

# What do Birmingham postgraduates do?

## School of Cancer Sciences

### *First destinations of postgraduates*

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Analysis of first employment destinations of postgraduates  
from the College of Medical and Dental Sciences  
(six months after graduation)

- ▣ Analysis of postgraduate destinations by subject areas
- ▣ Summary of first destinations of postgraduates, 2009–2013
- ▣ Illustration of the range of occupations undertaken by postgraduates

# Foreword

I AM DELIGHTED TO INTRODUCE 'WHAT DO BIRMINGHAM POSTGRADUATES DO?' WHICH LOOKS IN DETAIL AT THE FIRST DESTINATIONS OF OUR CANCER SCIENCES POSTGRADUATES AND AT EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR ALL POSTGRADUATES WITHIN THE WIDER COLLEGE OF MEDICAL AND DENTAL SCIENCES.



In addition to providing accessible information on employment destinations of Medical and Dental Sciences postgraduates, this publication is also designed to give an insight into the kinds of employment sectors and jobs for which a postgraduate degree at Birmingham can prepare you.

Pursuing a postgraduate degree offers you the opportunity to explore your chosen area of interest in depth, as well as developing your understanding in a subject area about which you are truly passionate. Beyond the transferable skills that you will take with you into the workplace, your postgraduate qualification will give you the chance to deepen

your knowledge, to become an effective scientific researcher, or become an expert in your field.

Here, we show you how your postgraduate qualification can help you make that knowledge and expertise work for you after graduation. For the School that is relevant to you, there will be a snapshot of the achievements of our postgraduates six months after graduation. All data is taken from the results of a 'Destination of Leavers' survey issued to our postgraduates after this time. You will be able to see how many of the postgraduates who replied to this survey successfully entered employment and/or further study within just six months, along with a range of the diverse and exciting career opportunities that will be open to you after studying for a postgraduate degree in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences.

Accompanying the data are case studies in which recent postgraduate alumni share their experiences of postgraduate study at Birmingham. Here, our alumni talk about the value inherent in postgraduate study, the knowledge and skills they developed during their degrees and where their qualifications have taken them since graduation.

I hope you find the information presented here useful and our alumni stories inspiring. We very much look forward to welcoming you to our campus soon.

Professor Steve Watson  
Head of Graduate School  
College of Medical and Dental Sciences



# College of Medical and Dental Sciences

THE COLLEGE OF MEDICAL AND DENTAL SCIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM IS A **MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION** IN MEDICINE, MEDICAL SCIENCES, DENTISTRY, NURSING AND PHARMACY.

Bringing together healthcare-related research and education, the College consists of the following five schools: Cancer Sciences; Clinical and Experimental Medicine; Dentistry; Health and Population Sciences; and Immunity and Infection.

The principal base of the College lies immediately between the main campus of the University and the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Other key NHS Trust buildings are also on the same campus including Birmingham Women's Hospital and The Barberry National Centre for Mental Health. The College is at the forefront of medical, pharmacy, health and dentistry research. We deliver world-leading research activities to develop and nurture excellence in basic and clinical science, and to ultimately improve human health.

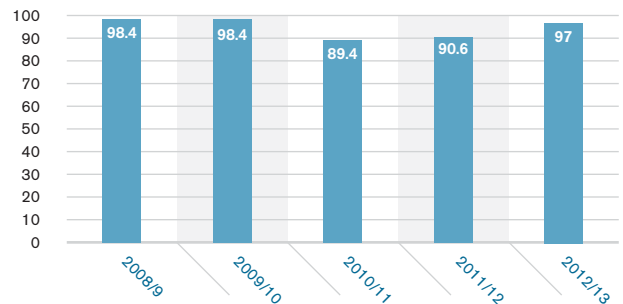
With over 800 researchers and in excess of £60 million research funding per year, our College represents a major international centre for biomedical research. Our programmes are delivered by some of the UK's most respected clinicians and health professionals, providing you with the best possible learning experience.

Over the last five years, 94.8% of taught postgraduates and 97.5% of research postgraduates from the College of Medical and Dental Sciences have been in work and/or further study just six months after graduating.

