

# The UCAT Handbook

MedEntry

[www.medentry.co.uk](http://www.medentry.co.uk)



# Foreword

We wish to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of all the team at MedEntry. We realise how difficult, confusing and stressful entering medical and dental school can be, since we were in your position many years ago. We have helped tens of thousands of students enter medical schools in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand over the past two decades. Our aim is to help you too.

Whether you are a student, parent, teacher or careers advisor, we are here to assist. Our extensive knowledge regarding medicine, entry pathways, interviews and the UCAT means that you can be confident that you are in safe hands. We hope to have the pleasure of teaching you at one of our UCAT workshops, and meeting you in future as one of our medical colleagues.



Dr Ray Boyapati

Co-Founder  
Director of Education,  
UK, Australia & NZ



Dr Ann Deely

Co-Founder  
Director of Education,  
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# Our Founders



## DR RAY BOYAPATI

**MBBS (Hons I) Monash, FRACP, MD  
(Research, Edinburgh)  
Gastroenterologist at Monash Health**

Dr Ray was School Captain of the selective entry Melbourne High School. He obtained an ATAR of 99.9 (equivalent to all A\* grades at A-level) and UMAT percentile of 100. He was accepted into all medical schools and was awarded the Monash Scholarship for Exceptional Achievement.

His other awards include: Youth of the Year (State winner & National Finalist); Students Prizes for Excellence; awards for public speaking; first class honours at Monash University medicine, medal for the highest achieving candidate in specialist examinations held by the Royal College of Physicians (RACP News, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 2012, p. 27).

Dr Ray has published over 30 peer reviewed articles in prestigious journals on his area of specialty, Inflammatory Bowel Disease. He has also presented his research and multiple national and international conferences. He has taught thousands of aspiring medical students (many of whom are now junior doctors and consultants) over the past two decades.



## DR ANN DEELY

**MBBS (Hons I) Monash, FACD, FRCPI (Ireland)  
Dermatologist at Cork University Hospital,  
Ireland**

Dr Ann was School Captain of the selective entry MacRobertson Girls' High School. She obtained an ATAR of 99.9 (equivalent to all A\* grades at A-level) and UMAT percentile of 100. She was accepted into all medical schools and held the Monash Scholarship for Excellence, which is awarded to the best incoming student each year.

Her other awards include: Premier's Awards, the Students Prize, Achiever of the Year (awarded for the most outstanding co-curricular and community involvement each year in the state); Gold Medals in the University of NSW International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS); numerous awards for excellence in public speaking; Caltex Best All-rounder Award; State level Debater.

Dr Ann won an unprecedented three medals in the nationwide Dermatology Fellowship examinations ('The Mole' ACD Issue 102, Spring 2014, p. 8, 18; Health Link, Dec 2014 Issue 19, p. 14). Dr Ann has taught over 10,000 aspiring medical students.

# Table of Contents

	Foreword .....	3
<b>1</b>	<b>HOW TO GET INTO MEDICINE/DENTISTRY</b>	<b>7</b>
	Undergraduate Entry Into Medicine / Dentistry .....	8
	Other Pathways into Medicine.....	16
	What Should I Do Now? .....	20
<b>2</b>	<b>UCAT</b>	<b>23</b>
	Introduction to UCAT.....	24
	UCAT Verbal Reasoning .....	29
	UCAT Decision Making.....	34
	UCAT Quantitative Reasoning.....	43
	UCAT Abstract Reasoning.....	48
	UCAT Situational Judgement.....	55
	Strategies To Maximise Your UCAT Score .....	61
	UCAT Scoring.....	63
	How To Effectively Prepare For UCAT .....	68
	How To Optimise Your UCAT Performance .....	77
	Free UCAT Diagnostic exam .....	79
<b>3</b>	<b>THE MEDICAL INTERVIEW</b>	<b>81</b>
	Importance of Medical Interviews.....	82
	Interview Offers .....	84
	Timing of Medical Interviews .....	85
	Structure and Types of Medical Interview .....	86
	Multiple Mini Interview (MMI).....	92
	Preparing for Medical Interviews .....	94

<b>4</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS</b>	<b>97</b>
	How UCAT is used .....	98
	How BMAT is used .....	101
	How Personal Statement is used .....	102
<b>5</b>	<b>WHAT MAKES MEDENTRY DIFFERENT?</b>	<b>105</b>
	Quality Education That Delivers Results .....	106
	Our Services.....	110
	Free Resources .....	116
	Resources For Teachers.....	117

1

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# How to get into Medicine/ Dentistry

# Undergraduate Entry Into Medicine / Dentistry

## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to pursue medicine or dentistry as a career! Medicine and dentistry are incredibly rewarding fields, with the opportunity to make a significant, positive difference to the lives of others.

However, getting into these courses can be a difficult, and often confusing process. In this part of the handbook we will cover how to get into medicine and dentistry.

## ENTRY CRITERIA

University websites can be difficult to navigate and their selection criteria are often unclear.

Every university differs slightly in how they select students. You should research each university individually to see what their criteria are, and which course will suit you best. The Medical Schools Council has comprehensive information online about entry requirements for UK medical schools, which is available here: [www.medschools.ac.uk](http://www.medschools.ac.uk)

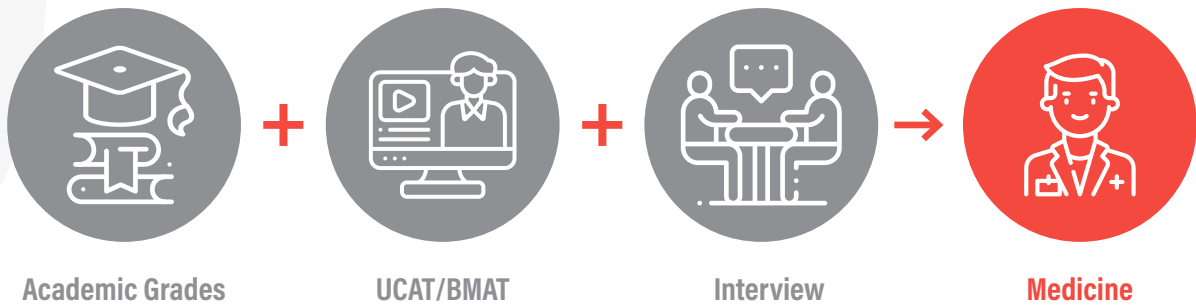
In general, entry into undergraduate Medicine and Dentistry is based on three criteria:

- Your academic grades: GCSE, A-Levels, IB (International Baccalaureate) or university degree classification
- Your score in UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test) or BMAT (BioMedical Admissions Test)
- Your score in a medical interview (plus a personal statement and work experience for some universities)

These three criteria can be equally weighted, or some universities may place more emphasis on a particular criterion.

For most universities, academic grades (predicted or actual) and UCAT are used to select students for interview. If you perform well in an interview, you are then offered a place in medical school.





## COURSE PREREQUISITES

Universities also require medicine candidates to study specific subjects at A-level. Most require Chemistry and Biology, with the third subject generally being any A-level that is **not** one of the following: General Studies, Further Maths (if Maths is also taken), Citizenship Studies, Critical Thinking or Global Perspectives.



*Universities require certain pre-requisite subjects to be studied in secondary school*

Many students take Chemistry, Biology and Maths which would be suitable for almost all UK medical schools.

MedEntry recommends taking three A-levels, with a fourth option left as an AS level or extended project qualification (EPQ). An EPQ taken in a medical related subject not only gives you the opportunity to discuss it at an interview, but also prepares you for university assigned projects.

Students need to ensure they select subjects that will satisfy university requirements. If you do not study a particular prerequisite subject and/or obtain a sufficient score in that subject, you will not be eligible for entry into some undergraduate medical courses.

Requirements differ between universities so it is important to research the particular universities that you are interested in.



*Top-tier A-levels are not the sole determinant of whether or not you will gain entry into undergraduate medicine*

## DON'T I NEED REALLY HIGH ACADEMIC SCORES TO GET INTO MEDICINE?

No, you do not necessarily need perfect grades to gain entry into an undergraduate medical course. Universities differ in their requirements and the emphasis they place

on different aspects of your application. In general, however, it is the combination of your UCAT/BMAT, academic ability and interview score that will help you to gain entry into medicine.

All universities require candidates to meet minimum academic thresholds. In general, AAA (or equivalent) is required. However, each university differs. For example, the University of Cambridge has entry requirements of A\*A\*A while Kent and Medway Medical School requires AAB.

Note that for most universities, you will also need to score highly in the UCAT. Without a sufficient UCAT score, even perfect A-level grades may not be enough to gain entry into medicine. Furthermore, in many cases, the higher your UCAT score the lower your academic grades can be (while still meeting minimum requirements). Conversely, stronger academic grades can result in you being offered an interview despite a lower UCAT score.

## TO WHICH UNIVERSITIES SHOULD I APPLY?

There are 44 medical schools in the UK. 30 of these use UCAT and are available to domestic undergraduate students. You can apply to four medical courses on your UCAS form. You have a fifth spot on your UCAS form for a different course, which must be a non-medicine option.

MedEntry advises students to place four medical courses on their UCAS form. This is because many universities require students to perform well in a medical interview. Due to the subjective nature of interviews, there is no guarantee of entry into a particular university. Students will maximise their chances of gaining entry into medicine if they apply to multiple universities.

Choosing the right medical school to which to apply requires some careful consideration. Here are some questions to ask yourself when choosing where you would like to study:

- Do I meet the entry requirements?
- What are the academic requirements?
- How much importance is placed on UCAT or BMAT?
- What is the teaching style (traditional, integrated or problem-based learning)?
- Where is the school located?
- Is it an Intercolated Degree (an optional or compulsory extra year to study another degree)?

Once you have selected a few universities that you are most interested in, visit them. If possible, talk to current students of the university to see what their experiences have been.

## APPLYING TO UCAS

After you have decided that medicine is the right choice for you, and you have narrowed down your preferred medical schools to your top four, you will need to apply via Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Your UCAS application will include your grades, a personal statement and a reference (usually from a teacher). The deadline to apply for medicine via UCAS is October 15th each year.

You can find more information on the UCAS website: <https://www.ucas.com/>



## UCAT

Most UK medical schools require students to sit and succeed in UCAT. You will need to sit UCAT if you are interested in applying to any of the following courses in the UK:

University	UCAS Course Code
The University of Aberdeen	A100, A201
Anglia Ruskin University	A100
Aston University	A100
University of Birmingham	A100, A101, A200
University of Bristol	A100, A108, A206, A208, D108
Brunel University London	A100
Cardiff University	A100*, A200,
University of Chester	A101
University of Dundee	A100, A104, A200
University of East Anglia	A100, A104
Edge Hill University	A100, A110
University of Edinburgh	A100
University of Exeter	A100*
University of Glasgow	A100, A200
Hull York Medical School	A100, A101
Keele University	A100*, A104*
Kent and Medway Medical School	A100
King's College London	A100, A101, A102, A202, A205, A206
University of Leicester	A100, A199
University of Liverpool	A100*, A200
University of Manchester	A104, A106, A204, A206
University of Newcastle	A100, A101, A206
University of Nottingham	A100, A10L, A108, A18L
Plymouth University	A100*, A206*
Queen Mary University of London	A100, A101, A110, A200
Queen's University Belfast	A100, A200*
University of Sheffield	A100, A101, A200
University of Southampton	A100, A101, A102
University of St Andrews	A100, A990
St George's, University of London	A100, BB96
University of Sunderland	A100
University of Surrey	A101
University of Warwick	A101
University of Worcester	A101

\* Alternative requirements may apply to certain groups of students – please visit the university website for details.



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**UCAS Code Course or Programme**

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A100	Medicine
A101	Medicine graduate entry Medicine with a gateway year (Hull York, King's)
A102	Medicine graduate entry (King's) Medicine with gateway year (Southampton)
A104	Medicine with gateway year (Dundee, East Anglia) Medicine with preliminary year (Cardiff, Manchester)
A106	Medicine (Manchester)
A108	Medicine with gateway year (Bristol, Nottingham)
A110	Medicine with gateway year (Edge Hill) Medicine (Queen Mary - Malta)
A10L	Medicine (Nottingham - Lincoln)
A18L	Medicine with gateway year (Nottingham - Lincoln)
A120	Clinical Foundation Studies (1 year, Queen Mary Malta)
A199	Medicine with gateway year (Leicester)
A200	Dentistry
A201	Dentistry graduate entry
A202	Dentistry graduate entry (King's)
A204	Dentistry with preliminary year (Cardiff, Manchester) Dentistry for medical graduate (King's)
A205	Dentistry (King's)
A206	Dentistry (Bristol, Newcastle, Manchester, Plymouth) Enhanced Support Dentistry (King's)
A208	Dentistry with gateway year (Bristol)
A990	North American Medical Programme (St Andrews)

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Registration to sit UCAT opens in May each year. Testing takes place between early July and late September. Therefore, it is important to start preparing for UCAT early, in order to be ready for the testing that occurs at the start of the new school year.

More information about UCAT can be found in part 2 of this handbook, and at: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>



## BMAT

BMAT is used by the following universities for entry into medicine in the UK:

University	BMAT Course Code
Brighton & Sussex Medical School	A100
Imperial College London	A100
Keele University (international students only)	A100
Lancaster University	A100, A104
University College London	A100
University of Cambridge	A100
University of Leeds	A100, A101, A200
University of Oxford	A100, A101

BMAT has three sections. It assesses aptitude and skills, scientific knowledge and written communication.

Note that you may not know your BMAT score when applying through UCAS. In contrast, you will know your UCAT score before applying to UCAS. Therefore, it is advisable to apply to a maximum of two BMAT medical schools, leaving two more spaces on your UCAS application for UCAT universities.

More information about BMAT is available at: <https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/>

## OTHER UNIVERSITIES

The University of Buckingham and University of Central Lancashire do not use an admissions test for entry into medicine. You could consider applying for these universities if you receive a lower UCAT / BMAT score.

However, the University of Buckingham is a private university so you would need to take into account tuition fees. The University of Central Lancashire only accepts applicants from the North West of England (specifically Lancashire, Cumbria, Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester) and international students.

Other options for those with lower UCAT scores include Keele and Sunderland which, provided a candidate achieves a UCAT score in the top 8 deciles, look solely at their own 'Roles and Responsibilities' form to select applicants for interview. This form focuses on a student's work experience and volunteering, the importance of which is explained in the next section.

## WORK EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEER WORK

While most universities do not require work experience or volunteering as a course prerequisite, it is beneficial to obtain some in order to confirm both to yourself and your chosen universities that you have a realistic appreciation for the profession.

Unfortunately, obtaining work experience can be difficult. Some tips for obtaining work experience include:

1. Contacting your local trust's work experience coordinator and getting to know them. They can be very helpful in assisting you to obtain work experience.
2. Asking family members, friends or teachers at your school for the contact details of people who are in the medical field. Then contact them to ask if you can engage in work experience with them.
3. Sending letters to General Practices in your local area explaining that you are a prospective medical student and would like to undertake some work experience.
4. Approaching local care companies or care homes and asking if you can shadow nurses.

Try to maintain balance in your work experience and volunteer work: seek out various specialties, include hospital and community settings, and shadow various members of the healthcare team. Remember that your work experience does not necessarily have to be with doctors or dentists (although this is ideal). Nurses, pharmacists, healthcare assistants and physiotherapists can all offer insight into the healthcare setting.

Importantly, you should reflect on your experiences. Write a journal each day which includes what you saw, how you felt, and how the experiences of the day have influenced your desire to pursue medicine or dentistry as a career. These reflections will help you when creating your personal statement, and in a medical interview.

Volunteer work is often much easier to obtain, and can be valued over work experience by some universities. Volunteer work demonstrates to the university that you truly are a well-rounded individual who cares for the community and that you are pursuing a career in medicine or dentistry for the right reasons. Volunteer work does not have to be in a medical-related field, but this is preferred. Some examples include volunteering in a care home, hospital, medical centre or with volunteer organisations like charity shops or sports teams.

# Other Pathways into Medicine

## WHAT IF I DON'T DO WELL IN UCAT?

You will obtain your UCAT score immediately after you take your test. This means that you will know your UCAT score before you apply to universities. If you obtain a low score in UCAT you can apply to universities that place little or no emphasis on the UCAT. You could also consider sitting BMAT and applying to universities that use this entrance test rather than UCAT.



*If you do not do well in UCAT, you can apply to universities that place less emphasis on UCAT.*

You cannot re-sit UCAT in the same year but can re-sit the following year. If you obtain strong A-levels, you could consider taking a gap year and reapplying for medicine the following year. During your gap year, you could prepare for UCAT as well as seek paid work, work experience and/or volunteer work in a health-related field. This will not only help you confirm that medicine is the right career for you, but will also help you significantly in interviews and your personal statement. Note however that not all universities accept reapplications – you should contact the individual universities to ensure you can reapply.

If you did not obtain strong A-levels, you could consider resitting these. Note, however, that some universities will not accept re-sits of A-levels for entry into medicine. Others accept them in certain circumstances. Before choosing to re-sit your A-levels, you should talk to your teachers and check if the universities you are applying to will accept these grades.

Your UCAT score is only valid for one year, therefore, if you are reapplying you will need to re-sit UCAT.

Ultimately, the decision you make will depend on a number of factors, particularly your A-levels and UCAT score. If you require guidance, please feel free to contact MedEntry.

## GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICINE

If you are currently unsure that you wish to study medicine, or you cannot gain entry into an undergraduate medical course, you have two main options: entry into an undergraduate medicine course as a graduate or Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM).

### Entry Into Undergraduate Medicine as a Graduate (5 year course)

Many universities allow non-medicine graduates into undergraduate medicine. The entry requirements are very similar to that of an undergraduate. However, it is important to note that most universities do not allow you to apply to the same medical school twice (i.e. as a school leaver and then as a graduate).

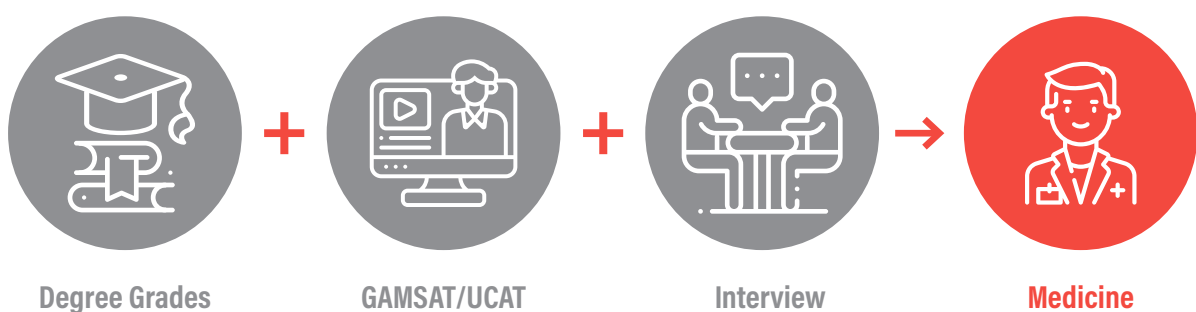
### Graduate Entry Medicine (4 year course)

This is a dedicated, accelerated graduate programme for students who have first completed an undergraduate degree in another area of study, or are current professionals in another area and are looking for a career change.

