projects, a Headstart course, the Arkwright Scholarship scheme, Smallpeice Trust courses, Young Engineers activities, and other similar courses or activities;

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- Relevant work experience placements”

<http://www.eng.cam.ac.uk/admissions/guide/procedure.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Veterinary Medicine: “Although work experience isn’t a requirement for applicants, some is useful.”

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/courses/vetmed/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

“Many applicants worry unnecessarily that they have not had sufficient veterinary experience before applying. It is helpful to have some personal experience of the veterinary profession and have a realistic idea of what the work may entail. However, extensive experience is not a prerequisite and seeing a variety of different aspects of the profession for relatively short periods can be more helpful.”

http://www.vet.cam.ac.uk/application/welcome/apply/work_experience.html (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Cardiff University

Engineering: “School Selection Criteria: Applicants to the School of Engineering are normally measured on their academic potential using predicted grades, along with their enthusiasm for the subject which should be demonstrated in their personal statement, relevant work experience and references.”

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/for/prospective/ug/applyingtocardiff/admissionscriteria/engin/selection/index.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: Applications are welcome from those who have “relevant work/life experience.”

<http://courses.cardiff.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/detail/74.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “The University recognises that opportunities for certain types of work experience and participation in some non-academic activities will vary according to individual circumstances, including an applicant's cultural or socio-economic background or the activities available in their local area.”

http://medicine.cf.ac.uk/media/filer_public/2010/09/22/admissions_policy_2011-12_.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Edinburgh

General Admissions: “If you are applying to a professional or vocational degree programme (such as Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Education), you must demonstrate through your personal statement, a clear understanding of the profession. You can support this with evidence of appropriate work experience, volunteering or work shadowing, although we do recognise that not all students have equal access to such opportunities.”

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/applications-admissions/entry-requirements/non-academic> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “Non-academic requirements”:

“Evidence of career exploration prior to application:

- Understanding of medicine;
- Work experience and shadowing (diseased, disadvantaged and disabled).”

“Prior experience:

Demonstration of a clear understanding of the nature of a career of medicine will be expected. This can be achieved by:

- Appropriate work experience or work shadowing, as evidence of an informed decision to apply for a medical programme.
- Talking with medical doctors and medical students.

...The Admissions Committee recognises that not all applicants have equal opportunities to gain such experience. If it is not possible to get any work experience in a hospital then other alternatives include working in a nursing home, riding for the disabled, or volunteer work.”

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/medicine-vet-medicine/undergraduate/medicine/applying/requirements/non-academic> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Veterinary Medicine: “Experience of working with animals is a key part of our entry requirements.”

“When applying, all candidates should submit a Work Experience Summary (WES) form”

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/vet/studying/uk-eu-school-leavers/work-experience> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

“Students are normally required to bring with them an additional reference outlining recent work experience undertaken.”

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/applications-admissions/selection/interviews>

(Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Glasgow

Dentistry: “The BDS Person Specification provides information on essential and preferred academic qualifications, work-shadowing experience and also personal qualities we would expect successful candidates to provide evidence of, from activities they have undertaken both within and outside of school.”

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/dentistry/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “Work experience in a medical setting is not necessary to study medicine but it is expected that candidates will have at least spoken to a doctor such as their own GP about a career in medicine or have found out about a medical career through reading careers books or newspapers. An awareness of current issues facing the medical profession is also expected, which can be obtained from newspapers, journals and the internet. An interest in caring for others is also expected, which can be demonstrated through voluntary/paid work in a community setting. This may also be useful in developing skills. Some hospitals will accept students looking for work experience. For example, staff at Monklands Hospital in Lanarkshire have developed a formal work experience scheme for 6th year pupils called the Next Generation programme.”

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/medicine/courses/medicineadmissions/entryrequirements/workexperience/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

“Although specific work experience in a hospital or general practice is not essential, it is important for all applicants to find out about the realities of a career in medicine.”

Medicine section in Undergraduate Prospectus (p.131):

http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_145194_en.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Veterinary Medicine: “Evidence of self-motivation is essential and substantial experience with animals is also a requirement for admission to the course. This may include knowledge and experience gained working in a veterinary, agricultural, research and/or biomedical setting; should be of appropriate breadth and depth such that it gives the applicant an understanding of the veterinary profession and an appreciation of the part played by the profession in society.”