The two charts to the right show the breakdown of these statistics for each year, for taught postgraduate and research postgraduate respondents:

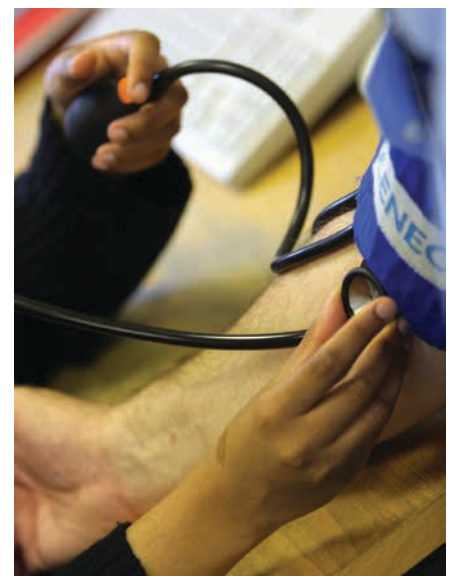
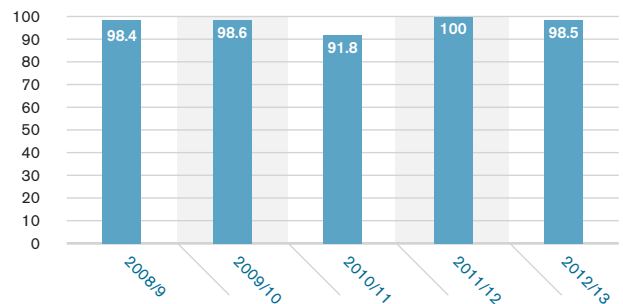
## Taught postgraduate destinations

Percentage of Medical and Dental Sciences taught postgraduates in work and/or further study six months after graduation



## Research postgraduate destinations

Percentage of Medical and Dental Sciences research postgraduates in work and/or further study six months after graduation



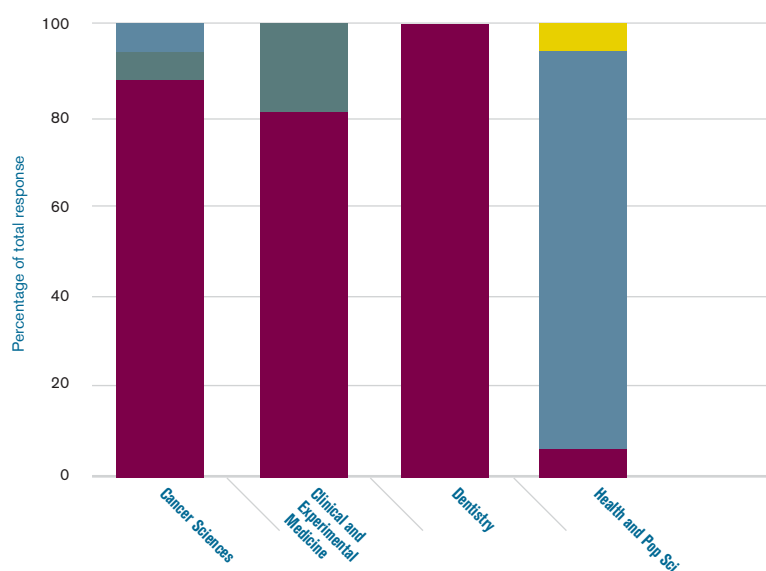
# College of Medical and Dental Sciences

The following charts summarise the destinations of Medical and Dental Sciences postgraduates from the 2012/13 academic year, six months after graduation:\*

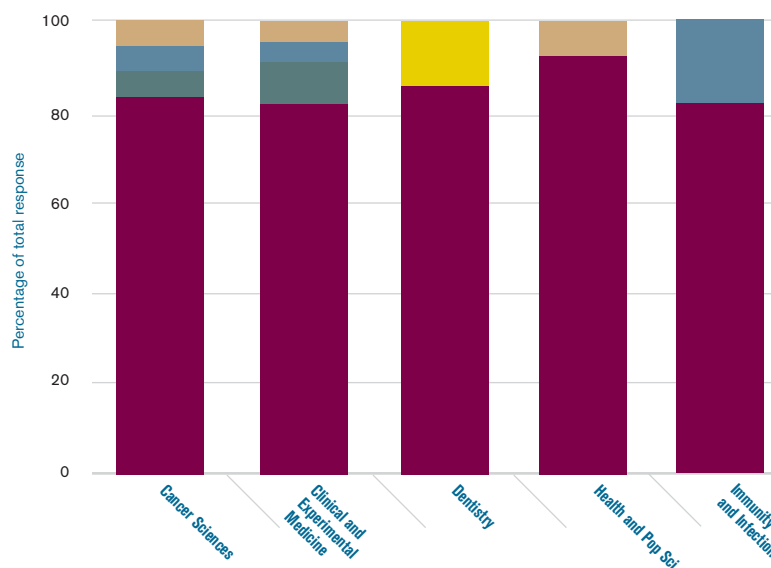
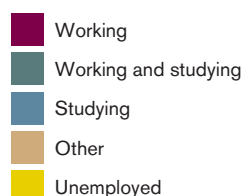
## Taught postgraduate destinations