Some universities only accept applicants with an undergraduate degree in science, whilst others accept any undergraduate degree (for example, arts, commerce, law, business, economics).

The three main criteria to get into Graduate Entry Medicine are:

- Your performance in the undergraduate degree.
- Your score in an admissions test: usually GAMSAT (Graduate Medical School Admissions Test); occasionally UCAT/BMAT, depending on the university.
- Interview score (usually a multiple mini interview, or MMI).



If you achieve sufficiently high scores in the above assessments, then you will obtain a place in Graduate Entry Medicine.

Note that some graduate medical courses have certain A-level or GCSE requirements. For example, Birmingham requires an A in English at GCSE. So, it is important to research these before applying.

## Comparison between the two types of Graduate Medicine

Undergraduate Medicine as a Graduate	Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM)
Less generous student finance	More generous student finance
Long summer holidays with the option to work and fund the degree	More intense course with shorter holidays
More places, less competitive	More competitive, often better qualified candidates
Mixed school leaver and graduate (mature) cohort	Only graduate (mature) cohort

## Should I pursue Graduate Medicine?

In general, the graduate entry pathway is longer and more expensive than the undergraduate one. If you are sure that you wish to pursue medicine, it is far less stressful, expensive and time consuming to obtain entry via the undergraduate pathway. You also need to consider the opportunity cost involved.

As one example, undergraduate medicine allows you to enter the field and practise earlier than graduate medicine. Generally, those who choose the graduate route will end up practising medicine later in life. The graduate pathway is best for those who are very unsure of their career path or who are unable to obtain entry into medicine via the undergraduate route.





## OTHER PATHWAYS INTO MEDICINE

Many medical schools have alternative entry routes into medicine. They often involve an additional year of study. This year can be a stand-alone year or part of the medical programme.

The two main types of alternative entry routes are:

### 1 MEDICINE WITH A PRELIMINARY YEAR:

this involves an additional year at the start of the medical degree (sometimes called a 'foundation year'), making it a six-year course. It is designed for students who performed well at A-level but did not take the required science subjects. The extra year gives students the necessary training in science to catch up.

### 2 MEDICINE WITH A GATEWAY YEAR:

this is designed for those who have high ability and have the potential to succeed in medicine, but who may have experienced educational or social disadvantage during their education. Medical courses can take this into account in various ways, for example by using adjusted criteria to change the entry requirements for certain applicants. Often these are six year courses, which include a foundation year.

Another option is to study a Biological or Clinical Science Degree followed by internal transfer into medicine. Students need to achieve a First in their first year of study, show commitment to medicine (including work experience) and often need to perform well in the UCAT. Students can place such courses as a fifth option on UCAS. However, students should note that this pathway is often very competitive.

In addition, many universities accept applications from mature students.

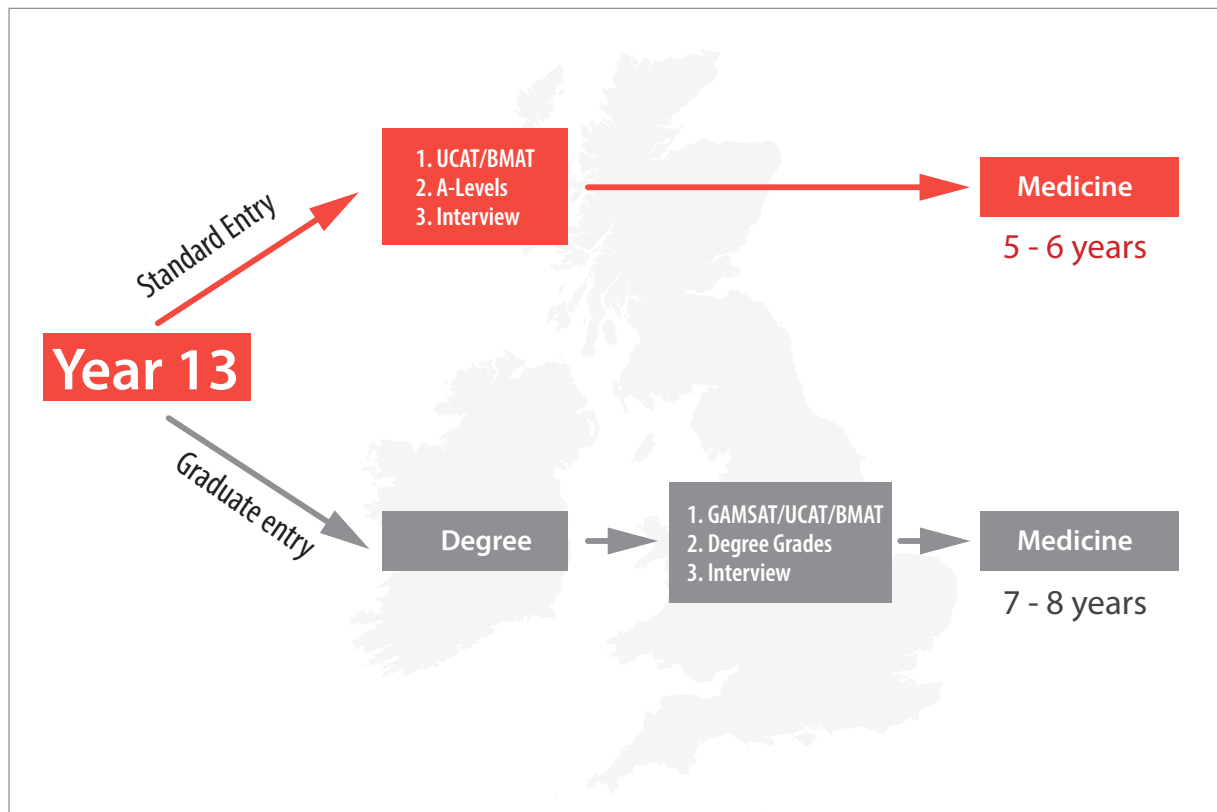


Figure 1: Pathways into medicine, UK

# What Should I Do Now?

## YEAR 13

If you are in Year 13 or have commenced university, and you are applying for medicine or dentistry for next year, you should check all deadlines for applications.

UCAS applications close in October each year so make sure you start work on your personal statement early.

Consider which universities you would like to apply to, and if you have not already done so, research their entry requirements. Remember that some universities have specific prerequisite subjects that are required, with minimum academic requirements. Before you select the universities that you wish to apply to, you will know your UCAT score which can help you decide which universities you should choose. You may consider sitting BMAT to apply to one of the universities that uses this entry test.

You should also consider researching scholarships offered by different universities. You can find information about these and deadlines to apply on university websites.

It is important that you prepare for medical interviews. Check the interview dates for each university and make sure that you will not be away when interviews take place – sometimes dates can clash with your holidays, for example. Universities will generally not reschedule interview dates, so you will need to work around them!

Work experience can be completed prior to interviews or UCAS applications in year 13, however it is advisable to complete these during year 12 when you will be less busy.



- 
- ✓ **Write Personal Statement**
  - ✓ **Research entry requirements**
  - ✓ **Prepare for interviews**
-

## YEAR 12

Make sure you are studying the required prerequisite subjects needed by your preferred medical courses. Your remaining subjects should be subjects that you enjoy and excel in, but also those which will help you to obtain the A-levels required for entry into medicine.

MedEntry recommends that you begin your UCAT preparation as early as possible.

Because UCAT is a skills-based exam, you cannot ‘cram’ for it. You need to learn, practise and master the skills required to succeed in the UCAT over a period of time. You will need to sit UCAT in the summer before Year 13. For more information about UCAT, please consult part 2 of this handbook.

It is also important to seek work experience or volunteer work in a medical-related field. This is useful not only for interviews and your personal statement, but also to help you decide if medicine is for you, and to ensure you understand the role of a health professional. It is important that you begin this process early, as you will be busy in your final year of sixth form.



- ✓ ***Prepare for UCAT***
- ✓ ***Research entry requirements***
- ✓ ***Engage in work experience and volunteer work***

## YEAR 11

Your research on different university requirements should begin now! Make a shortlist of universities at which you would like to study medicine. Note down each university’s selection criteria and any prerequisite subjects they may require. This will help you choose subjects for your A-levels. It will also encourage you to focus on your weaknesses if one of these subjects, such as Biology, is required by your preferred university.



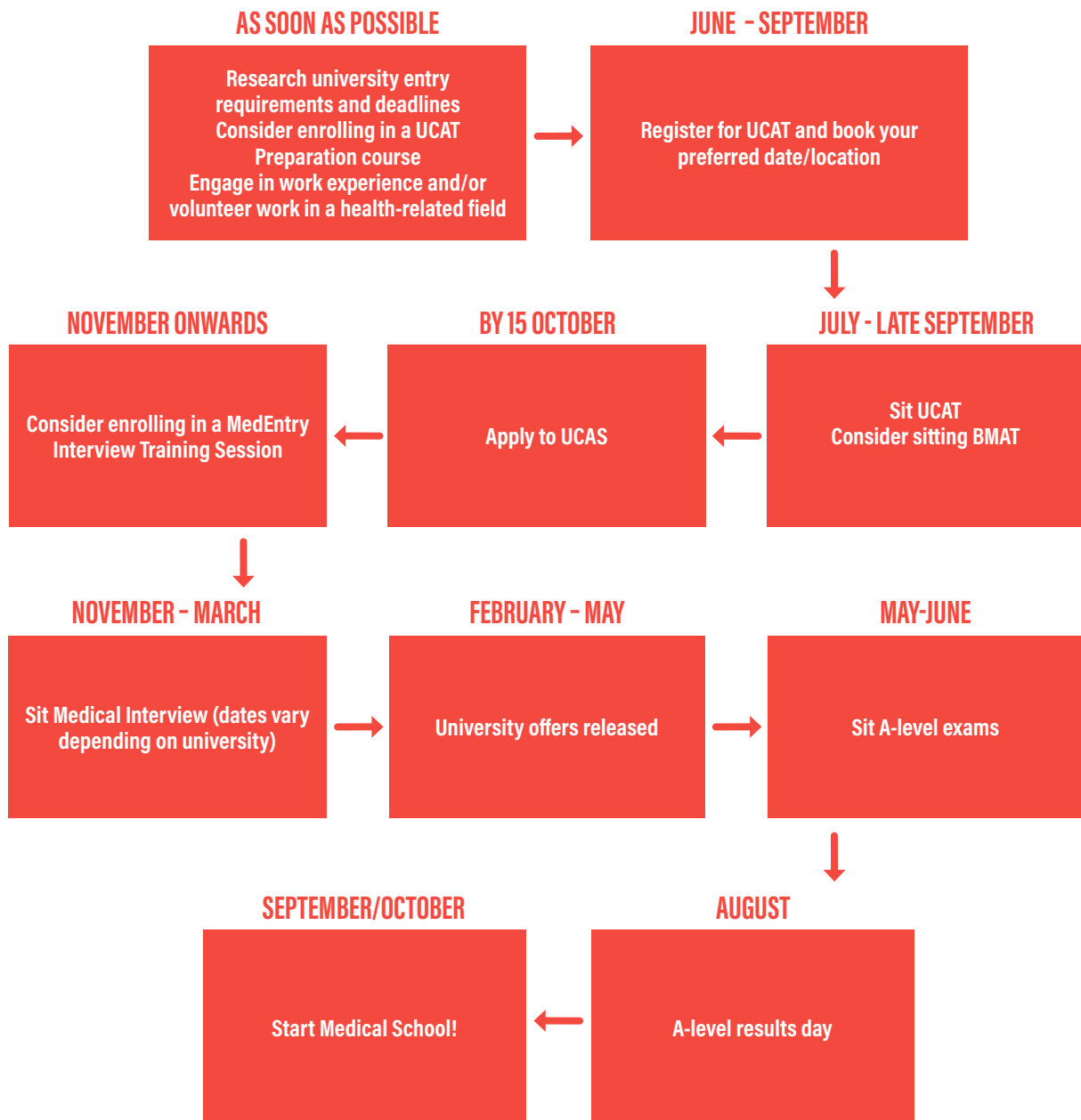
- ✓ ***Research entry requirements***
- ✓ ***Engage in work experience or volunteer work***
- ✓ ***Consider starting UCAT preparation***

Begin looking for work experience and volunteer work in the medical field.

Some students start preparing for UCAT before their final years of schooling, and if you are motivated, go for it! The earlier you start preparing for a generic skills test such as UCAT, the better. Most of the skills needed to succeed in the UCAT need to be developed over a period of time. Note that you will not be able to actually sit the UCAT until the summer before Year 13.

## SAMPLE TIMELINE

Following is a sample timeline for students who are in their final years of schooling.





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**UCAT**



# Introduction to UCAT

The University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) is a very difficult test and is different from any exam you have ever sat before. It is also an important criterion for getting into medicine and dentistry at many UK universities. In this part of the handbook, we will cover UCAT in detail, including how to prepare for it.

## WHAT IS UCAT?

UCAT stands for University Clinical Aptitude Test. It is used by most universities in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand to select students for entry into medicine and dentistry.

UCAT is a two-hour, computer-based test in multiple-choice question format. It is administered by Pearson VUE on behalf of the UCAT Consortium of universities.

## HOW IMPORTANT IS UCAT?

UCAT can be very important. Some universities use it as a significant factor in determining entry into medicine. For example, for medicine at the University of Newcastle, once minimum academic thresholds are met, candidates are ranked by UCAT score alone when selecting for interview.



## HOW HARD IS UCAT?

UCAT is a very difficult test. UCAT questions are completely different to those you will have encountered at school or university. UCAT is also highly time pressured, and the vast majority of students do not finish the test. It requires extreme concentration, quick thinking and solid test taking skills.

The good news? It is possible to prepare for and do well in UCAT.

## WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE SITTING UCAT?

UCAT is very different to pen and paper examinations that you are used to sitting in school and university. If you have ever sat a driver's licence theory exam, the UCAT environment will be similar. You will be in a room with other candidates, some of whom may be sitting tests other than UCAT.



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***UCAT is a computer-based test. You can see what it is like by accessing MedEntry's Free Diagnostic Exam***

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You will be provided with a computer screen, keyboard and mouse. You can use headphones or earplugs to minimise distractions during the test.

You will also have access to a UCAT Noteboard and marker pen so you can make notes during the test.

There is a one-minute timed instruction screen between each UCAT subtest. There are no scheduled breaks in the test. If you need to go to the bathroom, the UCAT timer will keep ticking!

You can see what the UCAT is like by accessing MedEntry's Free Diagnostic exam, accessible under 'Free Resources' on the MedEntry website.

## WHAT ARE THE UCAT SECTIONS?

UCAT is composed of five sections, known as subtests:

<b>1</b> <b>VERBAL REASONING:</b>	<b>2</b> <b>DECISION MAKING:</b>	<b>3</b> <b>QUANTITATIVE REASONING:</b>	<b>4</b> <b>ABSTRACT REASONING:</b>	<b>5</b> <b>SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT:</b>
assesses your ability to critically evaluate information presented in a written form and draw logical conclusions	assesses your ability to problem solve and evaluate arguments	assesses your ability to use numerical reasoning to draw valid conclusions	assesses your ability to identify patterns and relationships using non-verbal images	assesses your ability to identify critical factors and appropriate behaviour when dealing with real life situations
COGNITIVE SUBTESTS				NON-COGNITIVE SUBTEST

The first four subtests are known as ‘cognitive subtests’ and Situational Judgement is classed as a ‘non-cognitive’ subtest. Some universities do not consider the Situational Judgement subtest when determining entry into medicine, or use it differently compared to the cognitive subtests.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF UCAT?

UCAT is composed of 228 questions, to be answered in 120 minutes. The table below displays the timing for each UCAT subtest:

UCAT Subtest	Questions	Subtest Duration	Time Per Question
Verbal Reasoning	44	21 minutes	~28 seconds
Decision Making	29	31 minutes	~64 seconds
Quantitative Reasoning	36	25 minutes	~42 seconds
Abstract Reasoning	50	12 minutes	~14 seconds
Situational Judgement	69	26 minutes	~22 seconds

As you can see from the above table, UCAT is extremely time pressured. In fact, every year more than 20% of candidates fail to answer every question (that is, they run out of time to even make a random guess!).

Therefore, it is vital that you understand and practice the strategies required to deal with this time pressure, covered in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.



***UCAT is extremely time pressured and the majority of candidates struggle to finish it***

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## WHEN IS UCAT HELD?

UCAT takes place from July to late September. You can choose the time, date and location that you wish to sit UCAT.

You can only sit UCAT once per testing cycle. UCAT results are valid for one year.

## HOW DO I REGISTER TO SIT UCAT?

To register for UCAT, you should visit the Pearson VUE website. You will need to first create an account with Pearson VUE, and then book your desired testing date, time and location.

Further detailed instructions on how to register for the test can be found on the UCAT Official website: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/register/>

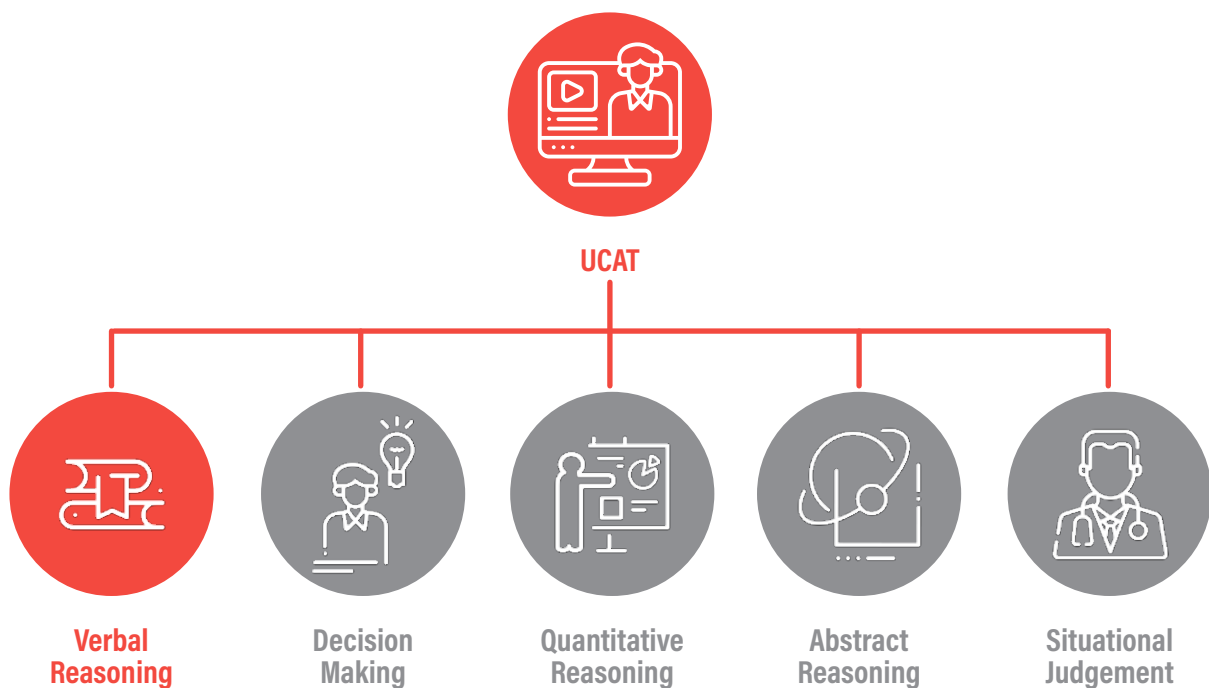


# UCAT Verbal Reasoning

In this section, we will cover what Verbal Reasoning entails, and how to effectively answer Verbal Reasoning questions.

