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GO BEYOND BOUNDARIES



Medical Sciences

UNDERGRADUATE GUIDE



→ 8TH IN THE UK FOR ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY

The Times & Sunday Times
Good University Guide 2027

Welcome

It is my hope that you will join our dynamic and friendly community, and enable us to help you achieve your aspirations and potential. We pride ourselves in world-leading excellence in both teaching and research

As a medical sciences student at the University of Aberdeen you will be part of the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition. As our teaching is research-led you will be taught by some of the top academics in the UK, delivered in the best possible environment with access to world class facilities.

We offer a range of degrees, and many choices within these, allowing you to shape your study to suit your career aspirations and interests. Our exciting curriculum and the opportunities we provide for you to enhance your transferable skills and employability, mean that when you graduate you will leave this University empowered and with the right skill set for the next stage of your career.

I hope you enjoy reading about the opportunities there are for you in the School.



Professor David Blackbourn
Interim Head of School

Your learning experience

The diversity of subjects and flexibility of our degrees allows students to explore different subject areas before specialising in their chosen discipline.

Our degree programmes are built to enhance your employability. All our honours disciplines offer the following features, highly relevant to your future job prospects:

- A three month full time research project in the final year;
- An optional industrial placement year and graduation with a Masters (MSci);
- An optional highly relevant and sought after experience in Bio-business

All medical sciences BSc Honours degrees follow the traditional Scottish four year structure. The process of selecting courses is simplified by using MyCurriculum. Full-time students typically take 60 credits (four 15-credit courses) per term. Compulsory courses are pre-selected, and you can choose others to complete your schedule. You can find your timetable and record attendance in MyTimetable. These tools make managing your academic schedule easy and efficient.

The key advantage to our four year system is that it allows a substantial level of flexibility meaning that you can defer your ultimate degree subject choice because the requirements for first year are largely the same for all degrees. You are then in a stronger and more informed position to make the correct judgement about which area you will specialise in.

How you are taught

A variety of teaching methods and styles are used to make the teaching engaging, exciting and responsive to the latest research in that subject area. The research we carry out in the School directly informs and guides our teaching, particularly in the final Honours year.

During years 1, 2 and 3 students undertake their practical classes in our dedicated Science Teaching Hub which opened in 2022, providing students with advanced analytical tools and flexible, safe laboratory spaces. Students have access to research grade equipment in a digitally focussed, paperless environment. The open plan layout offers a fantastic opportunity for interdisciplinary and collaborative teaching.

As a student, your learning is supported by MyAberdeen, our virtual learning environment where you can access lecture slides and recordings, practical class instructions, links to related reading, and tutorial support material. You will also submit assessments and access online tests via MyAberdeen.

Your academic development is supported from year 1 through to year 4 by an assigned personal tutor, who acts as adviser and mentor throughout your University career.

Find out more: **www.abdn.ac.uk/sth**

Undergraduate degree programmes

- BSc Biomedical Sciences
- BSc Biochemistry
- BSc Molecular and Cellular Biology
- BSc Neuroscience with Psychology
- BSc Physiology
- BSc Pharmacology
- BSc Sports and Exercise Science*

* Based on course choices, BSc Sports and Exercise Science students will graduate with either BSc Sports and Exercise Science (Physiology and Metabolism) or BSc Sports and Exercise Science (Nutrition and Health)

Visit our online prospectus to learn more about our degrees:
www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate

Enhance Your Degree
All of our Undergraduate programmes offer flexible options to enrich your academic experience.

Industrial Placement
Between your third and final honours year, you can opt for an industrial placement, upgrading your degree to an Master in Science (MSci).

Go Abroad
We encourage international exposure, with opportunities to study abroad for a semester or full year during your second year, supported by our GoAbroad team.

Biobusiness
For those interested in combining science with business acumen, we offer biobusiness courses, allowing you to graduate with a degree 'with biobusiness'. These options are designed to broaden your horizons and boost your career prospects.