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/faculties/vet/undergraduestudy/bachelorofveterinarymedicineandsurgerybvms/unitedkingdomapplicants/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Imperial College London

General Admissions: “All indications of candidates' interests outside their academic studies assist selection by providing valuable background information.”

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ugprospectus/howtoapply/selectionrequirements> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Mechanical Engineering: “You should indicate on your UCAS application why you wish to study mechanical engineering and what you have done to find out about the subject.”

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ugprospectus/facultiesanddepartments/mechanicalengineering/entryrequirements> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: One must show: “Motivation and realistic approach to medicine as a career”. Included in application assessment criteria: “Leadership and teamwork, Community activities, Motivation and understanding of medicine as a career.”

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/ugprospectus/facultiesanddepartments/medicine/mbbsmedicine/entryrequirements> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

King's College London

Business/Management: “We welcome applications from those with any experience of work within a business setting.”

http://www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/entryrequirements/name/business_management/alpha/b/header_search/ (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: “Although we do not require applicants to have been in paid or voluntary employment, we welcome applications from those with any experience of legal work experience.”

http://www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/entryrequirements/name/law/alpha/l/header_search/ (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine (and dentistry): “We would normally expect that applicants will have undertaken some voluntary work experience in a caring/health environment and/or observation in a medical clinical setting. It is important for applicants to have a realistic appreciation of what a career as a health professional involves.”

“Any voluntary contribution to your community is taken into account, e.g. volunteer in a care home. We look for evidence that you have worked in a setting where you can interact with the general public e.g. in a pharmacy, check-out or restaurant.”

http://www.kcl.ac.uk/prospectus/undergraduate/entryrequirements/name/medicine/alpha/m/header_search/ (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Leeds

General Admissions: In ‘Guide to Applying’: “If you have career plans then mention this, especially if it is related to the course. This shows commitment to the subject and that you’ve thought things through.”

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/downloads/file/6/guide_to_applying (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Business: “A good personal statement should also demonstrate how relevant extracurricular activities and work experience have enhanced your knowledge and skills in your chosen subject.”

http://business.leeds.ac.uk/fileadmin/webfiles/Undergraduate/2010_UG_Admissions_Policy_UKEU.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Dentistry: “Applicants are encouraged to undertake work experience in a variety of dental settings such as general dental practice and dental hospitals. To ensure an equitable process, the Admissions Team do not co-ordinate work placements within the Institute. Work placements are in high demand and dealt with via the NHS arm of the Institute. Those wishing to undertake a work placement at the Institute may put their request in writing to the address below and should be aware that placements are limited. Work Placements, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Trust Headquarters, St. James University Hospital, Beckett Street, Leeds, LS9 7TF. Telephone: 0113 206 5104.”

http://www.leeds.ac.uk/coursefinder/17810/BChD_Dental_Surgery (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Engineering: “We wish to hear about why you are interested in the field, any relevant work or other experience, details of any particular skills, interests or attributes you have which you think demonstrate your aptitude, motivation and interest in the subject area.”

Engineering Undergraduate Admissions Policy link on website page

<http://www.engineering.leeds.ac.uk/faculty/undergraduate/admissions-policy.shtml> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: “Interest in and commitment to the subject: You should demonstrate that you have questioned your reasons for choosing the degree you wish to apply for, and that you understand

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what the degree entails. Normally, you should have some direct experience of legal practice or the criminal justice system and should be able to illustrate what you learnt from the experience. It would be advantageous if you provided details of the type of work experience or "shadowing" and its duration. If attempts to gain work experience have been unsuccessful, you should refer to this within the academic reference."

<http://www.law.leeds.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduates/admissions-information/advice-ucas-personal-statement.php> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: "Normally you should be able to report some direct experience of both hospital and community medical practice and describe what you have learnt from your experience.

Although direct observation of medical consultations may not be possible due to issues of confidentiality, most applicants should be able to observe reception or other aspects of health care.

Tip: Provide details of the type of work experience and its duration. If attempts to gain work experience have been unsuccessful, there should be some reference to this contained within the Referee's statement. In addition to work experience, you should also have some factual knowledge about potential careers and be realistic about the future."