## WHAT IS VERBAL REASONING?

The Verbal Reasoning subtest is the first section in UCAT. It assesses your ability to quickly read a passage, locate relevant information, critically evaluate it, and make logical conclusions.



## WHY IS VERBAL REASONING IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE?

Verbal Reasoning is an important skill in medicine. Doctors need to interpret information from textbooks, journals, referral letters and other sources quickly, and communicate information clearly to other health professionals and patients. They also need to critically appraise research findings in order to provide patients with the best possible care.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF VERBAL REASONING?



The Verbal Reasoning subtest is composed of 11 passages of text (ranging from 200 to 400 words), each with 4 associated questions, giving a total of 44 questions.

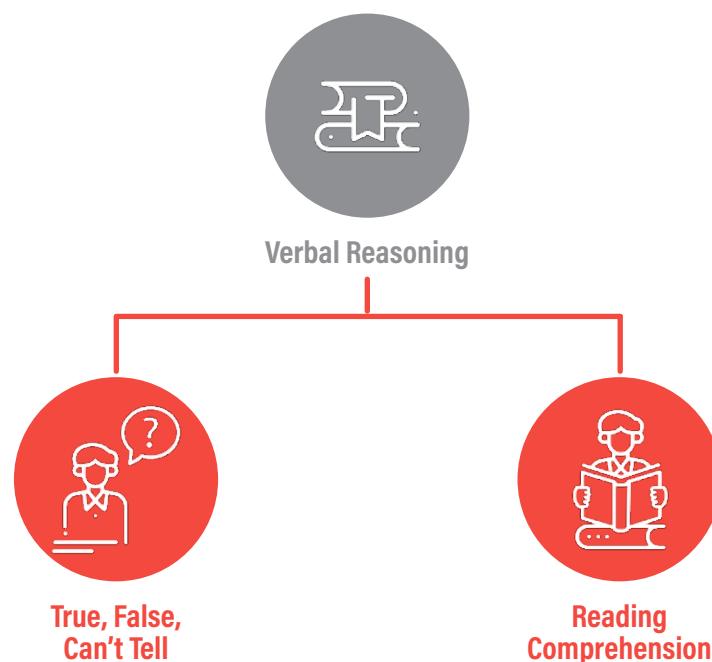


***Most students find Verbal Reasoning the most time-pressured subtest***

You have 21 minutes to complete these questions, which is under 2 minutes per unit, and under 30 seconds per question! It is generally the most time pressured UCAT subtest, and the one that most candidates struggle to finish.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN TYPES OF UCAT VERBAL REASONING QUESTIONS?

There are two main types question in the Verbal Reasoning subtest.





## 'True, False, Can't Tell' questions

In these questions, you will be presented with a passage associated with four statements. For each statement, you must decide if, based on the information in the text, the statement is:

- True
- False
- Can't tell (*that is, you cannot tell from the passage whether the statement is true or false*)

### Example Question – True, False, Can't Tell

Time limit per question – ~28 seconds

#### Passage:

There are several species of citrus trees whose fruits are called limes, including the Key lime (*Citrus aurantiifolia*), Persian lime (*Citrus latifolia*), kaffir lime (*Citrus hystrix*), and desert lime (*Citrus glauca*). Persian limes are more phototoxic than Key limes. The difficulty in identifying exactly which species of fruit are called lime in different parts of the English-speaking world is increased by the botanical complexity of the citrus genus itself, to which the majority of limes belong. Species of this genus readily interbreed, and it is only recently that genetic studies have started to throw light on the structure of the genus. The majority of cultivated lime species are in reality bred from two different "parent" species through hybridisation, produced from the citron (*Citrus medica*), the mandarin orange (*Citrus reticulata*), the pomelo (*Citrus maxima*) and in particular with many lime varieties, the micrantha (*Citrus micrantha*).

Although the precise origin is uncertain, wild limes are believed to have first grown in Indonesia or Southeast Asia, and then were transported to the Mediterranean region and North Africa around 1000 CE. To prevent scurvy during the 19th century, British sailors were issued a daily allowance of citrus, such as lemon, and later switched to lime. The use of citrus was initially a closely guarded military secret, as scurvy was a common scourge of various national navies, and the ability to remain at sea for lengthy periods without contracting the disorder was a huge benefit for the British military. British sailors thus acquired the nickname "Limey" because of their use of limes.

Raw limes are 88% water, 10% carbohydrates and less than 1% each of fat and protein. Only vitamin C content at 35% of the Daily Value (DV) per 100g serving is significant for nutrition, with other nutrients present in low DV amounts. Lime juice contains about 47 g/L of citric acid, slightly less than the citric acid of lemon juice, nearly twice the citric acid of grapefruit juice, and about five times the amount of citric acid found in orange juice. Phototoxicity in lime species is due to higher concentrations of furanocoumarins, and lime peel contains higher concentrations of furanocoumarins than lime pulp (by one or two orders of magnitude).

#### Question:

*Citrus latifolia* contains higher concentrations of furanocoumarins than *Citrus aurantiifolia*.

- (A) True
- (B) False
- (C) Can't Tell

**Answer: A**

**Solution:**

The information required to answer this question is scattered throughout the passage. In the first paragraph, it is given that *Citrus latifolia* is another name for Persian limes, and *Citrus aurantiifolia* is another name for Key limes. The passage then states that "Persian limes are more phototoxic than Key limes". Additionally, in the last paragraph, the passage states that "Phototoxicity in lime species is due to higher concentrations of furanocoumarins". Since Persian limes are more phototoxic than Key limes, then Persian limes must have higher concentrations of furanocoumarins than Key limes, so the answer is A – true.



## Reading Comprehension questions

In these questions, you will be provided with an incomplete statement or question, and will be required to choose one of four options that can best be concluded based on the passage. You will need to use critical thinking and logical reasoning skills to arrive at the correct answer.

### Example Question - Reading Comprehension

**Time limit per question – ~28 seconds**

**Passage:**

The Mechanical Turk was a fake chess-playing machine, constructed and unveiled in 1770 by Wolfgang von Kempelen to impress the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria. The Turk appeared to be able to play a strong game of chess against a human opponent, as well as perform the knight's tour, a puzzle that requires the player to move a knight to occupy every square of a chessboard exactly once. Until its destruction by fire, it was exhibited by various owners as an automaton, though it was eventually revealed to be an elaborate hoax.

Following word of its debut, interest in the machine grew across Europe. Kempelen, however, was more interested in his other projects and avoided exhibiting the Turk, often lying about the machine's repair status to prospective challengers. In the decade following its debut at Schönbrunn Palace, the Turk only played one opponent, Sir Robert Murray Keith, a Scottish noble, and Kempelen went as far as dismantling the Turk entirely following the match. Kempelen was quoted as referring to the invention as a "mere bagatelle", as he was not pleased with its popularity and would rather continue work on steam engines and machines that replicated human speech.

In 1781, Kempelen was ordered by Emperor Joseph II to reconstruct the Turk and deliver it to Vienna for a state visit from Grand Duke Paul of Russia and his wife. The appearance was so successful that Grand Duke Paul suggested a tour of Europe for the Turk, a request to which Kempelen reluctantly agreed. The Turk began its European tour in 1783, beginning with an appearance in France in April. Upon arrival in Paris in May 1783, it was displayed to the public and played a variety of opponents, including a lawyer named Mr. Bernard who was a second rank in chess ability. Following the sessions at Versailles, demands increased for a match with François-André Danican Philidor, who was considered the best chess player of his time. Moving to the Café de la Régence, the machine played many of the most skilled players, often losing, until securing a match with Philidor at the Académie des Sciences.

While Philidor won his match with the Turk, Philidor's son noted that his father called it "his most fatiguing game of chess ever!" The Turk's final game in Paris was against Benjamin Franklin, who was serving as ambassador to France from the United States.

**Question:**

Which of the following statements **cannot** be inferred from the passage?

- (A) The Turk began its tour of Europe in April of 1783.
- (B) During its European tour, the Turk won almost all of its matches.
- (C) Philidor found his match with the Turk challenging.
- (D) The Turk's visit to Vienna preceded its appearance in Paris.

**Answer: B**

**Solution:**

Note the use of the word 'cannot' in the question stem. We are looking for an option that cannot be concluded. Options A, C, and D are incorrect as they can ALL be reasonably inferred from the passage.

Option A can be inferred as the passage states that "The Turk began its European tour in 1783, beginning with an appearance in France in April".

Option C can be inferred as the passage states that Philidor's son "noted that his father called it 'his most fatiguing game of chess ever!'"

Option D can be inferred as the passage states that the Turk's European tour (including its stop in Paris) was suggested as a result of the success of its appearance in Vienna. Note that 'precede' means to come before.

Option B cannot be reasonably inferred as the passage never suggests that the Turk won the majority of its matches – indeed, the passage states that at the Café de la Régence, "the machine played many of the most skilled players, often losing". The right answer is therefore option B.

## WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ANSWER VERBAL REASONING QUESTIONS?

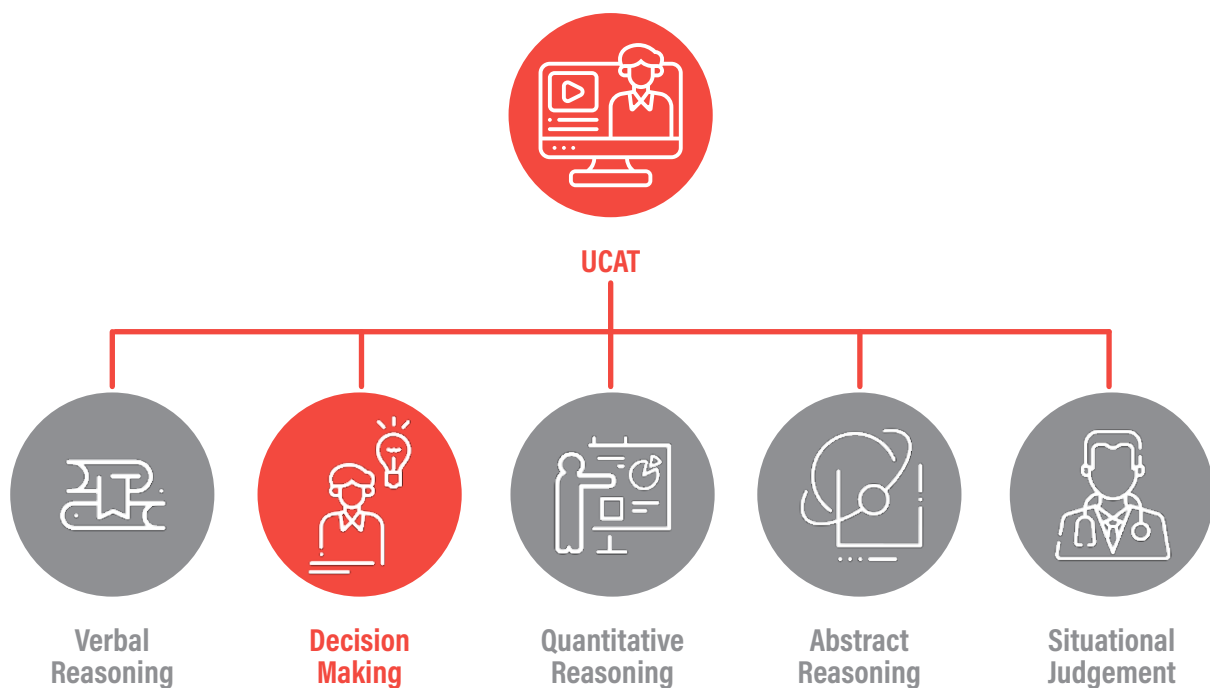
There are many strategies that can be used to answer Verbal Reasoning questions quickly and accurately. These include speed reading, keyword searching, understanding logical fallacies and applying a critical thinking framework. These techniques and many others are covered in detail in MedEntry's UCAT courses.

# UCAT Decision Making

In this section, we will cover what Decision Making entails, and how to effectively answer Decision Making questions.

## WHAT IS DECISION MAKING?

Decision Making is the second subtest of the UCAT. It assesses your ability to solve problems, draw logical conclusions and evaluate arguments.



## WHY IS DECISION MAKING IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE?

Decision making is central to the role of a health professional. Doctors need to be able to solve problems, manage risk and deal with uncertainty. Furthermore, health professionals are often required to make decisions quickly, in complex or stressful situations.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF DECISION MAKING?

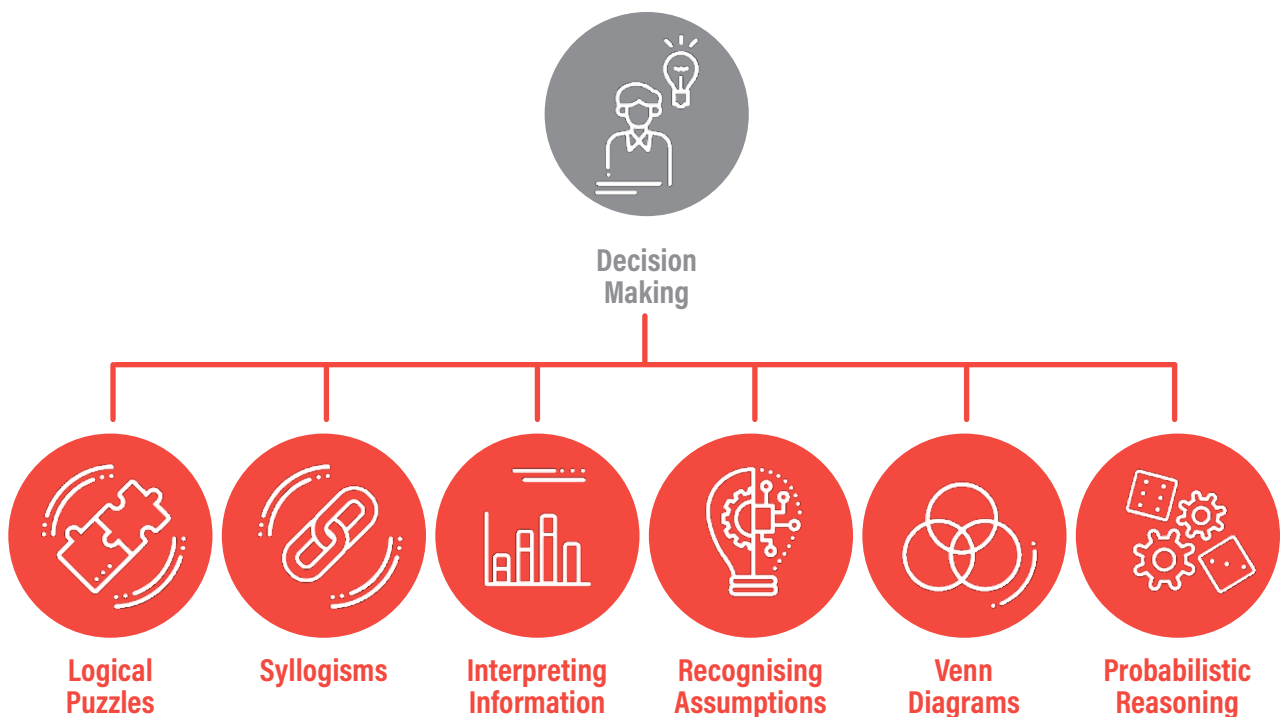


The Decision Making subtest is composed of 29 questions. Each question is ‘individual’ – that is, each is associated with text and/or a diagram, followed by an independent question. Your task is to select the best answer.

You will have 31 minutes to answer the questions, which is just over one minute per question.

## WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF DECISION MAKING QUESTION?

UCAT Decision Making is the most diverse of the UCAT subtests, with a mixture of question types. There are six major types of question:







**Marks for 'Drag and Drop' Decision Making questions range from 0 to 2.**

Most UCAT Decision Making questions are presented in standard multiple choice 'best out of four options' format. However, syllogisms and interpreting information questions are presented differently. In these types of question, you will be provided with a series of five conclusions, and you will need to decide

whether the conclusion does or does not follow. You will be required to 'drag and drop' a 'Yes' or 'No' response next to each statement.

'Drag and Drop' Decision Making questions are marked differently. Marks range from 0 to 2, with partially correct responses being awarded 1 mark.

Each type of question will be discussed below.



## Logical puzzles

These questions present you with a puzzle or game that you need to solve in order to arrive at the answer. You are usually presented with text, with or without an accompanying diagram.

### Example Question - Logical Puzzles

**Time limit per question - ~64 seconds**

#### Stimulus:

An Olympic athlete has put her medals up on the wall for everyone to admire. She has won six medals— two gold and four silver. The medals are from two Olympics, 2000 and 2004.

The medals are arranged as shown:

1	2	3
4	5	6

- Medal 2 is gold.
- Both gold medals were won in the 2004 Olympics.
- Medals 1 and 3 were won in 2000.
- At most only three silver medals are on the corners.
- All medals won in 2000 are hung adjacent to at least two medals won in 2004.

#### Question:

Which of the following could be the kinds of medals that 4, 5, and 6 are, respectively?

- (A) Gold, silver, gold.
- (B) Silver, gold, silver.
- (C) Silver, silver, gold.
- (D) Silver, silver, silver.