Introducing your Degree Programme Leads



Dr Donna MacCallum

BSc Programme Lead

Donna heads up the teaching team delivering the BSc medical sciences degree programmes. She is a microbiologist by training and has published extensively on how fungi cause disease and how we can best treat those infections. Donna is also an experienced teacher, teaching and assessing undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Dr Derryck Shewan

BSc Neuroscience with Psychology

You will see Derryck from day one as he helps oversee student induction and is involved in the teaching of Introduction to Medical Sciences. He coordinates the Skills Courses in 2nd year and Honours projects in 4th year. He is also the Undergraduate Inclusion Officer for Medical Science students.





Dr Samantha Miller

BSc Biochemistry

Samantha is a senior lecturer and teaches various aspects of biochemistry and microbiology from second year to Masters level and co-ordinates teaching at course and programme level. Her main research interests lie in understanding how ion channels and transporters help bacteria survive their environment.

Dr Ann M Rajnicek

BSc Biomedical Sciences

Ann's research expertise is in tissue healing and regeneration, with emphasis on central nervous system repair. She co-ordinates courses and contributes to teaching from 2nd year to Masters level on topics ranging from neuroscience, cell biology, developmental biology, physiology, and scientific writing. She is the Senior Personal Tutor and provides pastoral and academic support for undergraduate students across all four years.





Dr Jenny Gregory

BSc Sports and Exercise Science

Jenny's main research interests lie in understanding how bone shape and structure changes with exercise, disease and disuse, particularly using biomedical image analysis techniques.

Dr Alexander Lorenz

BSc Molecular and Cellular Biology

Alexander is a senior lecturer in fungal genetics and teaches genetics, microbiology, and molecular biology from 2nd through to 4th year. He supervises lab project students in 4th year and at Master degree level. His research focusses on how organisms generate genetic diversity to understand the basic cell biological mechanisms underpinning heredity and evolution.





Professor Derek Scott

BSc Physiology

Derek teaches a variety of courses and subjects across all four years of BSc programmes in Medical Science. His research interests lie in improving practical physiology training globally, increasing access to NHS careers for scientists, and the physiology of ageing and dying.

Dr James Hislop

BSc Pharmacology

James teaches at third and fourth year with a focus on molecular and neuropharmacology. He has an active research group investigating the pharmacology of opiates and cannabinoids which is integrated into his teaching to give a current view of pharmacological research.



Careers and employability

Our degree programmes go beyond traditional education. We equip you with the essential skills and knowledge that top employers in medicine and life sciences seek. Through our innovative curriculum, you'll gain a competitive edge, positioning yourself for a successful and impactful career.

Industrial Placements

Employers now expect an impressive list of skills, knowledge and experience in their graduate recruits. They welcome 'transferable skills' acquired during a work placement, such as communication, numeracy, use of IT, group work and time management.



Students who are successful in gaining an industrial placement will be placed in an industrial, commercial or research environment where they will obtain a breadth of practical experience to complement their degree programme.

We currently have links with a number of different companies and have recently placed students in companies such as Pfizer, Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline, AstraZeneca and NIMR as well as a number of smaller companies in the UK and abroad.

Career pathways

The quality of your training will permit you to take advantage of international career opportunities in research and development. Some pursue these within Universities and Research Institutes, while others find employment in the biomedical research, biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries. Our Bio-business courses teach you how biology links directly to commerce which may inspire you to set up your own business.

But not all Medical Scientists are found in laboratories. Others choose further study in related areas such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, dietetics and physiotherapy. Some may be found teaching in schools, inspiring the next generation of scientists, or in courts of law, arguing over complex patent cases.

An understanding of the Medical Sciences combined with your wider graduate skills will give you an additional broad choice of potential career options such as bioethics, journalism and health economics. For graduates with a Sport & Exercise Science background there are a number of career options available such as coaches, trainers, managers, physiotherapists and other health related professions concerned with fitness and nutrition.