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/medicine/admissions/personal.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Liverpool

Dentistry: "The Personal Statement is read to ensure that the applicant has knowledge of and insight into the profession with emphasis on work experience/observation. Applicants must demonstrate motivation and commitment to a career in dentistry. Candidates are expected to show a range of skills and it is desirable on all dental programmes that candidates have completed a period of work experience/shadowing in a local dental practice or hospital and preferably in more than one establishment. Evidence of a caring attitude is also sought."

http://www.liv.ac.uk/dental/documents/Web_version_2011_A200.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: "Evidence that the candidate has given serious thought to their choices and to their intended course is sought."

http://www.liv.ac.uk/law/prospective/Admissions_Criteria.htm (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: "Applicants demonstrating the most academic potential are then assessed against our non-academic criteria which include health care career awareness and insight, caring for the local community and a critical, coherent, and informative approach to written communication."

http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/School_of_Medical_Ed.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Personal Statement advice: “Be clear about your general work experience and how this might help you pursue a career in medicine:

- What did it involve?
- How long did you do it for?
- What was your commitment per week?
- How did you balance this with your academic studies?
- What did you get out of it that is relevant to a career in medicine?

Remember that your work experience does not necessarily have to be medically related, such as shadowing a GP or a consultant, but this might help you decide whether this career is really for you. Some applicants find it very difficult to obtain this type of work experience, but will have other caring experiences that are relevant. Clarify the steps you have taken to confirm this is the career for you, or to confirm that other careers are not for you.”

http://www.liv.ac.uk/sme/prospective/ucas_mbchb.htm (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Veterinary Science: “Candidates should have spent a minimum of 6 weeks gaining experience of the husbandry of a range of animals, on commercial livestock farms, in commercial stables and in commercial or rescue kennels / cattery. It is also beneficial to have gained experience in other veterinary-related sectors e.g. abattoirs, laboratories, zoos or wildlife centres. Candidates should also have completed at least 4 weeks in veterinary practice. As a minimum, experience should be gained in at least two different practices, preferably one small animal and one large animal (mainly farm / equine) practice.”

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/veterinary-science-bvsc/entry-requirements/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

London School of Economics

General Admissions: “We are looking for... Any job, paid work or placements you have undertaken, and what you have learnt from them. If these experiences influenced your choice of degree, why?”

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/howToApply/makingAnApplication/personalStatement/whatMakesAGoodPersonalStatement.aspx> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

“You should also include information on any paid or unpaid work experience or employment you may have undertaken that can complement your application...”

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<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/howToApply/makingAnApplication/personalStatement/writingYourPersonalStatement.aspx> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Economics, Management and other subjects: “Your extra-curricular activities such as work experience, participation in competitions, sport or volunteering are important, particularly when they can provide evidence of useful skills such as problem solving, working under pressure and time-management...and particularly how you have benefitted from these experiences.”

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/howToApply/departmentalAdmissionsCriteria/economics.aspx#What is looked for in the Personal Statement> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: “The selectors are keen to know why you wish to study Law, ...and what additional reading or relevant experiences (e.g. attending court hearings) you have had which have led you to commit to this challenging degree programme. If you include details of extra curricular activities such as such as music, drama, art, work experience, charitable or sporting involvement, the selectors are particularly interested in knowing how you have benefitted from the experiences.”

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/howToApply/departmentalAdmissionsCriteria/law.aspx> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Management: “Whilst it is not a subject you will have had the opportunity to study specifically as part of your school curriculum, we are interested in what stimulated your enthusiasm for and desire to study for a degree in Management, as well as the experiences, such as wider reading or personal involvement that have resulted in your commitment to this contemporary and interdisciplinary field of study. Your extra-curricular activities, including work experience, are taken into consideration, particularly if they help to demonstrate your motivation to study on this course. Please note that work experience is not essential, as the composition of this degree programme is academic rather than vocational in nature; however, the selectors are interested in your longer term career plans, if known.”

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/howToApply/departmentalAdmissionsCriteria/management.aspx> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Manchester

General Admissions: Advice for Personal Statement: “Work experience: both related and unrelated to your chosen course choice. Be specific about what you learned. Refer to transferable skills gained, for example, communication, planning, time management and problem-solving. Skills mentioned should be relevant to academic course and attending Higher Education.”