**Answer: C**

**Solution:**

It is useful to draw a diagram to summarise the rules:

S/'00	G/'04	S/'00
?/'04	S/'??	?/'04

We know there is a gold medal in spot 2. We also know that it is from 2004, as it is a gold medal. Medals 1 and 3 are from 2000, so they must also be silver medals. From these, we know that medals 4 and 6 are from 2004, as medals from 2000 are hung adjacent to at least two medals won in 2004. Finally, as we know that a maximum of 3 silvers can be on the corners, and because 1 and 3 are already known silver medals, then medal 5 must be silver.

The order of the last row could either be gold, silver, silver or silver, silver, gold (option C).



## Syllogisms

This type of question requires you to use deductive reasoning to assess a series of conclusions. You will need to decide whether each conclusion does or does not follow from the information provided. You will need to 'drag and drop' your answer accordingly.

### Example Question - Syllogisms

**Time limit per question - ~64 seconds**

**Stimulus:**

At a conference for anaesthetists in Sydney last year, none were men who had subspecialised in chronic pain management.

**Question:**

Place "Yes" if the conclusion does follow. Place "No" if the conclusion does not follow

Only female anaesthetists in were present at the conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>
Any man at conference was not a chronic pain management specialist	<input type="checkbox"/>	
There were female anaesthetists who had subspecialized in chronic pain at the conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Very few male anaesthetists were present at the conference	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No anaesthetists at the conference who had subspecialized in chronic pain management was a man	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### Answers/Solution:

Statement 1: No. Anaesthetists who were male but had subspecialised in other areas may have been present at the conference.

Statement 2: Yes. No attendee who had subspecialised in chronic pain management was a man at the conference.

Statement 3: No. This assumes that there were people who attended the conference who had subspecialised in chronic pain management (i.e. potentially no one who had subspecialised in chronic pain management attended).

Statement 4: No. The stimulus only reflects on the number of males in the subspecialty of chronic pain management at the conference, not the total number of male attendees.

Statement 5: Yes. This is an accurate reflection of the statement.



### Interpreting Information

In these questions, you may be provided with text, charts and/or graphs. Your task is to interpret the information and decide whether each conclusion does or does not follow. You will need to 'drag and drop' your answer accordingly.

#### Example Question – Interpreting Information

Time limit per question – ~64 seconds

##### Stimulus:

Jeremy, Tony, Jacob and Lucy are students who go to the same school. Jeremy only follows 2 people from school on Instagram. Everyone at school follows Lucy. The only people whom Tony follows on Instagram are those who follow him first, and Tony follows Jeremy.

##### Question:

Place 'Yes' if the conclusion does follow. Place 'No' if the conclusion does not follow.

The only people who Jeremy follows from school are Tony and Lucy		<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>
Lucy follows Tony		
Jacob follows Lucy		
The number of people who follow Tony must be greater than or equal to the number of people who are followed by Tony		
Lucy follows Jeremy		

### Answer/Solution:

Statement 1: Yes. It is given that Jeremy only follows 2 people from school on Instagram. Since Tony follows Jeremy, Jeremy must have followed Tony first (since Tony only follows people who follow him first). In addition, everyone at school follows Lucy; therefore, Jeremy follows Lucy. Therefore, the two people from school whom Jeremy follows are Lucy and Tony.

Statement 2: Yes. It is given that everyone at school follows Lucy, indicating that Tony also follows Lucy. Since Tony only follows people who follow him first, Lucy must follow Tony.

Statement 3: Yes. Everyone at school follows Lucy, and therefore Jacob must follow Lucy since they are students from the same school.

Statement 4: Yes. The number of people who follow Tony must be greater than or equal to the number of people who are followed by Tony, as the only people Tony follows are those who follow him first.

Statement 5: No. There is no information which suggests that Lucy follows Jeremy.



## Recognising Assumptions

These questions are perhaps the strangest in UCAT and can be very unfamiliar unless you have acquired and practiced effective strategies to answer them. You will be required to analyse a statement and four associated arguments. You will need to choose the strongest argument from among the available options.

### Example Question - Recognising Assumptions

**Time limit per question - ~64 seconds**

#### Stimulus:

Should the government be able to monitor and read all telephone conversations?

#### Question:

Select the strongest argument from the statements below.

- A) Yes, it is important for police to be able to prevent terrorism
- B) Yes, so that the government can help plan for infrastructure
- C) No, because it would be technically very difficult to do this
- D) No, because it is a serious infringement of civil liberties

#### Answer: D

#### Solution:

Option A is incorrect as the statement refers to police rather than the government. Furthermore, terrorism is not referred to in the stimulus. Option B is incorrect as although planning for infrastructure is important, there is no link between why monitoring all telephone conversations is needed to do this well. Option C is incorrect as the question is about whether it **should** be done rather than whether it **can** be done. Option D is the best answer because it directly addresses the question asked and provides a reasonable reason why objections may be raised from citizens.



## Venn diagrams

These questions require an understanding of Venn diagrams. You may be presented with:

- A Venn diagram
- A series of statements requiring you to draw a Venn diagram
- Several Venn diagrams that represent information

You will need to choose the correct answer from among the available options.

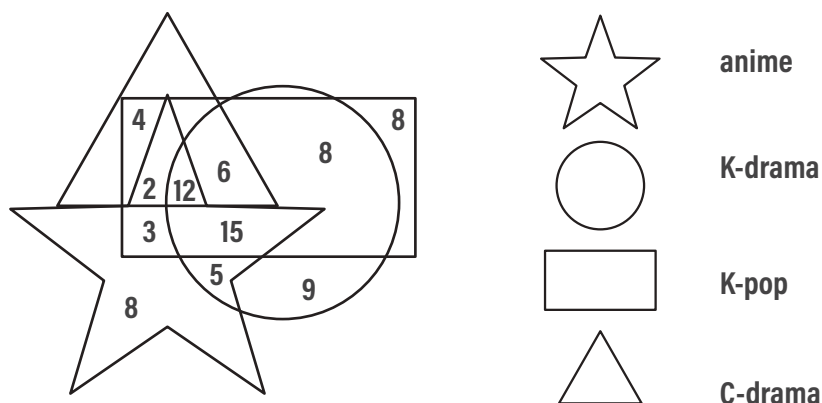
The diagrams presented in UCAT can look unusual due to the variety of shapes that are used. It is important to have a strong understanding of how Venn diagrams work to answer these questions.

### Example Question – Venn Diagrams

Time limit per question – ~64 seconds

#### Stimulus:

A survey was conducted across some classes in a school to determine the forms of Asian entertainment media that its students engaged with in their spare time.



#### Question:

Which of the following statements is true?

- (A) More students engaged with C-dramas and anime, than K-dramas and K-pop only.
- (B) A total of 17 students engaged with anime and K-pop but not K-dramas.
- (C) Less than 20% of all students who engaged with K-dramas also engaged with anime.
- (D) Less than half of the students surveyed engaged with K-pop.

#### Answer: A

#### Solution:

There are 14 students ( $2 + 12$ ) who engaged with C-dramas and anime (region enclosed by the triangle and star). There are 8 students who engaged with K-dramas and K-pop only (region enclosed by the circle and rectangle only). Therefore, more students engaged with C-dramas and anime, than K-dramas and K-pop only – A is correct. To save time, it would be important to move on after selecting A, and not waste time checking the other responses. However, they will be discussed for completeness.

Only 5 students ( $2 + 3$ ) engaged with anime and K-pop but not K-dramas (region enclosed by the star and rectangle but not the circle) – B is incorrect.

More than half of the students who watched K-drama (region enclosed by circle) also watched anime (region enclosed by the star) – this is evident after observing that the number of students who watched K-drama but not anime is 23 ( $8 + 9 + 6$ ), which is less than the number of students who watched K-drama and anime ( $15 + 12 + 5 = 32$ ) – C is incorrect.

It can be estimated that more than half of the students surveyed engaged with K-pop. There are 28 ( $6 + 8 + 9 + 5$ ) students who did not engage with K-pop (region outside the rectangle). This is less than the number of students who did engage with K-pop (region enclosed by the rectangle), which is more than 33 ( $15 + 12 + 6 = 33$ ; using just some of the values enclosed by the rectangle which already add up to a total greater than 23). Therefore D is incorrect. For reference, there are a total of 58 students who engaged with K-pop ( $4 + 2 + 12 + 6 + 3 + 15 + 8 + 8 = 58$ ), out of a total of 86 students ( $58 + 28 = 86$ ).



## Probabilistic reasoning

In these questions, you will be provided with a passage of text containing statistical information. You will need to use your understanding of probability principles to select the best answer.

### Example Question - Probabilistic Reasoning

**Time limit per question – ~64 seconds**

#### Stimulus:

Joe has five 50 cent and three 5 cent pieces.

He picks two of these coins at random, one after another.

Joe states that the probability that both coins will be 50 cent pieces is  $1/4$ .

#### Question:

Is Joe correct?

- (A) Yes, because there is a  $1/2$  chance of the first coin being a 50 cent coin and  $1/2$  chance that the second is a 50 cent coin
- (B) Yes, because he picks the coins at random.
- (C) No, the probability is  $5/16$
- (D) No, the probability is  $5/14$

#### Answer: D

#### Solution:

The probability of the first coin Joe picks being a 50 cent piece is  $5/8$ , since 5 of the 8 coins are 50 cent pieces.

Joe does not replace this coin – thus, there are now only 7 coins remaining, 4 of which are 50 cent pieces. Therefore, the probability of the second coin he picks being a 50 cent piece is  $4/7$ .

Thus, the probability that both coins will be 50 cent pieces is  $5/8 \times 4/7 = 20/56 = 5/14$



## WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ANSWER DECISION MAKING QUESTIONS?

This is the subtest where your UCAT Noteboard and pen will be most helpful to you. It will help to note down important information or key calculations, and draw tables or diagrams. You must have a strong understanding of Venn diagrams, probability and logical reasoning principles to succeed in this subtest. There are a variety of techniques which can be used to answer each specific question type quickly and accurately, which are discussed in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.

# UCAT Quantitative Reasoning

In this section, we will cover what Quantitative Reasoning entails, and how to effectively answer Quantitative Reasoning questions.

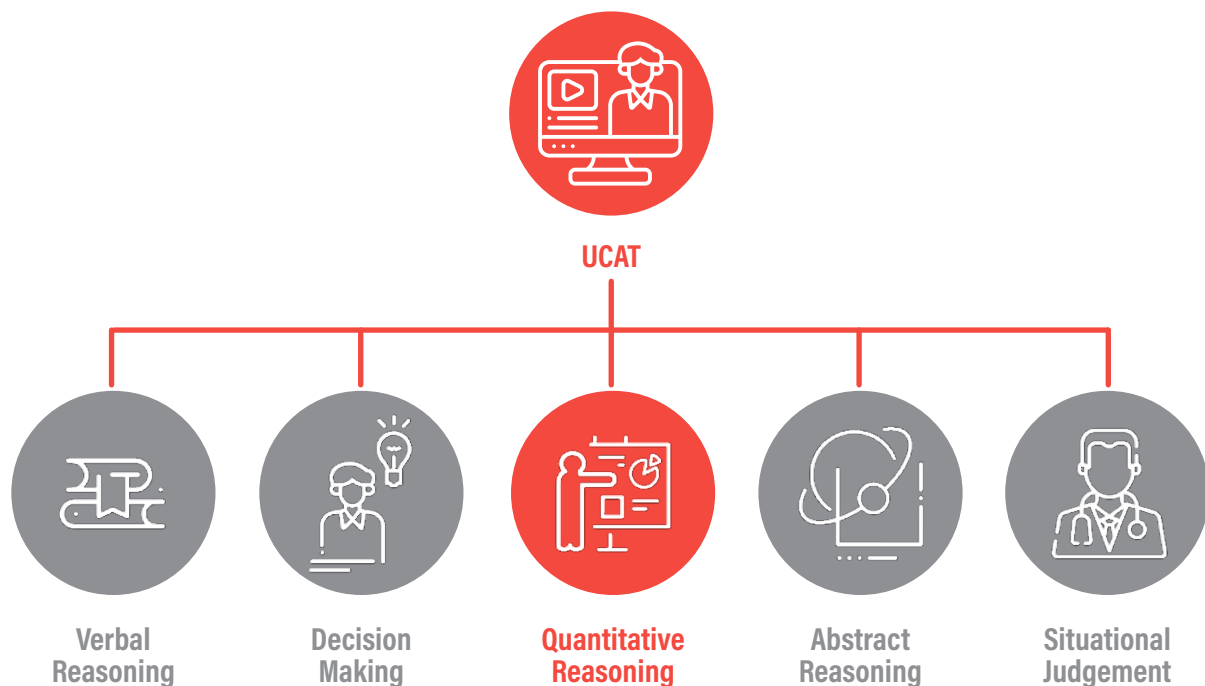
## WHAT IS QUANTITATIVE REASONING?

Quantitative Reasoning is the third subtest in UCAT.

It assesses your numerical and problem solving abilities. Note that it is not just a ‘maths test’, but rather a reasoning test requiring you to use mathematical skills.



**Quantitative Reasoning is not a maths test, it is a reasoning test using mathematical skills**



## WHY IS QUANTITATIVE REASONING IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE?

Doctors will often need to make calculations in their day to day work, for example, when calculating medication doses and in research. They often need to make calculations quickly, and use them as a basis to make decisions and solve problems.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF QUANTITATIVE REASONING?

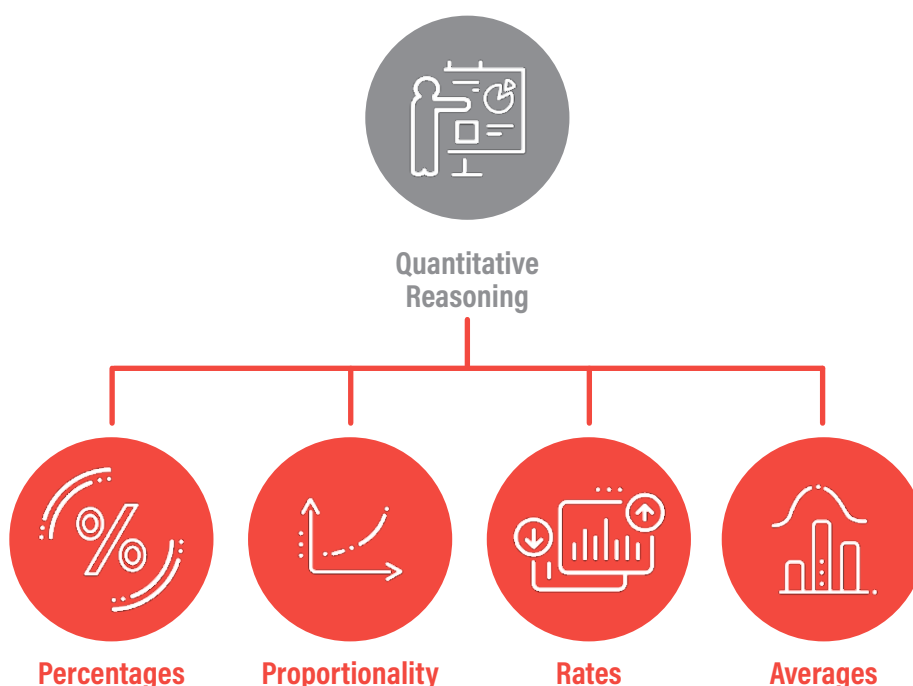


In this subtest, you will have 36 questions to answer in 25 minutes, which is an average of 42 seconds per question. Most Quantitative Reasoning questions are presented in units of four questions, however, some questions are ‘standalone’ or individual.

In Quantitative Reasoning, you will be presented with text and/or tables, graphs or diagrams that you will need to interpret. You will then need to select the correct answer from among the available five options. The difficulty of questions varies from straightforward to more complex. You will often need to make multiple calculations to arrive at the correct answer, and avoid common wrong answer ‘traps’.

## WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF QUANTITATIVE REASONING QUESTIONS?

UCAT Quantitative Reasoning questions cover a range of numerical abilities. These include:





## Percentages:

Calculating percentage increase or decrease in prices or quantities of an item. You may be required to convert between percentages, decimals, fractions and ratios.

### Example Question – Percentages

Time limit per question – 42 seconds

#### Stimulus:

A television streaming service changes its fees from last year to this year.

The following represents the original and new fees (in \$ per month) for its basic, premium and ultimate packages, as well as showing the number of customers paying for each of these packages.

Packages	Last Year		This Year	
	Price	No. of Customers	Price	No. of Customers
Basic	7	3250	8.5	4425
Premium	12	7845	14	5595
Ultimate	15	5220	18	2250

Note: The service can only be purchased/switched to a different package at the beginning of a month.

#### Question:

The company decides to raise its prices by the following from this year to the next year: 10% increase for basic package, 7% decrease for premium package and 15% increase for ultimate package.

If the number of customers for each package remains the same as this year, what is the percentage change in income from last year to next year?

- (A) 17.6%
- (B) 11.75%
- (C) 21%
- (D) 7.25%
- (E) 8.49%

#### Answer: A

#### Solution:

Note that this question should be identified by students as one that is going to take a long time (involves lots of calculations). Thus, it should be flagged and students can return to it if there is time. It is easy to get caught on this question, and compromise the rest of your subtest, so be careful!

Last year's total income:  $(\$7 \times 3250) + (\$12 \times 7845) + (\$15 \times 5220) = 22750 + 94140 + 78300 = \$195,190$  per month.

Next year:

Basic package increased by 10%. New price =  $11 \times 8.50 = \$9.35$

Premium decreased by 7%. New price =  $14 \times 0.93 = \$13.02$

Ultimate increased by 15%. New price =  $18 \times 1.15 = \$20.70$

Total income next year:  $(9.35 \times 4425) + (13.02 \times 5595) + (20.70 \times 2250) = 41373.75 + 72846.9 + 46575 = \$160,795.65$  per month

Difference =  $\$195,190 - \$160,796 = \$34,394$

Percentage change =  $34,394 / 195,190 \times 100 = 17.6\%$

(Note that there is no need to multiply both values by 12, as the % difference will be the same and this will waste time).



