

Degrees: vocational or subject specific?



THINKSTOCK

With over 50,000 undergraduate courses to apply to through UCAS how do you decide which one is right for you?

One of the first things you need to decide is which subject you want to study. On the face of it an easy decision. But is it really?

Quite often you'll study a subject so that you can get a particular job on graduation – but what sort of job? Do you want a vocation or a career? This is where it gets complicated.

If you study medicine chances are you'll become a doctor, and if you study law, a lawyer. So far so clear, everyone knows what they do as a job. But what happens if once you've qualified as a doctor you realise it's not right for you? Your vocational

degree will qualify you to be a doctor or a vet or a dentist, but if you want to change your mind at a later date your options might be limited.

However, if you study chemistry at degree level, once you graduate, your career options aren't reduced. In fact quite the opposite: a huge range of careers open up for you.

The graduate job market is becoming much more competitive as the numbers going to university reached a record high for new admissions in 2010. While numbers were down overall in 2011 the graduate job market has become more fluid with fewer 'jobs for life'. This means graduates have to be able to compete and a chemistry qualification provides you with the skills and the knowledge to do that.

If you're after more information about careers from chemistry, visit the RSC at the Science Careers stand at one of the following UCAS HE fairs:

- Manchester: 5–6 March
- Cardiff: 19 March
- London: 28–20 March
- Tyneside: 25 April

<http://bit.ly/ucasconventions>



Dates for your diary

ChemNet Events:

ChemNet events are supported by an education grant as part of the Reach and Teach program funded by the **Wolfson Foundation**

► **Diamond Light Source**

18 January 17:00–19:30

Diamond Light Source Ltd, Didcot, Oxfordshire

Take a look around the UK's national synchrotron science facility.

<http://bit.ly/DLS180112>

► **Quotient Biosearch**

24 February 09:00–14:30

Quotient Biosearch, Fordham, Cambridgeshire

Behind the scenes at Quotient Biosearch, one of the world's most extensive bioanalytical facilities.

<http://bit.ly/quot240212>

► **Look what chemistry has done for me**

22 March 19:00–21:00

Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge

Find out more about careers in chemistry from a range of people using chemistry everyday.

It's not just athletes who go for gold!



Enter the UK Chemistry Olympiad

2012 to compete for a place in the UK team for the 44th International Chemistry Olympiad in Washington DC. Register by 13 January at www.rsc.org/olympiad

Warm-up question

Olympic gold medals haven't been made of gold since 1912, what are they made of now?

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Answer: Gold medals are in fact gilded silver rather than real gold. Gold and silver medals are 92.5% silver but gold medals must be plated with at least 6 grams of gold.

To book a place on a ChemNet event:
E: events@rsc.org
T: 01223 432340
or book online and find more info about all the events at:
www.rsc.org/chemnet
<http://my.rsc.org/chemnet>