

This document is a guide for Personal Tutors who have been asked to write a UCAS reference for students applying for undergraduate degrees of Medicine or Dentistry.



STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS



Students intending to study medicine or dentistry as a graduate must apply via UCAS, with a maximum of 4 course choices. UCAS will class these as "independent applicants" as they are not applying through a school or college. Most students will be applying for the traditional 5-year MBChB, though some may apply for the 4-year Scottish Graduate Entry Medicine (ScotGEM) course, offered by the Universities of Dundee and St Andrews.



Students must have booked, paid for and sat the required additional assessments (usually UCAT; GAMSAT for ScotGEM) before applying. The referee does not see this part of the application and does not need to make any comment on this.



Their application should be accompanied by their answers to UCAS' three application questions:

- 1 Why do you want to study this course or subject?
- 2 How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?
- 3 What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?



Students should share their answers to these with you as their referee to set the context and their experiences.



Students can get help and feedback from the Careers and Employability Service on preparing these answers.



Your reference must be completed by the application deadline of **15 OCTOBER** (though we recommend it is completed before this to avoid any last-minute system issues). References are limited to 4,000 characters inclusive of spaces, line breaks etc. UCAS recommend you draft this separately in e.g. MS Word before submitting via the UCAS portal.



THE APPLICANT CANNOT SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATION TO UCAS UNTIL A REFERENCE HAS BEEN SUBMITTED ONLINE BY THEIR CHOSEN REFEREE.



PREDICTED GRADES



Graduates will be expected to achieve a 2.1, and any offer will be conditional on this. If asked for their predicted grades please do say 2.1 as without this they may be automatically declined without their application being considered. If you are unsure that the student is on track for a 2.1 please discuss this with the Senior Personal Tutor in the first instance.



UCAS REFERENCE - THREE PARTS

The UCAS reference is in three parts:



SECTION 1

Provide an overview of your relationship with the applicant (mandatory)



SECTION 2

If applicable, enter any information about extenuating circumstances which may have impacted the applicant's education and achievement



SECTION 3

Outline other supportive information specific to the applicant and relevant to the course(s) applied for that you think universities and colleges should be aware of.



WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR REFERENCE

Referees should provide concise, evidence-based comments on the key attributes required for studying medicine and dentistry. These might include:



ACADEMIC STRENGTH: including their ability to manage a demanding workload and engage with complex material.



PROFESSIONALISM AND RELIABILITY: e.g. attendance, punctuality, integrity, responsiveness to feedback.



COMMUNICATION SKILLS: including clarity of expression, teamwork, and respectful interaction with others.



RESILIENCE, MATURITY AND MOTIVATION: including response to challenge, ability to manage pressure, and sustained commitment to a career in medicine or dentistry.



EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES



If you're aware that the student has faced extenuating circumstances, and they have referenced this in their application, you can mention this in your reference to provide context for how these have been overcome.

Please ensure you have the student's consent before referring to any such circumstances.



FURTHER READING AND USEFUL RESOURCES



UCAS:
Writing undergraduate references for independent applicants

www.ucas.com/advisers/help-and-training/guides-resources-and-training/writing-references/writing-undergraduate-references-for-independent-applicants



University of Aberdeen
Medicine Advice for Referees

www.abdn.ac.uk/smsn/undergraduate/medicine/entrance-requirements/advice-for-referees/

(please note alternative guidance may be available on other University's websites).



University of Aberdeen
mini course (designed for students):

Applying as a Graduate for
Medicine or Dentistry

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