## Proportionality:

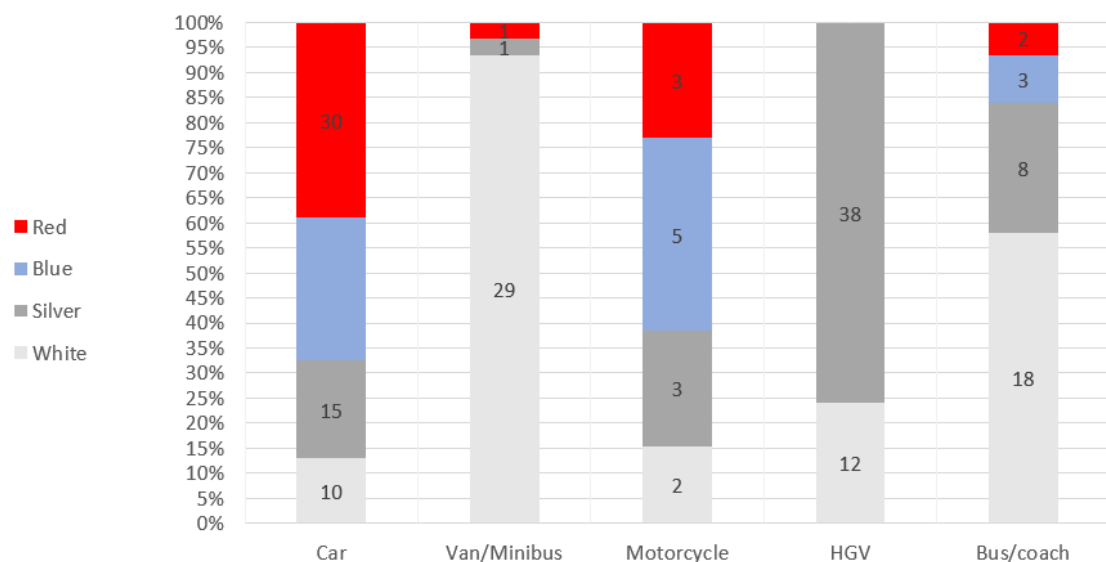
Calculating direct and indirect proportions and converting between units.

### Example Question – Proportionality

Time limit per question – 42 seconds

#### Stimulus:

The chart below shows the results of a traffic survey conducted this year. The numbers in each bar show the actual number of vehicles of each colour counted. These are all the types of vehicles considered.



A large motor reseller (which sells vans/minibuses and buses/coaches) uses these statistics to work out how many vehicles they should preorder for resale in their yard, and in what colours in a given year. The reseller preorders vehicles in the same proportions as these statistics.

### Question:

Based on this survey, the motor reseller has purchased 377 white vans/minibuses. How many blue buses/coaches will they pre-order?

- A) 3
- B) 26
- C) 39
- D) 104
- E) 403

### Answer: C

### Solution:

$377 \text{ white vans/minibuses} \times (31/29) = 403$  (number of vans/minibuses total).

We need to now multiply this number by  $3/31$  as this is the proportion of blue/total buses/coaches.

$$403 \times (3/31) = 39$$



### Rates:

Calculating the speed of an object, or rates of flow.



### Averages:

Calculating the mean, mode or median from data presented, including use of combined samples and use in prediction.

### Other:

Other skills required include an understanding of ratios, geometry and data interpretation.

## WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ANSWER QUANTITATIVE REASONING QUESTIONS?

To do well in Quantitative Reasoning, it is important to look for shortcuts and develop your mental maths skills. Although you are provided with a calculator in UCAT, it is often much quicker to make calculations 'in your head' or on your UCAT Noteboard. Over-use of a calculator will usually lead to you running out of time to answer the questions. It is also important to have a solid understanding of various mathematical principles, including percentage change, rates, averages, ratios and geometry. There are many other strategies that can be used to answer Quantitative Reasoning questions quickly and accurately, which are covered in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.



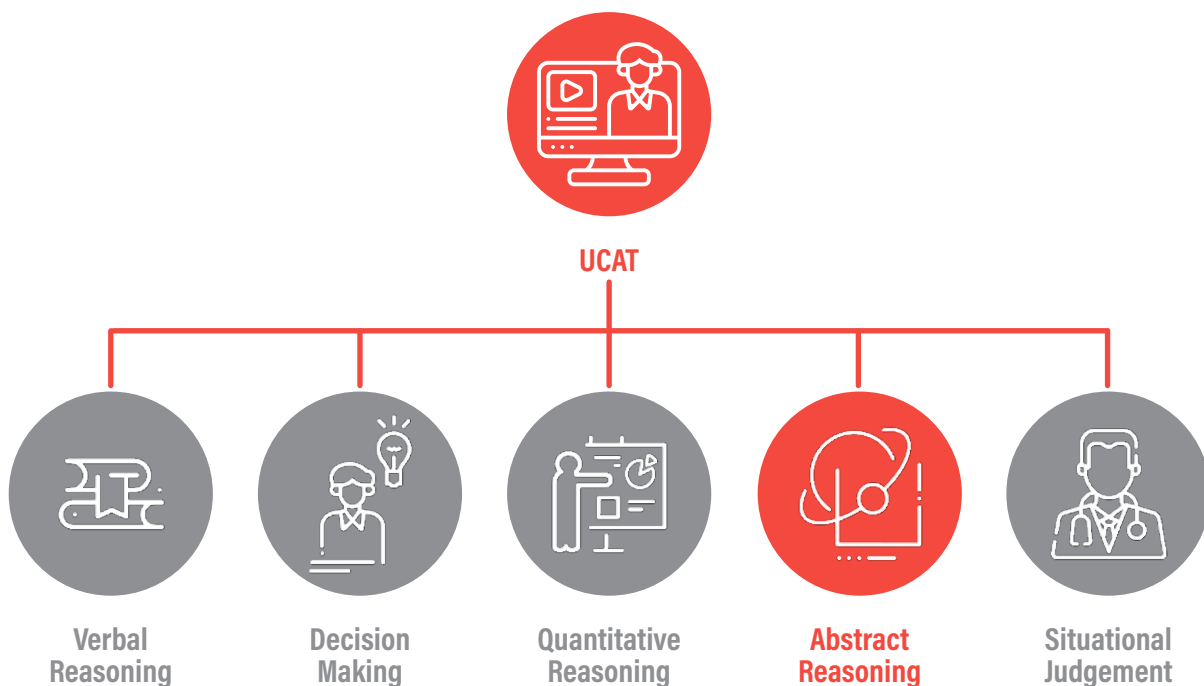
# UCAT Abstract Reasoning

In this section, we will cover what Abstract Reasoning entails, and how to effectively answer Abstract Reasoning questions.

## WHAT IS ABSTRACT REASONING?

Abstract Reasoning is the fourth subtest in UCAT.

It assesses your non-verbal and visuo-spatial reasoning ability. You will be required to identify patterns, spot trends, engage in hypothesis testing and ignore distracting information in order to arrive at the right answer.



## WHY IS ABSTRACT REASONING IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE?

Much of the work of a senior health professional involves pattern recognition. Furthermore, doctors will often need to generate and test hypotheses, extract relevant information and identify trends in their day to day work and in research.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF ABSTRACT REASONING?



50 Questions



12 Minutes



14 sec/question

In Abstract Reasoning, you will have 50 questions to answer in just 12 minutes, which is an average of less than 15 seconds per question!

Most Abstract Reasoning questions are presented in units of 5 questions, based on two 'sets' of images. Some questions will be individual or 'standalone'. You will be presented with several images, and you will need to identify (and sometimes extrapolate) patterns to arrive at the correct answer.

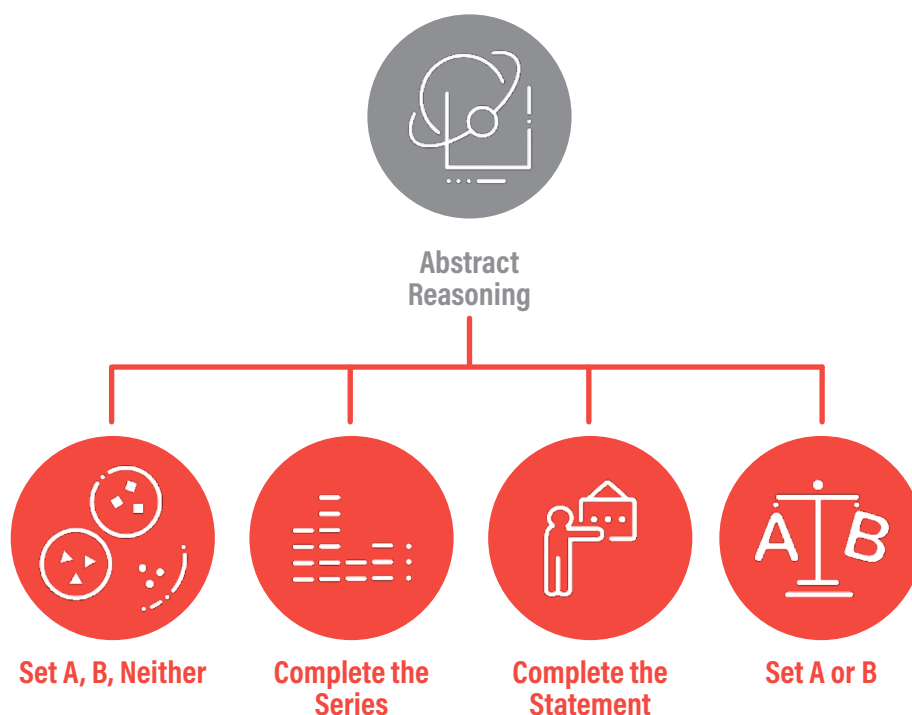
UCAT Abstract Reasoning questions can look unfamiliar and intimidating, but with practice, they become much easier to solve.



***Abstract Reasoning questions can be very difficult to answer initially, but become much easier with practice***

## WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF ABSTRACT REASONING QUESTIONS?

There are four types of Abstract Reasoning questions.



Each question type will be discussed in turn.



### 'Type 1' questions (Set A / B / Neither)

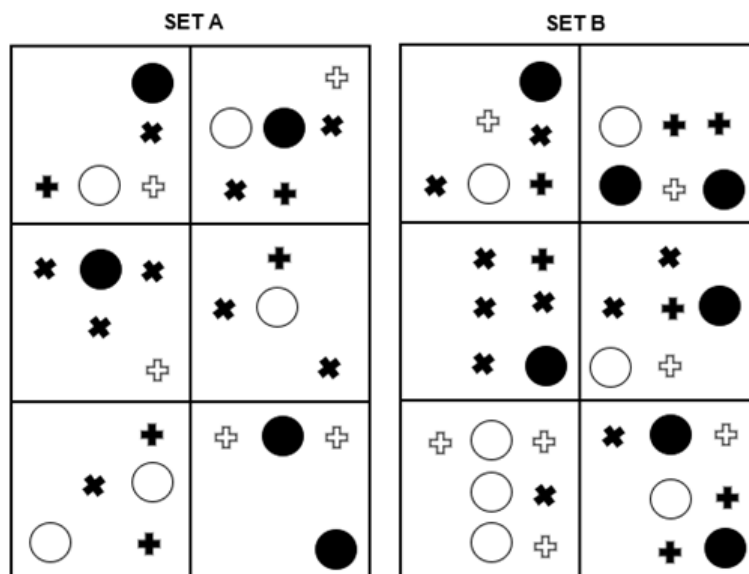
This is the commonest type of question in Abstract Reasoning. You will be presented with two sets of shapes, one labelled 'Set A' and the other labelled 'Set B'. You will be provided with a series of five 'test shapes' sequentially, and will be asked to decide whether the test shape belongs to Set A, Set B or Neither Set A nor Set B.

Note that this is not a 'matching' exercise. You are not simply required to match the test shape to one of the boxes. You will first need to find a logical pattern that links all images in Set A, and a related (but different) pattern that links all images in Set B.

#### Example Question - Set A / B / Neither

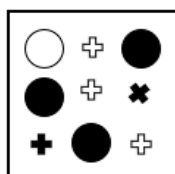
Time limit per question - ~14 seconds

##### Stimulus



##### Question

Does the following shape belong to Set A or Set B or Neither?



- (A) Set A
- (B) Set B
- (C) Neither

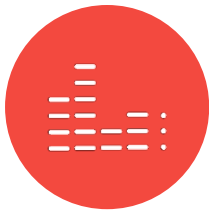
**Answer: A**

**Solution:**

SET A: Black + = white circle; White + = black circle; X = nothing

SET B: Black + = black circle; White + = white circle; X = nothing

The shape belongs to Set A as there is one black + and one white circle, and there is three white + and three black circles. The cross is irrelevant.



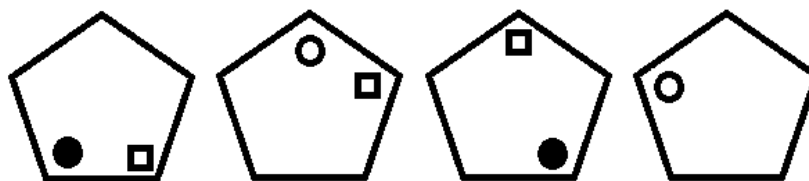
### 'Type 2' questions (Complete the Series)

In these questions, you will be provided with a series of images. You will need to determine the likely pattern and select the image that would logically appear next in the series.

#### Example Question - Complete the Series

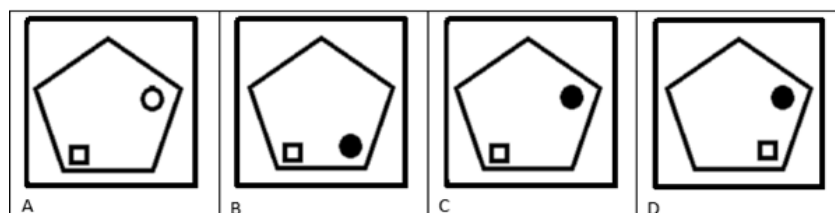
Time limit per question - ~14 seconds

**Stimulus:**



**Question:**

Which figure completes the series?



**Answer: C**

**Solution:**

The black circle moves two points around in a clockwise direction each move and changes colour with each move. It will therefore be black and in the top right hand corner of the pentagon in the answer (thus options A and B are incorrect). The square moves one point in an anti-clockwise direction each move and therefore will be in the bottom-left hand corner in the answer (thus option D is incorrect). Option C is the answer.



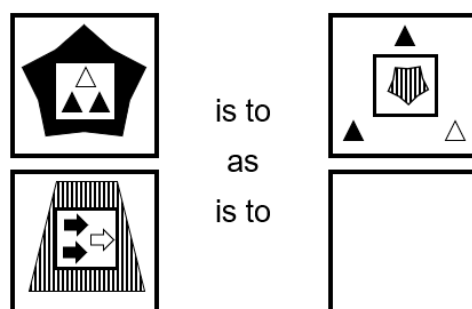
## 'Type 3' questions (Complete the Statement)

These questions are otherwise known as 'this is to that'. In these questions, you will be given an image which has undergone a transformation to form another image. You will need to apply the same transformation to a third image to arrive at the answer.

### Example Question - Complete the Statement

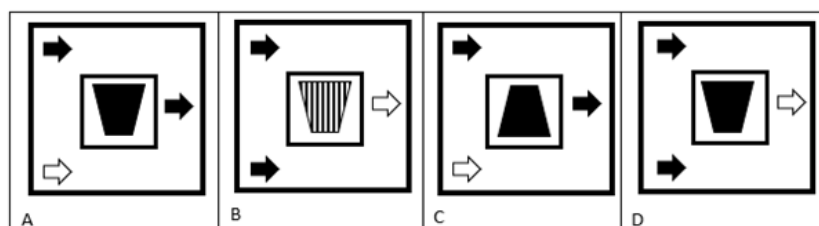
Time limit per question - ~14 seconds

Stimulus:



Question:

Which figure completes the statement?



**Answer: A**

**Solution:**

In the example image, the outer shape is flipped along the horizontal axis, changes from black to striped and moves inside the small square. Thus, in the question image, the outer shape will flip along the horizontal axis, change from striped to black and move inside the small square (thus options B and C are incorrect).

The three inside shapes in the example image (triangles) move to the outside of the square and rotate around in a clockwise direction. Thus, in the question image, the three inside arrows should move outside the square and move around in a clockwise direction with the white arrow being in the bottom left (thus option A is the correct answer).



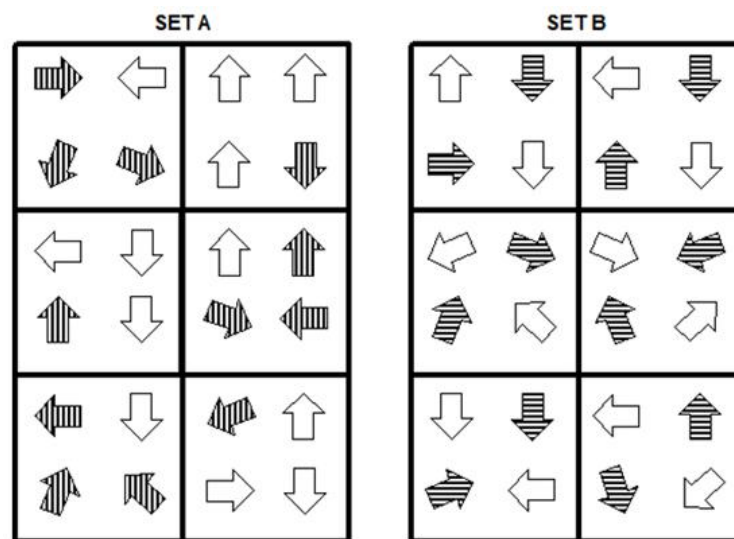
## 'Type 4' questions (Set A or B)

These questions are similar in appearance to type 1 questions (Set A / B / Neither). You will be given a set of images labelled 'Set A' and a second set of images labelled 'Set B'. You will then be given a series of four 'test shapes' simultaneously and will be asked to determine which of the four belongs to either Set A or Set B.

### Example Question - Set A or B

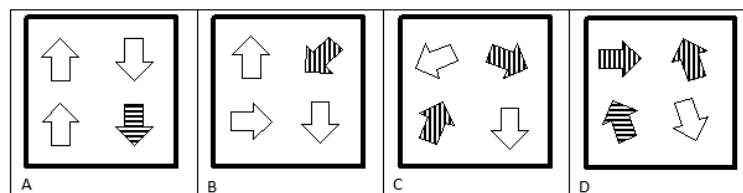
Time limit per question - ~14 seconds

Stimulus:



Question:

Which of the following shapes belongs in Set A?



**Answer: B**

**Solution:**

Set A has an odd number of striped arrows, and regardless of the arrow rotation, the stripes are always vertical. Set B has an even number of striped arrows which are always in the top right and bottom left positions. Regardless of the arrow rotation, the stripes are always horizontal.

Option A has an odd number of striped arrows (Set A rule), but the stripes are horizontal (Set B rule). Option C has vertically striped arrows (Set A rule) but there are an even number. Option D has an odd number of striped arrows (Set A rule) but the stripes are only vertical on two of the arrows. The only option that abides by the Set A rules is option B, which is the correct answer.



## WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ANSWER ABSTRACT REASONING QUESTIONS?

It is useful to use a mnemonic that covers the key patterns that arise in Abstract Reasoning questions. Practicing questions will familiarise you with common patterns and rules. There are a variety of effective strategies that can be used for each type of Abstract Reasoning question to arrive at the answer quickly and accurately. These will be covered in detail in the MedEntry UCAT Courses.



