FAQs re Intercalation in Academic Year 2018-19

1. Why do students intercalate?

Students intercalate for a variety of reasons. For many students, intercalation offers the opportunity to study a subject area in greater depth. Intercalation can also provide the chance to explore current trends in research alongside international experts, as well as focus on a research project that lead to opportunities to present your work at conferences or result in a publication. In addition to these academic benefits, intercalation will allow you to further develop transferable skills such as critical thinking, evaluating evidence, researching literature and academic writing. Intercalating will also enable you to make friends away from your professional programme and experience life as a student away from the extensive timetable.

2. When can I intercalate? Do I have to do it between Year 2 and Year 3?

For current Year 2 medical students, you will only have the opportunity to intercalate between Year 2 and Year 3. Following your intercalation year, you will return to the MB21 curriculum of the MB ChB programme. Current Year 3 and 4 medical students must also intercalate in 2018-19. No medical students will be allowed to intercalate in 2019-20. Veterinary students intercalate between Year 3 and 4. Dental students might ‘de-skill’ if they intercalate after Year 3 and 4 rather than after Year 2.

3. Will everyone who applies get to intercalate?

We cannot guarantee a place to every student who applies for intercalation. Past academic performance is considered. For MB ChB students, there is a cap on the numbers of students who will be allowed to intercalate and this may vary from year to year. If there are more applications than places, then we will use ranking to determine the students that will be released from their professional programmes for intercalation. For example, for MB ChB students who wish to intercalate after year 2, we will use your rankings at the end of Year 1. However, don’t let concerns about past performance in examinations put you off from applying as the programme you apply to may have fewer applicants and therefore less competition for places.

There is less demand from BDS students to intercalate, and whilst we are keen to encourage more dental students to intercalate their academic performance will also be considered in the selection process.

4. What are the grade requirements (and/or any other requirements) for each programme on average?

There are no specific grade requirements, and the requirements will vary from programme to programme. Schools (departments) offering intercalated degrees may consider your unit marks to date. For example, many of the programmes offered by the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences make their decisions based on marks and will offer places to the highest scoring applicants.

5. Which exams are included in the average? Does it vary between programmes? This is calculated differently depending on the programme you are studying. For Year 2 MB ChB students the average unit mark is calculated by adding your unit marks for Molecular & Cellular Basis of Medicine, Human Basis of Medicine and Systems of the Body 1 and dividing the results by three.
For Year 2 BDS students the average unit mark is calculated from Year 1 unit marks and major completed examinations in Year 2 (e.g. Oral Biology, Biomaterials, and Pathology and microbiology).

6. How many students does each intercalation programme take on average?
There is a wide variation in numbers per intercalation programme and it isn’t possible to calculate an average. It can also vary from year to year. For one-year entry onto the 3-year courses it will depend upon how many of their own students are progressing from year 2 to the final year. They may also have applications from dental, veterinary and external students.

7. Do any courses comprise intercalators only?
Global Health, Bioethics, Genomic Medicine, Medical Humanities, Functional and Clinical Anatomy & Health Sciences.

8. Do I need to write application essays or be interviewed for all the courses?
There is no second stage to the application process for an intercalated degree in one of the medical sciences. Some of the other programmes (e.g. Bioethics, Global Health) have additional requirements which might include review of written work you have submitted.

9. How many internal applications can I make? Do I need to list them in order of preference on the form? What happens if I change my mind about my first choice later on and want to switch them around?
You can make three internal applications. You must list them in order of preference on the application form. It is not possible to change your preferences after the deadline unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case you are advised to discuss this with the intercalation administrator by emailing intercalation-admin@bristol.ac.uk.

10. How many external applications (to other universities) can I make? Who should I speak to about making an external application?
You are permitted to apply to intercalate at another university provided the course you are interested in is not also offered at Bristol. There are no restrictions on the number of external applications you can make. It is up to you to research the application processes, deadlines etc. Please keep the intercalation administrator informed and complete a UOB application form even if you are not applying to intercalate here. Please discuss your plans with the appropriate Director (Nicola Taylor for MB ChB years 3-5) or Deputy Director of Student Affairs (David Morgan for MB ChB years 1 and 2), or the BDS programme director (David Dymock).

You will need documents to support your application.
- Ask the intercalation administrator for a transcript of your marks.
- Ask the appropriate individual (as listed above) for a letter of permission to study elsewhere. Make sure you tell that person which university and which course you are applying to.
- Ask your academic mentor or personal tutor for a reference.

If you accept an offer from another university you will be required to suspend your studies for one academic year. This will require the signature of the appropriate Director/Deputy of Student Affairs.
11. Can I apply to Bristol programmes and externally at the same time?
You may make internal and external applications at the same time. However, when an offer on a Bristol programme is made to you, you will need to make a decision to accept the Bristol place (and forfeit external intercalation) or decline the Bristol offer (thus forfeiting the place to intercalate within Bristol). For external applications, please see above.

12. What if I accept an offer to intercalate and then decide that I actually don't want to do it?
By signing the acceptance form on an intercalation programme, you are committed to intercalating. For MB ChB Year 2 students, if you change your mind you MUST inform us before Easter vacation or you will lose a place on the LiTHE unit, which you have to complete before you can progress to Year 3. If you lose your LiTHE placement or do not complete the LiTHE module and do not wish to intercalate you may need to suspend your studies for one academic year.

13. Can I intercalate and get a Masters degree?
Current Year 2 students will not be eligible for Masters degree programmes. Current Year 3 and 4 students can intercalate onto a one year Masters of Research (MRes) in Health Sciences or the MSc in Transfusion and Transplantation Sciences. Due to funding constraints the MRes/MSc degree will be awarded at the same time as the MB ChB, BDS or BVSc degree and not immediately after completion of the intercalation year.

14. What bursaries/funding support are available?
Please refer to the Student Funding office for detailed financial advice. http://www.bristol.ac.uk/studentfunding/

15. Is it better for me career-wise to do X or Y?
There is no evidence-based answer to this question and any answer would be personal opinion. Perhaps what is most important are the skills that you develop by undertaking the degree. You may wish to read the following articles:


16. What is an Academic Foundation Programme? Do I need an intercalated degree?
See: http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home

17. 'I've had to resit exams. Will that affect my application to intercalate?'
If you had extenuating circumstances that were accepted by the panel and resat an exam as a first attempt your unit mark will not be capped. If your resit examination was a second and final attempt your unit mark will be capped at 50. You can still apply to intercalate but you may not be successful as your average unit mark will be calculated using the capped mark.

18. Further information?
We are planning an Intercalation Fair on Tuesday 12th December 2-5 pm in the Wills Memorial Building. Please refer to the intercalation website for details of this fair and a list of programmes that are available at Bristol (www.bristol.ac.uk/intercalate). Other applicants are welcome to contact the intercalation administrator (intercalation-admin@bristol.ac.uk) to request further information.

19. Deadlines?

The deadline for receipt of applications is **12 noon Monday 15th January 2018**. Schools offering intercalated degrees will be asked to send their decisions to the intercalation administrator by Friday 2nd February 2018 and offers can be collated and published the following week. Every effort will be made to place applicants, but as this is a fairly complex process students may not all hear about their offers at the same time.

In addition to meeting this deadline, medical students intending to apply to intercalate between Years 3 and 4 must email medadmin-placements@bristol.ac.uk by **Monday 13th November 2017**. Once this has been done you will be removed from the rotations pathway. You will be given a year 4/5 rotation later if your application to intercalate is unsuccessful.