<http://www.umass.manchester.ac.uk/applying/personalstatement/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

www.educationandemployers.org www.educationandemployers.org/research.aspx
www.inspiringthefuture.org

Dentistry: “Work experience: Applicants must have observed a dentist at work before applying. This must be a general dental practitioner as this is the role which most students fulfil on graduation. Applicants must undertake a minimum of two weeks work experience in a general dental practice. The personal statement must be specific about the duration of any dental work experience undertaken. If applicants wish to arrange additional work experience in a specialist area of dentistry, this will be beneficial. It is not necessary to have fulfilled the role of a dental nurse.”

<http://www.dentistry.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/bds/coursedetails/?code=00398&pg=4>
(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: Pathways to Law programme participant: “The aim is to encourage and support young people in applying to study Law at university and we will be supporting pupils through a variety of activities. These activities will include, UCAS application advice sessions, careers days, parents information sessions, mentoring from current University of Manchester Law students along with local legal professionals and organised Legal work placements, all of which will increase a student’s chances of being successful in their applications to study Law.”

<http://www.law.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/pathwaystolaw/index.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “The School requires voluntary work experience in a caring capacity. Applicants should be aware that the School may request confirmation of their work experience.”

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/search2011/atoz/course/?code=01428&pg=3> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Newcastle

Dentistry: “All applicants are required to have undertaken a minimum of two weeks' dental work experience prior to submitting their UCAS application. This should be carried out in a General Dental Practice, but other types of dental work experience may be considered.”

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/course/A206/entrance-requirements> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “We will be looking for your experience of interacting with people in a caring environment, which you may have acquired through employment or voluntary work in a variety of settings.”

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/documents/ugbrochures/medicine.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Nottingham

General Admissions: What we look for – “other factors as appropriate to the discipline, such as employment or volunteer work in relevant fields showing commitment to a chosen career or area of work...”

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ugstudy/introduction/applying/admissions-procedures.php>

(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: Attributes sought during selection: “Insight into medical career (appropriate and realistic view of the role of a doctor); Having seen doctors in their working environment; Awareness of the positive and negative aspects of a medical career from talking to doctors.”

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/mhs/documents/mhs-docs/admissionspolicy.pdf> (Accessed

21/06/2011)

Veterinary Medicine: “An insight into veterinary career (an appropriate and realistic view of the role of a veterinary surgeon)

- Having seen veterinary professionals in their working environment.
- An awareness of the positive and negative aspects of a veterinary career.
- An awareness of current important issues and developments in veterinary medicine and science.”

Phase 2 selection: “At this stage, in addition to academic attainment the application is reviewed to ensure that the applicant has gained at least six weeks' experience of working with animals.”

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/vet/prospectivestudents/undergraduate/admissions.aspx> (Accessed

21/06/2011)

University of Oxford

Engineering: As a means of showing enthusiasm/interest in the course: “Perhaps you have obtained work experience in engineering, or you have attended a course or lecture.”

<http://www.lmh.ox.ac.uk/admissions/Undergraduate/Courses-offered/Course-list/Engineering.aspx>

(Accessed 21/06/2011)

“Whilst we recognise that it is not possible for everyone to get on a Headstart course or get some engineering-related work experience, if you have managed to do this say so – and don't forget to include what personal and engineering lessons you have learned from it.”

<http://www.eng.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/frequently-asked-questions>(Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “All candidates are free to make reference to skills or experience acquired in any context to date to illustrate compatibility with the selection criteria for Medicine at Oxford; sometimes candidates refer to voluntary work and other extracurricular activity, but many forms of evidence can help demonstrate to tutors that a candidate has made an informed decision regarding their own suitability to study Medicine.”

http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate_courses/courses/medicine/medicine_how_to.html (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Queen's University Belfast

General Admissions: “Some course selectors may take into consideration experience, motivation and commitment to the chosen course.”

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/home/ProspectiveStudents/FileStore/Filetoupload,198597,en.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Dentistry: “Applicants should be able to show commitment to and an understanding of a career in dentistry; this may be through work experience or work-shadowing at a General Dental Practice, attending relevant careers conferences or undertaking voluntary work in a care setting.”

<http://www.dentalcourses.co.uk/dental-schools/university-belfast.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

In ‘How UCAS forms are assessed’ (FAQs for Dentistry admission)

- “Background knowledge and experience of dentistry and an interest in being a dentist (e.g. attendance at Dental School open days and/or attending your General Dental Practitioner’s practice to observe how he/she works) observation period with your own.
- A genuine interest in people, and in improving the health and well-being of others which might include voluntary, charitable, mentoring activities or paid work.”