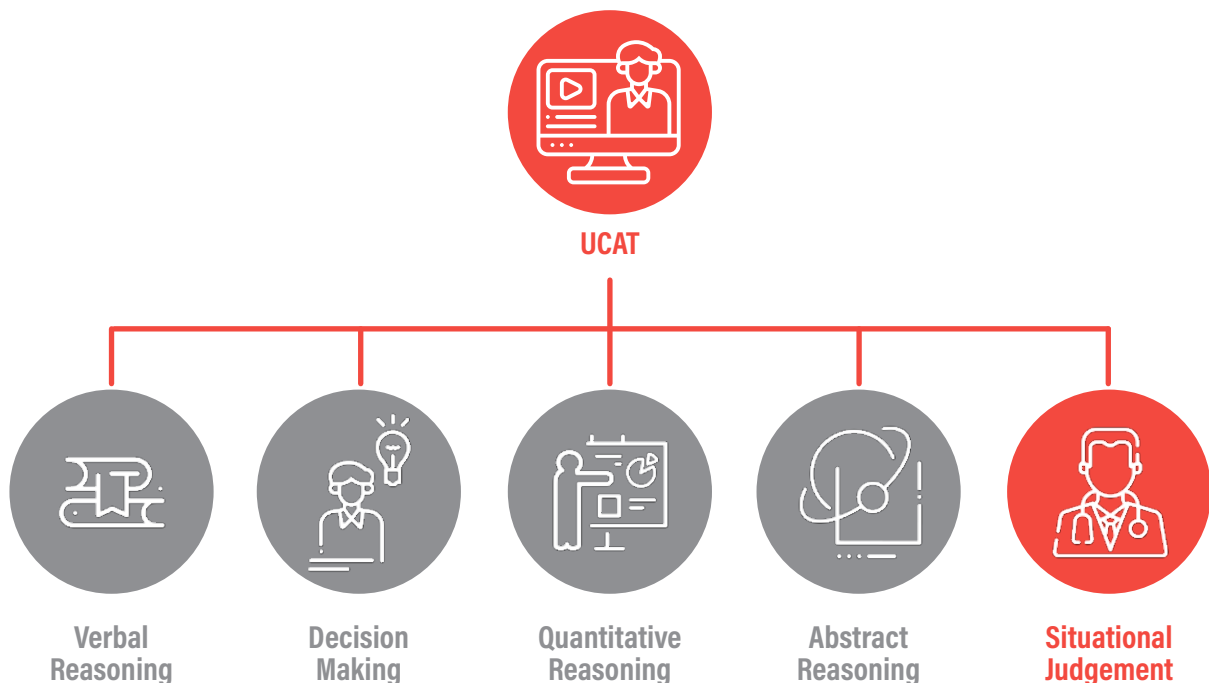
# UCAT Situational Judgement

In this section, we will cover what Situational Judgement entails, and how to effectively answer Situational Judgement questions.

## WHAT IS SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT?

Situational Judgement is the fifth and final subtest in UCAT.

It assesses your ability to understand real world situations and identify important factors and appropriate responses in dealing with them. Scenarios are usually based in a university or health-related setting, and the main character will normally be a medical or dental student, or junior health professional.



## WHY IS SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE?

Situational Judgement tests are widely used in medicine to evaluate candidates' professionalism. UCAT Situational Judgement assesses attributes considered important in the study and practice of medicine, including empathy, adaptability, resilience, teamwork and integrity.

## WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT?



In this subtest you will be presented with 69 questions associated with a series of scenarios. Each scenario can have up to 6 questions.



***In Situational Judgement, you will receive full marks if you choose the correct answer, and partial marks if you choose an option that is close to the correct answer***

You will have 26 minutes to answer all of the questions, but most students do not find Situational Judgement as time pressured as other UCAT subtests. It is, however, often very difficult to judge which is the 'correct' answer.

In Situational Judgement questions, you will receive full marks if you choose the correct answer, and partial marks if you choose an option that is close to the correct answer.

## WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT QUESTIONS?

There are three main types of Situational Judgement questions.





## Importance questions

Less than half of the questions in the Situational Judgement subtest will be composed of Importance questions. In these questions, you will be presented with a scenario, followed by a number of considerations. You will need to rate the relative importance of each consideration in the context of the scenario, from 'very important' to 'not important at all'.

### Example Question - Importance Question

Time limit per question - ~22 seconds

#### Passage:

A junior doctor, Brian, has just commenced work on a busy surgical ward. He shares his workload with another junior colleague, John. Brian has noticed that John is consistently late for work. This has been going on for the past fortnight. John being late has resulted in Brian taking on extra responsibilities on the ward to ensure that patients receive appropriate care.

How **important** is it to take into account are the following considerations for **Brian** when deciding how to respond to the situation?

#### Question:

That Brian and John do not know each other well and are yet to form a close working relationship

- A) Very important
- B) Important
- C) Of minor importance
- D) Not important at all

#### Answer: D

#### Solution:

This is not important at all. Brian will need to take action to ensure that patient care is not compromised, and also to ensure his own well-being, regardless of his relationship with John. Brian should express his concerns to John, question John on the reasons why he is late, and explain the impact of John's actions.



## Appropriateness questions

The commonest type of question in the Situational Judgement subtest is Appropriateness questions. Here you will be presented with a scenario and a series of actions. You will need to rate the appropriateness of each action from 'very appropriate' to 'very inappropriate'.

A smaller number of questions will provide an exact quote that a character may say based on the scenario, and ask you to rate the appropriateness of each statement.

### Example Question - Appropriateness Question

**Time limit per question - ~22 seconds**

#### Passage:

A dental student, George, has been contacted by his supervisor, Dr Jefferson, to arrange a mid-placement review. The purpose of the review is to assess George's learning portfolio. George has been on a placement at a busy dental clinic, and has not kept up to date with his supervised learning events. Furthermore, George has not completed any of the learning targets he had agreed upon with Dr Jefferson at the start of the rotation.

How **appropriate** are each of the following responses by **George** in this situation?

#### Question:

Stay back late after the placement has finished in order to complete the supervised learning events.

- A) A very appropriate thing to do
- B) Appropriate, but not ideal
- C) Inappropriate, but not awful
- D) A very inappropriate thing to do

#### Answer: B

#### Solution:

This is an appropriate response, as it does attempt to address the issue, but is not ideal. Staying back later to complete targets demonstrates dedication, but it is also an example of being unable to maintain work/life balance. Learning portfolios should be updated throughout the year, and staying late after placements is not a sustainable response.





## Most/least appropriateness questions

In this question type, you are also presented with a scenario. However, you are then given three possible actions or responses directly underneath the scenario. You will need to choose the most and least appropriate response for the given scenario, and ‘drag and drop’ these items accordingly.

### Example Question - Most/Least Appropriate Questions

**Time limit per question – ~22 seconds**

A medical student, Joanne, is interviewing Mr Jones, a patient with a chronic lung condition. Joanne has read in Mr Jones’ notes that he has stated that he has quit smoking, which is a major reason why he has been assessed as being suitable for home oxygen. Joanne is aware that only patients who have quit smoking are offered home oxygen, and that smoking on home oxygen is very dangerous. While conducting the interview, Joanne notices a pack of cigarettes in Mr Jones’ jacket pocket.

Choose **both** the **one most appropriate** action **and** the **one least appropriate** action that **Joanne** should take in response to this situation.

You will not receive any marks for this question unless you select **both** the most and least appropriate actions.

<b>Most Appropriate</b>	
<b>Least Appropriate</b>	

Inform the senior doctor immediately, as this may be risk to Mr. Jones’ health

Overlook the pocket of cigarettes, so as not to damage the relationship that Joanne has built with Mr. Jones

Ask Mr. Jones further questions to understand what she has seen, and to assess whether her suspicions regarding him smoking are correct

### Answer:

Most Appropriate: Statement 3

Least Appropriate: Statement 2

### Solution:

This question tests the candidate’s assessment of the situation, in particular understanding the threat to patient safety. The most important consideration in this question is that it would be very unsafe for Mr Jones to be on home oxygen if he is smoking. However, it is also important to establish the facts before making accusations and acting on any suspicions. Thus, the most appropriate course of action is for Joanne to directly discuss what she has seen with Mr Jones. This is preferable to informing the senior doctor straight away.

While it is important to maintain relationships with patients, it is inappropriate and potentially dangerous to overlook the packet of cigarettes. Patient safety is always the primary consideration.



## WHAT STRATEGIES CAN I USE TO ANSWER SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT QUESTIONS?

To effectively answer Situational Judgement questions, you will need a solid understanding of the principles governing medical professionalism. These include: honesty and integrity, compassionate and patient-centred care, effective teamwork, patient autonomy, confidentiality and a commitment to safety and ongoing improvement. A useful document to read is the General Medical Council's Good Medical Practice. There are a variety of strategies that can be used for Situational Judgement questions to arrive at the correct answer and maximise your score. These are covered in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.



# Strategies To Maximise Your UCAT Score

## WHAT STRATEGIES WILL BOOST MY UCAT SCORE?

There are a variety of questions within each of the five UCAT subtests. For each type of question, there are specific strategies that can be used to arrive at the answer quickly and accurately. Strategies should be learned, implemented and practiced so that by test day, they will feel ‘automatic’, or like second-nature.

There are some strategies that are effective for most UCAT questions. It is also important to learn and practice these strategies to maximise your score. These include:

- 
- ➔ Using the process of elimination
  - ➔ Strategic guessing
  - ➔ “Looking for shortcuts  
(for example, estimation and only solving what is necessary)”
  - ➔ Using keyboard shortcuts
  - ➔ Using the keyboard numberpad when operating the calculator
  - ➔ Flagging wisely and sparingly
- 

These strategies and many more are covered in detail in the MedEntry UCAT Courses.

## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO MAXIMISE MY UCAT SCORE?

It is also helpful to incorporate UCAT-style thinking in your everyday schoolwork and life. This will not only help boost your UCAT score, but will also increase your overall productiveness and academic performance. For example, you should:

- ➔ Practice speed reading
- ➔ Read widely and critically
- ➔ Practice using mental maths skills
- ➔ Develop stamina, concentration and focus
- ➔ Develop stress management techniques



# UCAT Scoring

## HOW IS UCAT SCORED?

The UCAT scoring process is complicated, and Pearson VUE uses complex statistical analysis to arrive at your UCAT score, based upon the answers you select. The scoring process is covered in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.

There are several myths relating to UCAT scores, which are outlined below:

UCAT scoring myth	Reality
It is possible to predict UCAT scores based on raw marks	UCAT scores are calculated using complex statistical processes. It is not possible to predict UCAT scores based on raw marks (the number of questions you answered correctly). The most accurate indication of your performance can be obtained after completing MedEntry UCAT practice exams, as MedEntry uses similar statistical programs to calculate your scores.
You need to answer all questions correctly to achieve a high score	UCAT is a very difficult, time-pressured test. The majority of students do not have sufficient time to answer every question. You can therefore obtain very high scores even if you do not answer every question correctly.
UCAT questions change depending on your response	Computerised Adaptive Testing is not utilised in UCAT. There are multiple 'versions' of UCAT that are used every year, but the content within each version is identical, and does not vary based on your responses.
You will be penalised for incorrect responses	There is no negative marking in UCAT. If you choose an incorrect response, you will receive a score of zero.

## WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY UCAT SCORE?

You will receive your UCAT score on the day you sit UCAT. You will be provided with your score report before leaving your UCAT testing centre. However, full statistics relating to the performance of other UCAT candidates will not be released until later in the year. You will not know exactly how your score compares until this time.


Note that your UCAT scores will be sent to the UCAT Consortium universities you have applied to in early November – you do not need to submit your own scores.

## WHAT WILL MY UCAT SCORE REPORT LOOK LIKE?

Below is an example UCAT Candidate Score Report. It shows an overall score of 3530, which was the highest worldwide UCAT score achieved last year (achieved by a MedEntry student).



*The highest UCAT score achieved last year was 3530 (achieved by a MedEntry student).*

	
<b>CANDIDATE SCORE REPORT</b>	
<b>UCAT SUBTEST SCORES</b>	
Verbal Reasoning	890
Decision Making	840
Quantitative Reasoning	900
Abstract Reasoning	900
Total Score	3530
Situational Judgement	Band 1

Scaled score for each cognitive subtest

Total scaled score

Situational Judgement band provided separately

Your Candidate Score Report will show a scaled score for each of the five subtests, which ranges from 300 to 900. You will also receive a total scaled score for the four cognitive subtests (Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning) that ranges from 1200 to 3600.

The Situational Judgement score is provided separately as it tests ‘non-cognitive’ attributes. Scores for the Situational Judgement subtest are expressed in one of four bands, with band 1 being the highest:

- **Band 1:** Those in Band 1 demonstrated an excellent level of performance, showing similar judgement in most cases to the panel of experts.
- **Band 2:** Those in Band 2 demonstrated a good, solid level of performance, showing appropriate judgement frequently, with many responses matching model answers.
- **Band 3:** Those in Band 3 demonstrated a modest level of performance, with appropriate judgement shown for some questions and substantial differences from ideal responses for others.
- **Band 4:** The performance of those in Band 4 was low, with judgement tending to differ substantially from ideal responses in many cases.

Some universities use the Situational Judgement subtest differently to the cognitive subtests. For example, most do not offer interviews to students in band 4. Others consider this subtest when you attend your interview.

## WHAT IS A GOOD UCAT SCORE?

The following chart shows how each percentile converted to overall cognitive scaled scores in last year’s UCAT:

Decile Rank	Final Scores	Actual percentile
1st	2150	10th
2nd	2270	20th
3rd	2360	30th
4th	2430	40th
5th	2500	50th
6th	2570	60th
7th	2640	70th
8th	2730	80th
9th	2850	90th



For example, if you achieved an overall scaled cognitive score in the range of 2650, you will have been in the 7th decile, or about the 70th percentile. This means you performed better than 70% of candidates, and 30% of candidates performed better than you.

Ultimately, UCAT scores are a comparison of your own performance against others sitting UCAT. This means that achieving a 'good score' means performing well in UCAT compared to others. Statistics on how this year's UCAT cohort performed will be available at the end of the UCAT testing cycle (with interim statistics available mid-cycle).

In general, a good score is above 650 in the cognitive subtests (a total cognitive subtest score of 2600). A high score is usually considered to be a score above 680 (a total cognitive subtest score of 2720). If you achieve such a score, it is recommended that you apply to universities that place significant emphasis on UCAT. A low UCAT score is usually considered to be below 610.

## WHAT UCAT SCORE DO I NEED TO GET INTO MEDICINE?



***A total cognitive score of at least 2600 is generally required for a standard medical place.***

The UCAT score you need to get into medicine depends on various factors, including the year that you sit UCAT, the university/course to which you are applying and other aspects of your application such as academic grades.

Most universities use UCAT alongside predicted or actual academic achievement to select students for interview. Some universities (such as the University of Bristol) rank applicants by UCAT score and a certain number are invited to interview. Usually a minimum UCAT cut-off score is not released, as it varies from year to year.

In general, a UCAT percentile of around 70-80 would be sufficient for entry into medicine at most universities. This would equate to total cognitive test scores of above 2600 (or average subtest scores of 650).

Situational Judgement scores are used by universities in various ways: some use it as a 'virtual' interview station, some eliminate students scoring in band 4, some issue 'points' depending on the band achieved, and some do not consider it at all.

Every MedEntry practise exam provides detailed feedback including estimated percentiles and scaled scores, so you can track your progress and see where you stand.

## HOW WILL UNIVERSITIES USE UCAT SCORES?

Universities use UCAT scores in different ways. For example, the University of Newcastle places significant emphasis on UCAT. This university selects candidates for interview based solely on UCAT scores (once academic thresholds have been met). “Last year, the UCAT cut-off score for interviews was 2730 but this can change year on year.”

Further information on how universities use UCAT scores is covered in part 4 of this handbook.



# How To Effectively Prepare For UCAT

Preparing for UCAT can feel overwhelming, especially if you are going into your final year of secondary school or are studying at university. How can you fit in preparation for such an important and difficult test into your already busy schedule? Do not despair! MedEntry has developed a plan to help you effectively and efficiently prepare for UCAT so you will be ready come UCAT test day.

## HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR UCAT?

Effective preparation for UCAT can be summarised in four key steps:



### U - Understand

To succeed in UCAT, you will need to **Understand** the following:

- How important UCAT is and how it is used in selection
- How the UCAT computer platform works and how to use it strategically to maximise your score
- Important details relating to each UCAT subtest, including structure, timing, format and types of question
- Effective strategies and skills for answering each type of question in each UCAT subtest

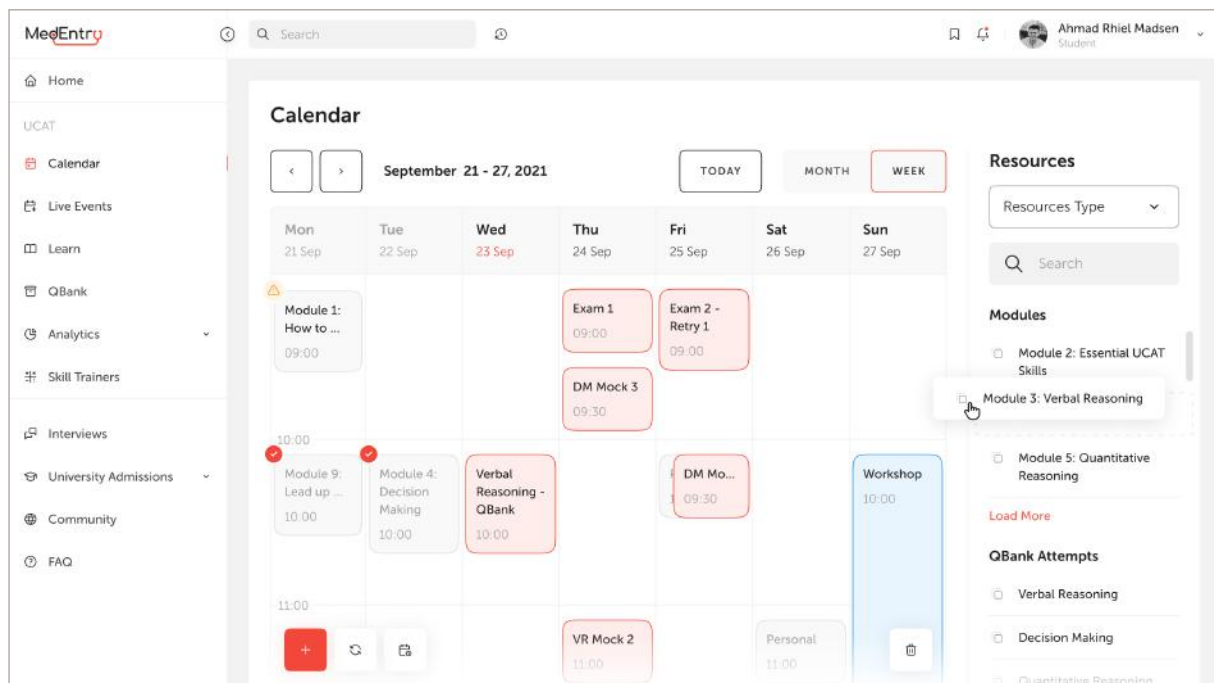
MedEntry makes this easy by providing a two-day workshop and comprehensive curriculum with video instruction, enabling you to have a detailed understanding of UCAT.