No data available for Immunity and Infection.



## Research postgraduate destinations



'I had previously been working as a trials coordinator, but after graduating from the MSc I was promoted to Team Leader, heading up a team of five people and running all the cancer trials at St Mary's

Hospital, part of the Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust.

'The MSc fitted in really well with my job; having lectures condensed into a week-long block made it possible for me to attend a course which was a long way away from where I work, but was better than other courses available locally. Several of the lecturers are at the cutting edge of cancer research in terms of developing the vaccine for cervical cancer and I loved the fact that clinicians were lecturing to us about what happens in the real world of cancer treatment. Also, it was great to have lectures on the latest research into cancer.

'Through studying the MSc, I became more confident, especially in dealing with the clinicians and professors making important decisions about recruiting to clinical trials.'

**Gillian Hornzee**, MSc Clinical Oncology, part-time, graduated 2011  
*Gillian is now a Cancer Trials Team Leader at Imperial College London.*

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# Cancer Sciences

OUR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATES ARE MOST LIKELY TO BE WORKING FOR AN **NHS TRUST** SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION, WHILE OTHERS ARE EMPLOYED BY **VETERINARY PRACTICES, UNIVERSITIES, PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES AND MEDICAL PUBLISHERS.**

## Highlights

Over the past five years:

- 99.1% of taught postgraduate respondents from Cancer Sciences successfully found work or further study within six months of graduation
- 98.2% of research postgraduate respondents from Cancer Sciences were in work or further study six months after graduation

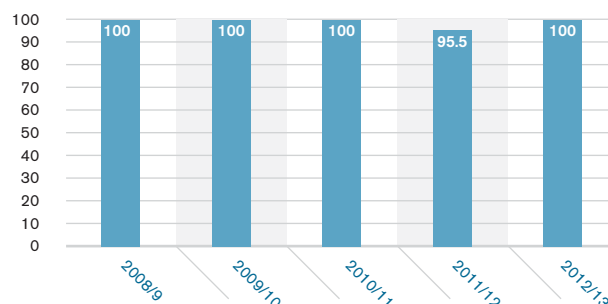
Many of our taught postgraduates in Cancer Sciences are health care professionals from diverse backgrounds who wish to expand their knowledge of theoretical and practical aspects of oncology, whilst others are suitably qualified science students who are interested in research careers in cancer.

Many of our research postgraduates in Cancer Sciences successfully secure postdoctoral positions and continue in the fields of medical and academic research, whilst others continue and progress in the clinical careers around which their PhD study was based.

The two charts to the right show results from Destination of Leavers surveys for our Cancer Sciences postgraduates over the past five years:

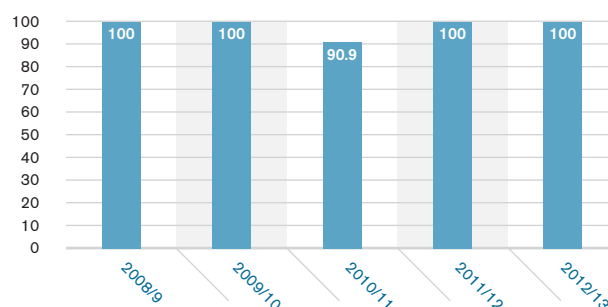
## Taught postgraduate destinations

Percentage of taught postgraduate respondents in work and/or further study six months after graduation



## Research postgraduate destinations

Percentage of research postgraduate respondents in work and/or further study six months after graduation



'I carried out my PhD between 1994 and 1998 in the School of Cancer Sciences. As with most PhD projects I started working on one

subject (which back then was adenovirus) but eventually changed my focus to look at apoptosis/autophagy instead.