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/cm/cms/docs/admissionprofiledentistry-2011.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “Candidates are expected to state explicitly that Medicine is their career choice. There should be evidence of commitment and motivation in the personal statement; this is usually shown by "workshadowing" in Medicine, attending medical careers conferences or undertaking voluntary work in a care setting. Participation in activities within or outside School demonstrating leadership, teamwork and communication skills are also considered.”

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/cm/cms/docs/Admissionpolicymedicine-2010.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Sheffield

General Admissions: Used in assessment: “The personal statement, for evidence of:

- Motivation and commitment to the subject(s);
- Work or voluntary experience showing commitment to a chosen career;
- Extra-curricular activities, achievements and interests....”

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/content/1/c6/03/59/17/UG%20Admissions%20Policy%20Revised%20Final%20Feb%202010.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Dentistry: “Career Exploration: Applicants who can demonstrate knowledge of the dental profession, what has attracted them to the profession and those who have researched the possible career opportunities will be given preference for interview. Applicants should have attended work experience placements within a general dental practice.”

http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/dentalschool/pug/bds_selection.html (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “Medical schools expect applicants to have a range of work experience for two reasons. Firstly, this demonstrates that you have a realistic insight to the profession – you are after all committing to a lifetime career when you apply to study Medicine. It is important that you have an understanding of the complex nature of a doctor's role, as well as being aware of the highs and lows of the profession.

Work experience is also important in enabling you to develop (and to demonstrate that you have) the relevant skills and qualities that are essential to becoming a good doctor. A few examples are listed below.

Participatory work experience (not simply observing, but a 'hands on' role) is extremely valuable. Many applicants arrange to undertake paid or voluntary work as a Healthcare Assistant. Whatever work experience you have, it is important that you reflect effectively on this in your Personal Statement.”

http://www.shef.ac.uk/medicine/prospective_ug/applying/workexperience.html (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Southampton

General Admissions: ‘Useful hints for application’: “Include any relevant work experience, career aspirations or personal interests that relate to the programme you want to study.”

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/makethemost.html> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: “We look for a well written personal statement that shows commitment, determination and motivation towards the study of law. That the student has researched the subject and has perhaps undertaken relevant work experience...”

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/law/ugopportunities/files/FAQ_2010_11.pdf (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “In addition to academic entry requirements, the selectors will look at your UCAS personal statement and reference for evidence of non-academic criteria.

You will be asked to demonstrate that you are self-motivated and have initiative; are literate and articulate; are able to interact successfully with others; have learnt from your experiences of interacting with people in health or social care settings – this may draw on what you have learnt from your own life experiences (e.g. friends and family), or more formalised activity (e.g. paid or voluntary work, or work shadowing).”

<http://www.som.soton.ac.uk/undergrad/apply/entry/> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University of Warwick

General Admissions: “With this in mind, you might want to think about how any of your extra-curricular activities and/or work experience could illustrate your interest in your chosen subject or show evidence of skills which would be particularly useful to that field of study.’... “We are keen to hear about your work experience [though should not dominate personal statement].”

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/tips> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Law: Admission FAQs: “Is legal work experience necessary?” ...Not necessary but “Legal work experience can show a commitment to pursuing legal studies and it gives you a taste of what work in the legal profession may be like. ..We are interested in hearing whether your work experience provided you with any insights which might be of relevance to your legal studies.”

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/law/ug/admissions/faq/#experience> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

University College London

Civil and Environmental Engineering: “Evidence of your enthusiasm and proven leadership skills demonstrated through previous educational and personal experience will help to make your application stand out.”

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prosp-students/prospectus/engineering-sciences/civil-environmental-engineering/application/index.shtml> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Medicine: “Considerable weight is also given to... the steps you have taken to gain insight into a medical career.”

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prosp-students/prospectus/medical-school/medicine/application/index.shtml> (Accessed 21/06/2011)

Taken into account when selecting students for interview: “Previous experience (both personal and through work experience or volunteering), particularly if it has involved contact with the healthcare profession or laboratory work, or if the candidate has been involved with the sick, disabled, very young or elderly, and, importantly, is able to reflect on their experiences.”

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/medicalschoo/mbbs-admissions/faqs/selection.pdf> (Accessed 21/06/2011)