## C - Create

Every student is different, and some strategies that work very effectively for one student may not work for another. Therefore, you will need to **Create**:

- ➔ A UCAT study plan that takes into account your other academic and non-academic commitments
- ➔ A bank of strategies that work for you when approaching each type of question and UCAT overall

MedEntry provides an interactive study planner to allow you to easily plan and track your UCAT preparation.



Our comprehensive two-day workshop and detailed curriculum covers every effective UCAT strategy, with thousands of practice questions for you to apply them. By the end of MedEntry's program, you will be armed with a bank of strategies that work for you, so you will be ready to succeed come UCAT test day.

## A - Assess

It is important to prepare for UCAT efficiently, so that your UCAT preparation does not detract from your school study. The most time-efficient way to prepare for UCAT is to **Assess**:

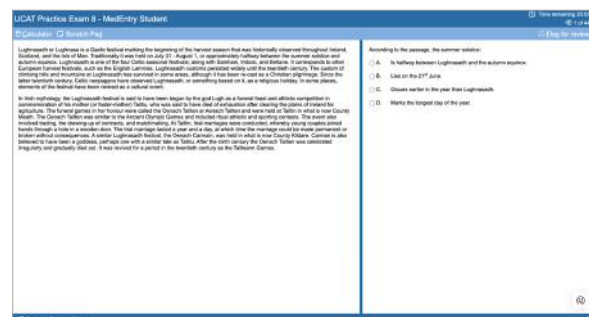
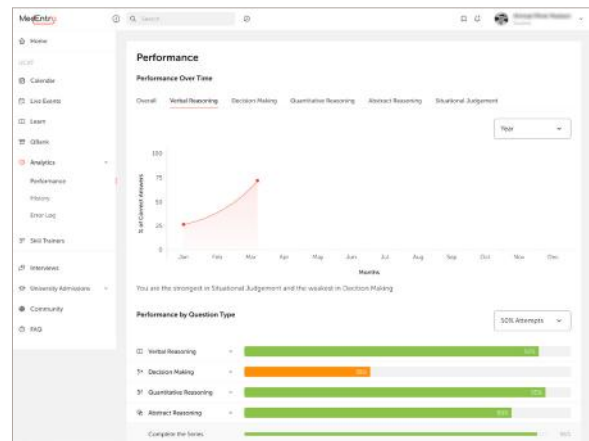
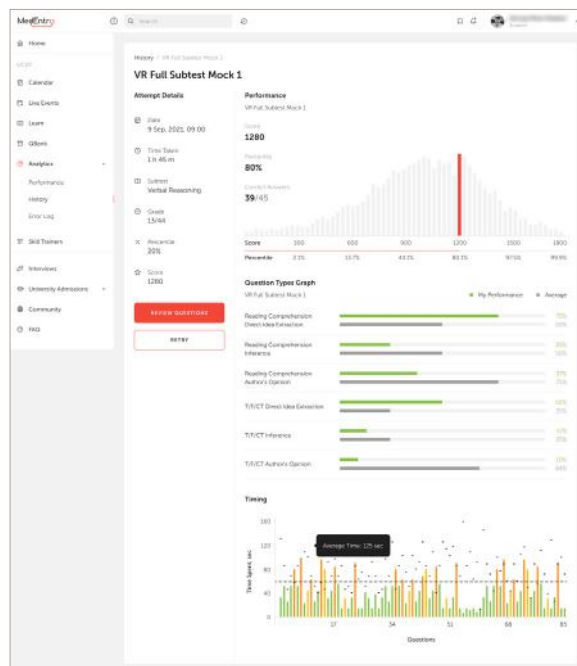
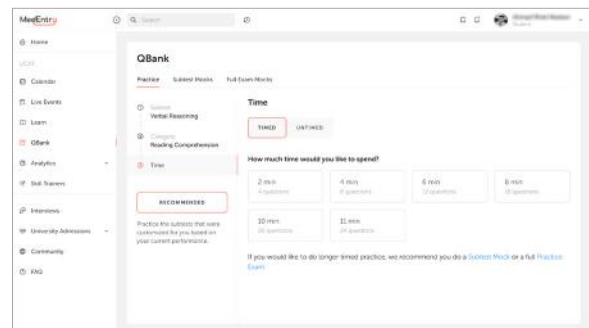
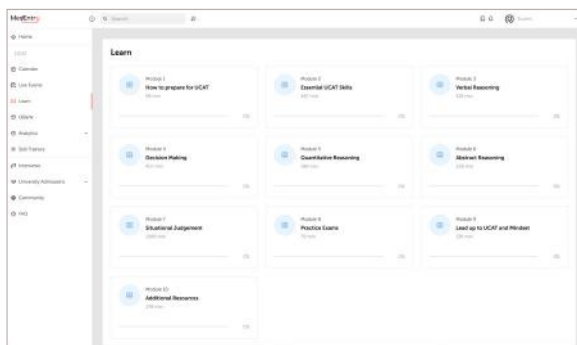
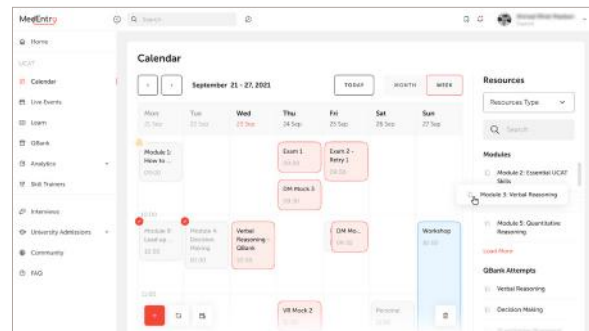
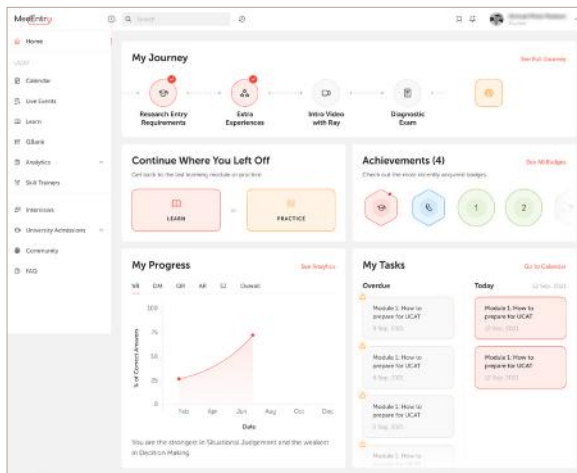
- 
- How you are performing overall in UCAT
- 
- How you are performing in each of the five UCAT subtests, and in each UCAT question type
- 
- What your strengths and weaknesses are
- 

You can then target your UCAT preparation to focus on your weakest subtests and question types.

MedEntry makes this easy with our Personalised Adaptive Learning (PAL) technology. PAL provides comprehensive, personalised feedback provided after each drill, subtest mock or Practice exam attempt, including:

- 
- Predicted UCAT percentiles and UCAT scores
- 
- A breakdown of your performance in each UCAT subtest and question type
- 
- Detailed feedback on timing, including the time spent on each question and how this compares to other students
- 
- Specific feedback on every question, with comprehensive solutions (including video solutions) and feedback on how other students have performed on that question
- 
- An ability to re-attempt incorrectly answered questions in each practice exam up to four times
- 
- Performance reports which analyse your performance and provide advice on where to direct your future study
-

With MedEntry, you can be sure your UCAT preparation is targeted, effective and time-efficient.







## T - Train

UCAT is like a marathon, and it requires training. As well as acquiring and practicing the strategies required to solve each question, it is also vital that you **Train** for UCAT. This involves developing the following skills in order to succeed:

---

➔ Concentration

---

➔ Focus

---

➔ Stamina

---

The best way to do this is via full length UCAT practice exams, completed under simulated conditions.

The most important way to simulate UCAT is to ensure you complete each practice exam under strict time conditions, with no breaks. It is also vital that you work with a computer platform which exactly replicates the live UCAT. Don't make the mistake of working with outdated or (even worse), paper-based UCAT questions!

MedEntry makes training for UCAT easy with 16 full-length UCAT exams, which **exactly** simulate the content and testing platform of the live UCAT. By the time UCAT test day arrives, it will feel like just another MedEntry practice exam!

In addition, MedEntry has a wealth of other important training resources such as our exclusive Skills Trainers (e.g Venn Diagram trainer, Mental Math trainer), drills, subtest mocks and more to optimise your UCAT skills.

## HOW MANY HOURS SHOULD I SPEND ON UCAT STUDY?

A common question that students ask is ‘how long should I spend on UCAT study?’

The amount of time you spend on UCAT preparation depends on your specific circumstances and extent of your desire to pursue medicine or dentistry. In general, MedEntry recommends setting aside about



*In general, MedEntry recommends setting aside about 5-10% of your study time for UCAT preparation*

5-10% of your study time for UCAT preparation. For example, if you study for about 25 hours per week, about 2.5 hours should be allocated for UCAT preparation.

However, it is not the number of hours which is important when it comes to UCAT preparation. It is **what** you do and **how** you do it that is important.

To prepare for UCAT in the most effective way, you should:

- ➔ Develop a bank of UCAT strategies that are effective for you by attending a MedEntry workshop and working through MedEntry's comprehensive guided curriculum
- ➔ Prioritise completion of full length UCAT Practice exams, completed under simulated conditions (particularly adhering to the time limits)
- ➔ Thoroughly review your UCAT exams, performance feedback and each question, and reflect on what you can do to improve in your performance next time
- ➔ Discuss difficult questions with a UCAT study group
- ➔ Focus your preparation on your weakest subtests and question types

## HOW CAN I BALANCE UCAT STUDY WITH OTHER COMMITMENTS?

The best way to balance your UCAT study with other academic and non-academic commitments is to create a UCAT study plan. You can do this easily with MedEntry's advanced, unique, interactive study planner. Schedule a little bit of UCAT study on a regular basis, for example once or twice per week.



*Schedule a little bit of UCAT practice on a regular basis*

An example study plan for one month could be:

March						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Verbal Reasoning Strategies & Practice	7	8	9 Decision Making Strategies & Practice
10	11	12	13 Quantitative Reasoning Strategies & Practice	14	15	16 Abstract Reasoning Strategies & Practice
17	18	19	20 Situational Judgement Strategies & Practice	21	22	23 Full-Length UCAT Practice Exam
24 Review of UCAT Practice Exam	25	26	27	28	29	30 Work on Weakest Subtest / Question Types
31						

You do not need to engage in UCAT practice every day, but regular practice over a period of time will help you develop the skills you need to succeed.

## WHAT ARE THE COMMON UCAT PREPARATION PITFALLS I SHOULD AVOID?

The UCAT is a skills-based test and, like learning to play a musical instrument, cannot be mastered in a short space of time. Unlike traditional school exams, which can often be rote-learned effectively, the UCAT assesses a students' information processing, critical thinking and situational awareness, among other skills. These take time to develop and apply, particularly in such a time-pressured exam. It is therefore important to start preparing for UCAT as soon as possible, and engage in regular preparation over a period of time.

### Not completing UCAT practice exams under timed conditions

This is a common pitfall. Many students are used to being able to complete school exams comfortably within the time limits. They feel extremely uncomfortable with the prospect of not being able to complete all UCAT questions. But the reality is, almost no one is able to answer every question in the live UCAT due to the intense time pressure. It is therefore important to strictly adhere to timed conditions when completing UCAT practice exams, so you develop important skills required to succeed, such as strategic guessing. Remember, practicing answering questions and practicing answering questions quickly are two very different things.



***It is important to strictly adhere to timed conditions when completing UCAT practice exams***

### Not thoroughly reviewing UCAT questions

Practice makes perfect, right? Well, yes, but only in part. The best way to improve is not simply to complete UCAT question after question after question, but also to thoroughly review and reflect on your attempts. What went right? What went wrong? How can you improve your performance next time, or avoid making the same error? Reviewing and reflecting is a very important part of the UCAT preparation process.

### Not working on your weakest UCAT subtests

It is tempting to work on your strengths, it is harder to work on your weaknesses. However, working on your weakest areas is by far the most effective and efficient way to prepare for UCAT. Early in your preparation, identify which UCAT subtests and types of questions you find most difficult, and work on them. MedEntry makes this easy with our Personalised Adaptive Learning technology, which identifies your weakest areas and provides curated UCAT preparation, just for you.



## Choosing the wrong UCAT preparation provider

Choosing the right UCAT preparation provider is one of the most important decisions you will make this year. Unfortunately, there are many UCAT providers which provide outdated questions, harmful advice, misleading information, or promise a lot and deliver very little. It is important to choose a provider with a track record of success, run by leading doctors and academics, and with hundreds of five star reviews: MedEntry!



*Choosing the right UCAT preparation provider is one of the most important decisions you will make this year*



# How To Optimise Your UCAT Performance

In the final weeks and days before UCAT, your focus should be on getting into top physical, emotional, psychological and mental condition for test day. UCAT is not just a test of your ability, it is also a test of your concentration, focus, stamina and stress management abilities.



*In the final weeks and days before UCAT, focus on getting into top physical, psychological and emotional condition*

This is not the time to cram! Instead, you should ensure you have everything you need for UCAT test day, revise your key strategies, and spend some time looking after yourself.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IN THE FINAL WEEKS BEFORE UCAT?

In the final weeks before you UCAT, ensure that you:

- ➔ Have organised everything you need for UCAT test day
- ➔ Focus on the areas that you are weakest
- ➔ Create a 'cheat sheet' of UCAT strategies that work for you
- ➔ Eat well, get sufficient sleep and manage stress

## WHAT SHOULD I DO THE DAY BEFORE UCAT?

This is definitely not the time to cram! Remember, UCAT is a skills rather than a knowledge-based test. UCAT skills need to be developed over time, and cramming on the day before UCAT is likely to be harmful rather than helpful.



*The night before UCAT, do something you enjoy and avoid the temptation to cram*

We suggest that you take the day off. Do something that you enjoy, and something that is going to take your mind off the test – exercise, have dinner with friends, watch a movie.



If you wish, you could review your UCAT ‘cheat sheet’, focussing on how well prepared you are and how ready you are for UCAT test day.

Organise everything you need for the test, including:

- 
- ➔ Valid identification (usually a passport or driver’s licence)

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  - ➔ Your Pearson VUE confirmation email

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  - ➔ A snack (such as a muesli bar or piece of fruit) if necessary, to eat before you go into the testing venue

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  - ➔ Reading glasses (if required)
- 

Know how you are going to get to the venue and plan your route to avoid last minute stress. Ensure you get a good night’s sleep to recharge your brain for UCAT test day.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO ON THE DAY OF UCAT?

Ensure you eat a healthy meal with protein and complex carbohydrates to keep you sustained. Some examples of nutritious meals are porridge with fruit, eggs on wholegrain toast or a wholegrain tuna sandwich. Avoid too much caffeine, as it will make you want to use the bathroom (and the timer will keep ticking if you have to go to the toilet during UCAT!).

If you are feeling stressed, use techniques to manage your stress and boost confidence, such as meditation and positive self-talk. Psychological techniques to optimise performance and manage stress are discussed in detail in MedEntry UCAT Courses.

Leave home with a support person if possible (such as a parent, sibling or friend), aiming to arrive about 30 minutes before your scheduled start time.

Finally, show ‘em what you’re made of! If you have undergone MedEntry’s preparation program, you should feel confident that you are ready to ace UCAT. Good luck from all of the MedEntry team!



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***If you have undergone MedEntry’s program, you should feel confident that you are ready to ace UCAT!***

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# Get a taste for UCAT and see where you stand with MedEntry's free Diagnostic mock!





# 3

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## **The Medical Interview**



# Importance of Medical Interviews

## WHY ARE INTERVIEWS USED TO SELECT STUDENTS FOR ENTRY INTO MEDICINE?

Medical interviews form one of three major criteria used by most universities to select students into medicine (the other two being UCAT/BMAT and academic grades). Aside from personal statements, medical interviews are the only way that universities can assess your non-academic (non-cognitive) personal qualities.

Interviews are a unique opportunity to showcase your personality, skills and passion for studying medicine.

## HOW IMPORTANT ARE MEDICAL INTERVIEWS?

Medical interviews are a critical, yet often underestimated part of the medical admissions process. At most universities, they are the sole criterion used to select students for a medical place, once academic thresholds have been met.

Be under no illusions – medical interviews are vitally important!



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***Medical interviews are a critical, yet underestimated part of the medical admissions process***

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## DO I NEED TO PREPARE FOR MY MEDICAL INTERVIEW?

Yes! It is vitally important that you prepare for your interview.

Medical school aspirants often overlook interviews, as they assume that interview skills are inherent: you either have them or you do not. Others believe the myth that you should not prepare for interviews. Still others assume that the interview is just a ‘chat’, and the questions will be straightforward. This could not be further from the truth.

Interviews are challenging and stressful. You will need to engage face to face with interviewers and provide interesting, eloquent and insightful answers.

However, there are specific, proven and reliable strategies that you can use to boost your performance significantly. Having a solid understanding of interview questions and technique will give you an enormous advantage over others vying for a medical school place.

Although you may be an ideal medical school candidate, unless you can present your skills and attributes effectively in an interview situation, you will not gain admission to your dream course. It is therefore vital that you do not try to ‘wing’ your interview.

Preparing for your interview will ensure you come across as confident, calm, genuine and motivated, rather than nervous or panicked.



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*Preparation will ensure you come across as confident, calm, genuine and motivated, rather than nervous or panicked*

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## WHY ARE MEDICAL INTERVIEWS DIFFICULT?

There are a number of reasons why medical interviews are difficult. You will be required to think in novel ways, under time pressure and may be faced with complex scenarios that you have not considered before. Many people find interview situations stressful, particularly if you understand how important they are to the admissions process. Furthermore, even though you may have a breadth of valuable life experiences and possess the qualities that the interviewers are looking for, it can be difficult to convey these in an interview situation.

If you want to make a good impression and give yourself the best chance of success, you must become familiar with the format and types of questions that are likely to arise, and understand how to best present yourself.