'During my PhD I was always encouraged to seek help and advice from as many people as possible. As a result I spent time in many different labs learning techniques to further my project. I believe this was key in my training to become an independent scientist. I also benefited tremendously from having a supervisor who was based in the lab, as expert teaching was always on hand. My PhD at Birmingham taught me to work hard and to enjoy research. After leaving Birmingham I gained postdoc positions in Cambridge and Stanford and now run my own research group at the University of Oxford.'

**Ester Hammond**, PhD Cancer Sciences, graduated 1998

*Ester is now Cancer Research UK Junior Group Leader at the Gray Institute for Radiation Oncology and Biology, Department of Oncology, University of Oxford.*

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# Cancer Sciences

## FIRST DESTINATIONS OF CANCER SCIENCES POSTGRADUATES

Below is an overview of the kinds of employment sectors, organisations and professions that recent Cancer Sciences postgraduates have entered, based on a survey conducted six months after graduation.

### Range of employment sectors

- ▣ General medical practice activities
- ▣ Higher education
- ▣ Hospital activities
- ▣ Human health activities
- ▣ Manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products
- ▣ Research and experimental development in biotechnology
- ▣ Research and experimental development in natural sciences and engineering
- ▣ Scientific research and development
- ▣ Specialist retail
- ▣ Tertiary education
- ▣ Veterinary activities

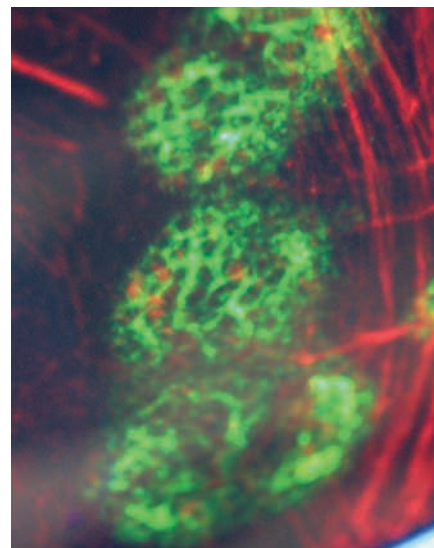
### Range of employers

- ▣ Cancer Research UK
- ▣ Cave Veterinary Services
- ▣ Columbia University, New York
- ▣ Derby Hospital NHS Trust
- ▣ Health Interactions (medical communications)
- ▣ Heartlands Hospital
- ▣ Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology

- ▣ National University of Singapore Cancer Science Institute
- ▣ NSPM (medical writing and communications)
- ▣ Parkinson's UK
- ▣ Phoenix Primary Care
- ▣ University of Oxford
- ▣ West Midlands Strategic Health Authority
- ▣ VRCC Veterinary Medicine

### Range of occupations

- ▣ Clinical Biochemist
- ▣ General Practitioner
- ▣ Hospital Doctor
- ▣ NHS Research Manager
- ▣ Oncology Pharmacist
- ▣ Postdoctoral Research Scientist
- ▣ Research Communications Officer
- ▣ Research Fellow
- ▣ Surgeon
- ▣ SHO in Palliative Care
- ▣ Therapy Radiographer
- ▣ Trainee Clinical Scientist
- ▣ Veterinarian



'The MSc course enabled me to further develop my skills as a researcher, helping me to conduct research in a more informed way and taking into account the downstream processes required to translate research for a patient's benefit. The dissertation project enabled me to become a more independent researcher by

intercalating my laboratory-based job with the planning, execution and reporting of a piece of independent study for this purpose (which I subsequently presented at a conference).

'The Masters programme benefited me in many ways. I not only assembled and learnt facts, but also considered some of the philosophical challenges, which underlie the treatment of cancer. I gained a greater understanding of how the research and trials processes fit together in the context of oncology. The lectures are given by world-class researchers and clinicians and the information is very

current and very relevant. Through engaging in continuing professional development, I also gained increased confidence and self esteem.

'I am committed to cancer research and enjoy making a positive contribution to the field through my laboratory work.'

**Rachel Hoare, MSc Clinical Oncology, part-time, graduated 2012**  
*Rachel is now a Research Technician at the University of Birmingham in the School of Cancer Sciences.*

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