Thomas Binns
MSci Neuroscience with
Psychology with Industrial Placement

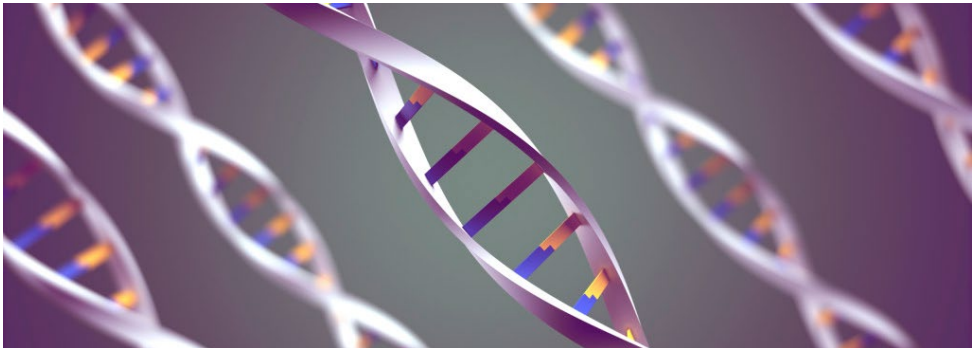
I enjoyed being able to get involved in scientific research. This was possible as part of my final-year research project at the university, where there were a huge number of projects from all areas of the medical sciences to choose from.

Additionally, I spent a year working in a neuroscience lab at a university in Germany for my Industrial Placement. For this, I received a lot of support from the university.

Morven Hollick
MSci Molecular Biology
with Industrial Placement

The courses I have studied have given me a broad foundation in medical science, whilst also allowing me to focus more on certain topics in lab classes and essays. Using the skills developed in the first three years of my degree, I went on to complete my placement in the Aberdeen Cancer Centre studying the immune microenvironment of breast cancer.





10 reasons to **choose Aberdeen**

01 **The academic strength you would expect from a 500 year old university – yet right at the forefront for careers in the 21st century**
A thriving, cosmopolitan community with students from 130 countries set within a beautiful, historic campus that has seen five Nobel Prizes.

02 **Choice and flexibility**
Unique programme options with industrial placements and the opportunity to graduate with a Masters (MSci).

03 **A proven track record for employment, with the best headstart your career can get**
Our experience and connections can help secure that all-important first step on the ladder to a successful career. We offer highly relevant experience in bio-business, a final year research project and optional industrial placement year.

04 **An ancient University which is recognised and respected**
The University of Aberdeen is ranked Top 30 in the UK in the Times & Sunday Times Good University Guide 2027.

05 **Opportunities to develop yourself and your interests**
Not only academic qualifications to rival the best, but also personal, communication and teamwork skills to make you an all-round achiever. Some of our students have participated in the European Space Agency Human Space Physiology Training Course.

06 **The very best learning resources**
We pride ourselves on providing state-of-the-art learning resources and students have the opportunity to experience working in a research focussed environment. We are especially proud of our facilities at the Science Teaching Hub, as well as facilities at the Aberdeen Sports Village.



07 **A supportive community**
A friendly campus across two sites; we will do everything we can to help you quickly feel at home. We have excellent student-centered services to ensure you have access to all the support and guidance you might need - academic, personal, medical or financial.

08 **First class accommodation**
All new students are guaranteed a place in student accommodation, either on the campus or close by - so no need to set the alarm too early!

09 **A buzzing, friendly city that has it all**
Aberdeen is everything a student city should be and more! Historic, international, fashionable and friendly.

10 **We're on the map!**
Aberdeen is probably closer than you think. Affordable and regular air, rail and bus connections will get you around Scotland, the UK and further afield in no time.

Any questions? Phone us on 01224 272090 or email study@abdn.ac.uk

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