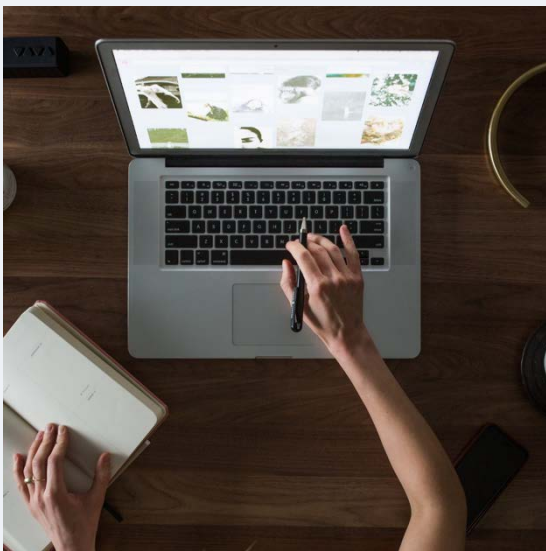


SANDIE'S TOP TIPS – HOW TO PREPARE FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL

Preparing for the highly competitive field of medicine starts well before you enter uni. Embarking on a career in medicine is a long-term commitment. It's important to stay motivated by your passion for the field and to balance your academic pursuits with activities that support your wellbeing and personal interests. The following is a list of advice for Year 9 - 12 students aiming for a career in medicine.



Carefully choose subjects: Pathways students at Catholic College should consider studying the following subjects: Biomedical Science - Disease and Diagnosis, Biomedical Science - Broken Bodies, Our Physical and Chemical World, and Electro-Chemistry.

VCE students should consider studying Mathematics, Biology, and Chemistry. Physical Education, Psychology, LOTE and Physics are also excellent options. High achieving students should consider applying for the Early Advancement Program. Read about your subject choices [here](#).



Dive into Healthcare: Work experience can be difficult to secure due to the confidential nature of the work doctors do and unfortunately there are no formal medicine work experience programs in Albury Wodonga. You could try and get some real-life experience in healthcare though. This could be working at a local pharmacy, working at Westmont Aged Care in the catering department, or working after school in a medical clinic etc. Another option is to join [St Johns Cadets](#). There is a program at Wodonga - you will learn first aid and work your way up to assist paramedics at local events.



Give Back and Lead the Way: Get involved in community service, volunteering, sport, art, music, leadership, hobbies etc. It's not just about padding your resume, it's about showing you've got a heart and a genuine desire to make a difference. School programs include: The Rite Journey, Youth Ministry, Sustainability Team, Carevan, Community Leadership, Sports Teams etc. Not only will you strengthen your skills in communication, team work, and problem solving, you will be able to use your experiences as examples during interviews for medical school.



Extend your love of STEM: If there's a chance to get involved in STEM programs, research projects, or any kind of scientific exploration, go for it. It's a great way to show your passion for the field. Excellent programs to consider applying for include the [National Youth Science Forum](#), [National Mathematics Summer School](#), and the [CSIRO Virtual Work Experience](#). Some companies like [Projects Abroad](#) offer overseas medical work experience programs for high school students.



Stay Healthy: Look after your own health, both physical and mental. The road to becoming a doctor is a marathon, not a sprint, and you need to be in good shape to make it through. Make sure you form solid networks with your teachers and access student services for support (i.e., wellbeing, diverse learning).



Learn Another Language: If you can, picking up a second language is a huge plus. It can break down barriers between you and potential patients in the future and open up opportunities to work overseas.



Plan Financially: Start thinking about how you'll pay for university. Look into scholarships, grants, and other financial support options. Undergraduate medicine is roughly \$12,720 per year for a [Commonwealth Supported Place](#) (2024 rate). You will also need to consider accommodation, living expenses, unpaid work experience, and being unable to work a lot of hours to support yourself. Graduate entry medicine is more expensive and the cost will depend on if you have a Commonwealth Supported or Full Fee Place.



Ace Your SACs and Exams: Year 11 students should aim to achieve excellent grades as these can assist with early admission programs and selection into the December round of interviews for the La Trobe University Bachelor of Biomedical Science (Medical) program. Year 12 students should aim for an ATAR of at least 95. While some rural entry courses have lower minimum selection ranks, entry is very competitive. Ensure you work with your teachers closely, access the free services through [RESN](#) and [ATAR notes](#) and access tutoring if you feel it will benefit you.



Prepare for the UCAT: this is a 2-hour computer-based test you will sit during Year 12 between July – August. [The University Clinical Aptitude Test \(UCAT\)](#) is a key part of selection for most undergraduate entry medicine programs and is made up of five separately timed subtests in multiple-choice format. You can prepare for the UCAT by accessing the free preparation materials on the UCAT website. Some students choose to pay for additional preparation programs through commercial companies such as [NIE](#) and [MedEntry](#). It's important to note that the universities who use the UCAT for selection don't endorse any of these companies.



Prepare for Medicine Applications & Interviews: Spend some time thinking about why you want to go into medicine. This will come in handy when you're responding to application questions and undertaking interviews.



Plan, Prepare, Take Action! Being organised for your medicine applications doesn't start in year 12. You will need to carefully plan your subjects, attend open days, fit UCAT preparation into your study program, balance extra-curricular activities and employment into your schedule, and have a clear university application plan for medicine and plan B courses. Most applicants won't gain entry into medicine straight away – having solid backup plans will be essential no matter how strong academically you are. Applying for courses across multiple states will mean a huge amount of administration and dates to keep track of. I will be able to help you with your planning, back-up plans, and university applications.