Gone are the days when medical students had to share dusty, well-thumbed anatomy text books to swot up on diagrams and photographs of odd-looking pieces of lung or muscle tissue. Now, would-be doctors can be part of a virtual classroom thanks to a newly launched iPhone app developed by the University of Warwick.

Professor of Clinical Anatomy at Warwick Medical School, Peter Abrahams, has turned his teaching into bite-size anatomy classes which
can be downloaded and used by medical students world-wide and not restricted to those lucky enough to attend his lectures.

The new app, entitled Aspects of Anatomy, provides 38 short teaching videos using real, plastinated prossections of the lungs, thorax and the arm, from shoulder to hand. You can watch how the professor teaches and demonstrates the function of nerves, tiny twig-like bronchioles or heart valves which very effectively bring medical theory to life. Students can even check progress on their learning by completing the short spot check tests also part of the app.

Professor Abrahams explained: "We're using the technology students have in their pockets to share the teaching expertise from Warwick Medical School. Students from across the world now have the chance to virtually join my classes at a time and place which suits them.

"Technology is never going to replace good teaching, but this way, we can provide extra material using clinical cases to support their learning in a way that is accessible, timely and mobile - it really is teaching for the 21st Century."

He went on to add that it wasn't only students who would benefit: "I see this app being incredibly useful for anyone from senior nurses to surgeons. It's a way of refreshing your knowledge - something that's absolutely vital in the medical profession and perfect for busy GPs or practice nurses."

The app is available to purchase from the usual iTunes store outlets and costs £4.99. All profits will go back to the university to support the ongoing clinical anatomy teaching at the Surgical Training Center at Warwick Medical School.