



Careers profiles

Aimee Pinnington

Biomedical Science careers

Biomedical Scientists (BMSs) typically work in healthcare laboratory settings and carry out tests on patient samples that will usually contribute to or determine a patient diagnosis or evaluate the effectiveness of treatment. 'Biomedical Scientist' is a legally protected title which requires registration with the Health and Care Professions Council. To register, BMSs must obtain a Certificate of Competence from the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS), which is achieved by the completion of a Healthcare Science or Biomedical Science degree accredited by the IBMS, and the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio, which typically takes around 12 months to complete. It can be completed at an IBMS-accredited training laboratory (most hospital laboratories) either during an integrated or sandwich year placement, or after graduating and obtaining work in one. The Portfolio is general, therefore provides qualification to start work as a BMS in any discipline, regardless of the discipline worked in whilst completing the portfolio – although laboratory experience relevant to the discipline you wish to work in is of course desirable. Disciplines in Biomedical Science include Blood Sciences, Cell Sciences, Genetics & Molecular Pathology or Infection Sciences. Disciplines available vary with hospital size and speciality. For more detail on disciplines, registration, and BMS careers, visit the IBMS website: <http://www.ibms.org>

Launched in January 2020, the Biomedical Scientist (BMS) Mentoring Scheme Teams site has proven very popular, with over 80 students joining already. The aim of the site is to provide tailored support for those looking to pursue a career as a BMS after graduation, offering:

- Job application support, including CV/cover letter feedback and mock interview support
- Guidance on HCPC and IBMS Q&A sessions on careers as a BMS
- Meetings with BMS staff from across the country to explore different career options Access to external IBMS events (for those with e-student membership)
- A support hub to chat with your peers about careers as a BMS

You can join the Teams site via BB or by email. Take a look at the resources and recordings available and get involved today to help achieve your career goals.

Research careers

Research careers are extremely varied, typically covering academic, industrial or clinical research but usually require the continuation of the academic pathway and strong interest in a specific area of biomedicine. These careers are competitive but are the literal advancement of science.

Salford's Research Careers Working Group (RCWG) seeks to facilitate undergraduate progression to research-based careers including Masters by research and PhD positions. I established the RCWG four years ago as a platform for students to engage with research and to mentor students through PhD

applications. Since then, the scheme has developed, and we now have a dedicated Teams Site, student leads and a growing membership that forms a vibrant community of like-minded students.

The RCWG is suitable for all students at any level. As you progress through your degree, we'll help you build a research-aligned CV through activities such as a regular journal club, dedicated seminars, discussion groups, learned society engagement, facilitated conference attendance, vacation scholarship and travel grant applications, research career events and scientific writing competitions. Then, when you are ready to apply for research-positions we will mentor you through the process.

On the 24th February, the RCWG hosted the inaugural "An introduction to research-based careers" symposium. Attended by around 40 students, I gave a brief overview of the PhD position then Dr Caroline Topham explained where a PhD can lead and considered the pros and cons of a research-based career. We were also joined by an international panel of scientists at various career stage who shared their experiences, advice and insight. The subsequent Q&A session was incredibly engaging. Don't worry if you missed the symposium as it was recorded and can be accessed via the RCWG Teams site.

It's also the first of many exciting events. Membership is free, and virtually all our activities are highly transferable; they will look good on any CV. As such, it's well worth joining even if a research-based career is only one of many options on your radar.

Graduate-entry Medicine, Dentistry and Physician Associate careers

Postgraduate students may access careers in Medicine or Dentistry either at undergraduate (more expensive) or graduate-entry (more competitive) level. Only postgraduate students may access Physician Associate studies.

Graduate Entry Medicine Mentoring at Salford (GEMMS) was established in 2015 by Prof Niroshini Nirmalan and a group of Biomedicine students with the objective of inspiring students to apply for careers in Medicine and Dentistry.

In 2019, the scheme was expanded to include post-graduate entry for Physician Associate studies with Dr Sara Namvar overseeing and co-leading GEMMS-PA. Each year as many as

30 students have taken part in elements of the mentoring scheme, with 4-5 students successfully transitioning onto Medicine or Dentistry. Many more successfully join Physician Associate courses. The mentoring for this working group is quite intense and involves close collaborative activity between staff and students with reliance upon the good will of our alumni.

Large scale events are regular and popular (e.g. Personal statement writing, mock interviews, external inspirational talks etc.) attracting 100 students at a time and are usually held many times during the year. These are followed up with smaller bespoke events depending upon the needs of students at the time. Mentoring generally begins with career management support – helping students decide upon the extracurricular activities they need to engage with and providing references to hospitals for instance. There are regular personal statement workshops and personalised feedback on statements. Interview practice sessions are also a regular occurrence and often involve our valued alumni sharing their experiences. For students working towards Medicine or Dentistry, a working group of students has been established which holds regular UKCAT/GAMSAT study sessions to support preparation.

Biomedicine Teaching careers

Teaching careers are rewarding and varied. They require additional qualifications such as a PGCE but will allow you to work in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges in the UK or even abroad. They allow

you to share your passion for and knowledge in a subject with children and young people, and thus be a part of inspiring the next generation of scientists, healthcare workers, health professionals and teachers.

“At our best, we are all teachers”

- Maya Angelou.

The Biomedicine Teaching Support Group has been established to support all those interested in teaching careers. Whether you want to be a primary or secondary school teacher and need application support, or whether you have realised teaching and mentoring skills are key to most areas of graduate employment, this support network can help you develop your CV and enhance your professional skillset. The network officially launched on the 17th of March with the 'Teaching Careers Symposium' which featured external speakers, CV enhancement talks and an engaging panel discussion to help network members get ahead of the game, learn about Salford public engagement and outreach opportunities and receive top advice from experienced teachers. Join the Biomedicine Teaching Support Group for more information.

The careers outlined so far are not exhaustive, rather these are the ones that are currently associated with strong support already in place at Salford University through the existence of the working groups and associated Teams sites mentioned. In [Issue 3](#), we will focus on lesser- known careers that students may not have thought of or heard as much about. If there is a particular relevant career that you would like to hear about, please contact us at bioscientistmagazine@outlook.com.

Now that some of the most prominent biomedicine careers have been discussed, read [a practical guide to planning them](#).