# Interview Offers

## WHAT DETERMINES WHETHER OR NOT I WILL RECEIVE AN INTERVIEW OFFER FOR MEDICINE?



*Once interviews have taken place, most university offers are based solely on interview performance*

Most universities assess candidates' applications and provide a numerical score using various systems. Two main parts of the application are considered in selecting candidates for interview:

- Academic grades: GCSE Score + predicted or achieved A-levels
- UCAT/BMAT, with or without consideration of a personal statement

Universities then invite the top scoring students for an interview. The emphasis universities place on these criteria depends on the particular university.

## WHEN ARE INTERVIEW OFFERS FOR MEDICINE RELEASED?

The interview offer release date varies depending on the university. Some universities begin sending out offers from November. Some continue inviting candidates to interview until all places have been filled, for example, at Birmingham University.

## HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE RECEIVED AN INTERVIEW OFFER FOR MEDICINE?

If you have received an interview offer for medicine, you will be contacted by the university directly or you will receive your interview decision in Track on UCAS.

## HOW ARE FINAL MEDICAL SCHOOL PLACES SELECTED?

Most universities no longer consider academic grades or scores in UCAT/BMAT once your interview has taken place. Interview alone is used to offer medical school places to the top performing candidates.

At some universities, borderline candidates are assessed using UCAT/BMAT and personal statements.

# Timing of Medical Interviews

## WHEN DO MEDICAL INTERVIEWS TAKE PLACE?

Medical interviews take place at various times depending on the particular university and course. Most interviews take place between November and March each year. You should keep this in mind when planning holidays, as universities will require you to attend the interview in person.

## IF I RECEIVE MULTIPLE INTERVIEW OFFERS, SHOULD I ATTEND THEM ALL?

MedEntry strongly suggests that you attend all interviews. This is because there is always an element of subjectivity when it comes to interviews. Attending all interviews will maximise your chances of obtaining a place at medical school.



# Structure and Types of Medical Interview

## WHAT TYPES OF MEDICAL INTERVIEW ARE THERE?

There are broadly three types of interview used to select students for entry into medicine and dentistry:

MMI (MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEW)	STRUCTURED PANEL INTERVIEW	SEMI-STRUCTURED PANEL INTERVIEW
candidates rotate through various themed 'stations', each addressing a particular topic presented as a scenario	traditional style of interview, where all candidates are asked the same or similar questions	traditional style of interview, where interviewers do not have to adhere tightly to a 'script', and can ask follow up questions

MMIs are the commonest type of interview.

## WHAT TYPES OF MEDICAL INTERVIEW ARE USED AT EACH UNIVERSITY?

MMIs are used at most universities. Some universities use a structured panel interview. Semi-structured panel interviews are rare.

## WHAT KINDS OF MEDICAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS CAN I EXPECT?

Each medical school varies in the types of questions that are posed to candidates. No two medical interviews are the same. It is therefore important to know the types of questions that are likely to be asked at each university.



*Each medical school varies in the types of questions posed to candidates*

## WHO CONDUCTS MEDICAL INTERVIEWS? WHAT IS THEIR BACKGROUND?

The background of the interviewers depends on the particular university. However, interview panels are generally composed of:

- Academic staff from the medical faculty
- Medical professionals
- Medical program students or graduates
- Laypeople from the wider community

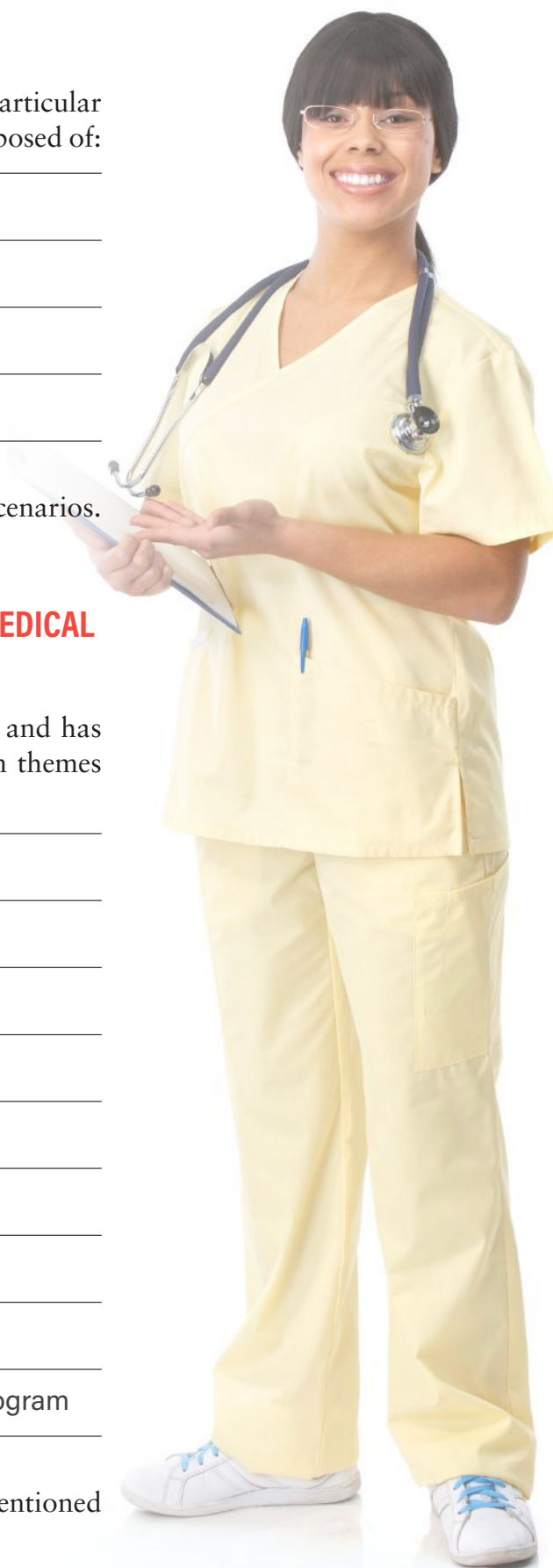
In addition, actors are often used to role play interview scenarios.

## WHAT ARE THE COMMON THEMES THAT ARISE IN MEDICAL INTERVIEWS?

Each university differs in the types of questions asked, and has a different emphasis on various themes. Some common themes that arise include:

- Motivation to study medicine
- Current issues in health
- Recent news from the NHS
- Ethics
- Empathy
- Critical thinking
- Teamwork and leadership skills
- Self-awareness
- Understanding of the university and medical program

Universities will sometimes ask you to discuss matters mentioned in your personal statement during interviews.



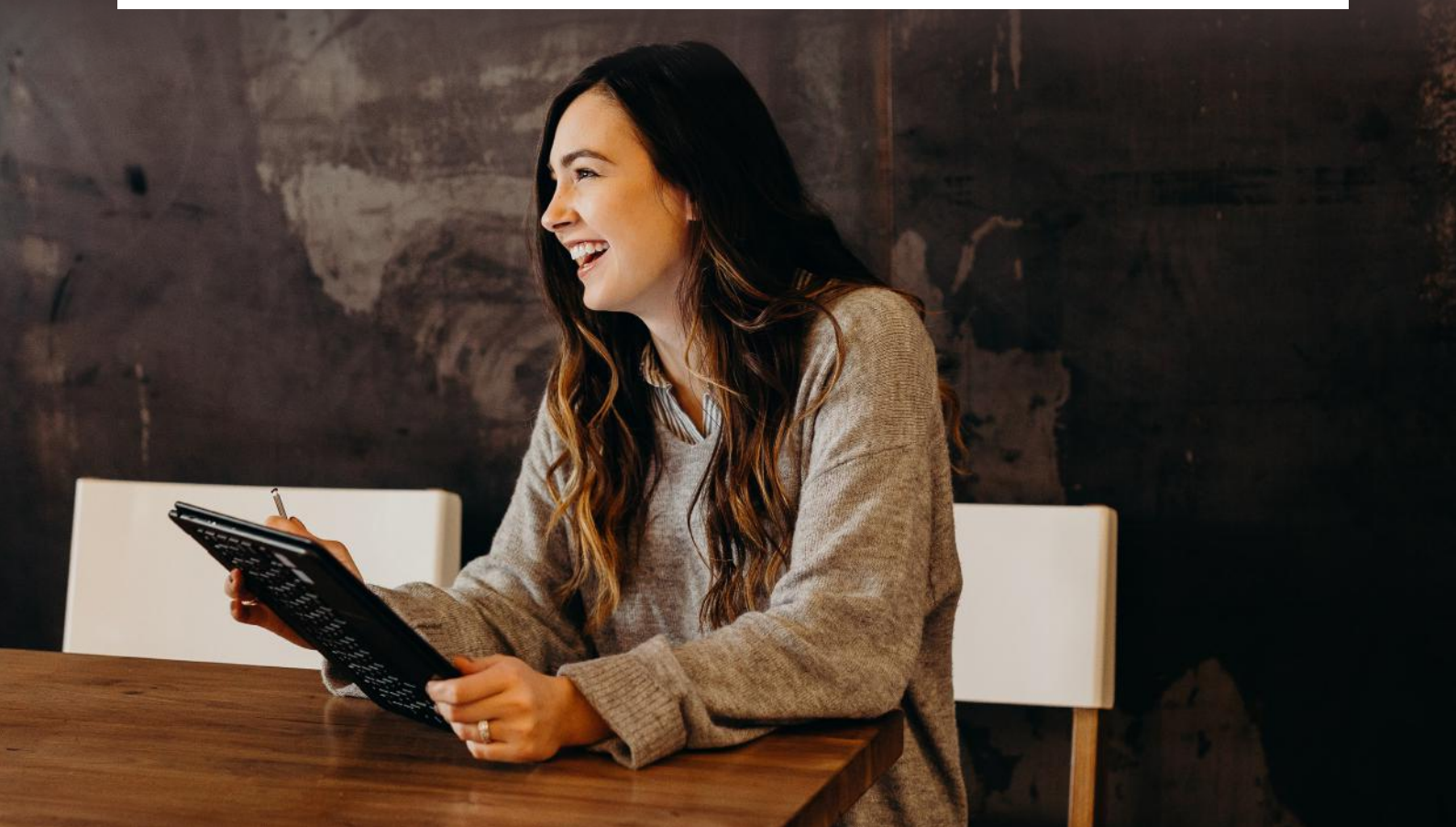
## WHAT TYPES OF QUESTIONS WILL COME UP IN MY MEDICAL INTERVIEW?

Each university varies in the types of questions they pose to candidates. Some questions involve hypothetical scenarios. There are hundreds of potential interview questions that may arise.

Some sample questions are provided below:

- 
- ➔ Why do you want to study medicine? Why not another profession that involves caring for others?
- 
- ➔ Describe a setback or disappointment that occurred in your life. How did you cope?
- 
- ➔ Tell us about a time when you worked in a team and things did not go well. What did you learn from the experience?
- 
- ➔ What volunteer work have you engaged in?
- 
- ➔ If you were Health Minister, how would you attract doctors to work in rural areas?
- 
- ➔ A patient, who is a Jehovah's witness, urgently needs a blood transfusion to save their life after an accident. Their beliefs prevent them from agreeing to a blood transfusion. What would you do?
- 

Role plays are also often used to assess candidates.





## WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED TO ASSESS MEDICAL INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE?

In general, medical interviews are designed to assess qualities considered important in both the study and practise of medicine.

Each university differs in their marking criteria for medical interviews.

However, common assessment criteria use the NHS values:

- Compassion
- Commitment to Quality of Care
- Respect and Dignity
- Everybody Counts
- Improving Lives
- Working Together for Patients

The following criteria are also used:

- Communication skills
- Critical thinking
- Decision making
- Social responsibility
- Empathy
- Moral and ethical reasoning
- Self-awareness
- Maturity
- Awareness of health / NHS issues
- Teamwork and leadership
- Quality of motivation to study medicine



## Example question and marking criteria

### Activity:

Consider the question, 'Why do you want to be a doctor?'

Try to speak for at least two minutes about this topic.

Once you have completed this activity, read on to view examples of outstanding and unsatisfactory answers, and an example of a marking sheet relating to this question.

### Example of an outstanding answer:

There are many factors that have attracted me towards becoming a medical practitioner. At a young age, I had to come to terms with the harsh unpredictability of life with the passing of my grandmother. The sudden death that could have been prevented with adequate health care services marked a crucial turning point in my life. Since then, striving to assist others and providing necessary lifelong services to disadvantaged people of Australia in a skilful and holistic manner has been an aspiration of mine. Furthermore, I have always had an inquisitive mind about the functioning of the human body and its applications in the care of illnesses fascinates me. Having a keen interest in research, I would like to work in a profession of continuous learning. Through my work experience at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, I was able to watch the dedication, leadership and teamwork surgeons utilise while dealing with patients in trauma and emergency units. This further inspired me to pursue medicine as a career.



Personal, engaging and genuine story



Altruistic mindset, focussing on how candidate can help others



Work experience shows motivation and understanding of the profession

### Example of an unsatisfactory answer:

I would like to be a doctor because I want to help people, and I am interested in science. I was first inspired to study medicine from watching Grey's Anatomy when I was younger. My parents are both doctors and they also encouraged me to pursue the career. I like the idea of specialising in the field of Paediatrics, and the job security also appeals to me.



Clichéd answer, which is too brief



Mentioning parents suggests motivation is external, mentioning Grey's Anatomy suggests unrealistic understanding of the profession



Focuses on why medicine is beneficial for candidate rather than what candidate can do for community



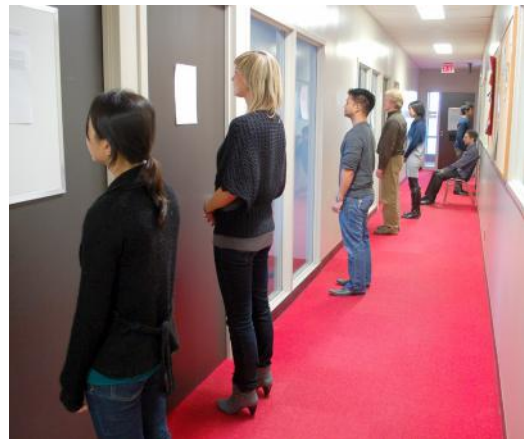
**Feedback:**  
**Example marking criteria**

Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Outstanding answer
Somewhat apathetic attitude towards a career in medicine; little evidence of sense of service to care for others	Generally displays interest and eagerness for a career in medicine; displays some sense of service to care for others	Displays genuine enthusiasm for a career in medicine with a very strong sense of service to care for others
Very little or reluctant participation in work experience or volunteer activities	Has participated in work experience or volunteer activities, or displays a willingness to do so	Actively participates in a wide range of work experience and volunteer work
Does not have a realistic view of medicine as a career	Has a generally realistic understanding of medicine as a career	Has a realistic understanding of medicine as a career

# Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

## WHAT IS AN MMI (MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEW)?

An MMI or Multiple Mini Interview is a particular type of interview used at most universities to select students for entry into medicine. It involves a series of 'mini interviews' conducted in separate rooms, booths or stations. Each station has a specific theme, and there are usually 6-8 stations which are each separately timed.



In a typical station, the applicant receives a written scenario or excerpt, and then a series of pre-determined questions are posed. The number of questions asked and the duration of each 'station' varies between universities.

## Why are MMIs used?



***MMIs are used at most universities to select students for entry into medicine***

MMIs are considered a fairer and more reliable way to assess candidates. MMIs involve more interviewers, therefore potentially minimising bias. They give the university a broader, more holistic evaluation of your non-academic qualities.

## What makes MMIs difficult?

MMIs can be challenging. As well as having to present interesting, insightful, concise and cohesive responses to questions, you will need to manage time, remain composed and establish rapport with the interviewers quickly.

## What types of medical interview questions and scenarios arise in MMIs?

Most MMIs are mini panel interviews covering a specific theme. Students may be provided with a written prompt, and then interviewers pose pre-determined questions. You may be given a hypothetical situation, excerpt from a research paper or other passage to analyse or debate.

Some stations may involve other tasks, such as evaluating videos, acting as a doctor to explain something to a patient, or completing a practical task. Some MMI stations test your reasoning, problem solving skills, values and mathematical abilities.



# Preparing for Medical Interviews

## How should I prepare for my medical interview?

Just like UCAT, there is an effective and systematic way you can prepare for medical school interviews. To best prepare for your interview, you should follow these three steps:



### Step 1: Understand your interview

You need to have a good understanding of the specific interview(s) for which you have received an offer. This involves understanding the types of questions that are likely to arise, and what qualities and skills the interviewers are looking for.

### Step 2: Develop solid interview technique

It is important to understand how to best present yourself during the interview. This includes:

- Your manner (including voice, body language, eye contact, confidence, passion)
- The content of your answer (including level of insight, length, clarity, use of interesting anecdotes/examples)

You should also develop an understanding of:

- Current issues in the NHS
- The particular university's course



### Step 3: Practice and seek feedback

It is important to practice the specific questions that will arise in each university's interview. It is also important to practice answering questions within time limits, particularly for MMIs. You should seek expert feedback on your performance and take steps to improve.

It is also extremely valuable to act as an interviewer yourself, and listen to other people answering the same question. This will give you an invaluable insight into what makes an outstanding answer, and poor answer traps to avoid.

MedEntry provides all students with an Interview Guide, which covers interview strategies and common questions that arise. Students also have the opportunity to enrol in Medical Interview Training sessions which cover all of the three preparation steps. The sessions provide invaluable training and practice that will not only be useful for medical school interviews, but for all interviews you will face in your future career.



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***It is important to seek expert feedback on your interview responses and technique, and take steps to improve***

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With the right preparation, interviews are a wonderful opportunity to showcase your unique life experiences, achievements and skills, giving you a significant advantage over other candidates.

### Why do some universities say I should not prepare for my interview?

Just like with UCAT, there is a common misconception that you should not prepare for interviews, or that you do not need to prepare for interviews. Some people may feel that preparing for your interview will mean that your responses are not natural and authentic.

However, preparation does not mean you should memorise your answers word for word – in fact, this is a terrible strategy. Preparation means knowing the types of questions, knowing how best to present yourself and understanding the features of an excellent response. Quality preparation will allow you to formulate genuine, interesting and effective answers. In fact, many universities coach their own graduates for job interviews!

It is essential that you prepare for your medical interview to give you the best chance of securing a place in medical school.







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**University Admissions**

### Important Notes:

- The information is accurate at the time of printing. For the latest information, you are advised to download the latest electronic version available at: <https://www.medentry.co.uk/resources/free-resources#ucat-handbook>
- Please note that universities change their entry requirements frequently, so it is best to check the relevant university website for up-to-date information.

## HOW UCAT IS USED

University	UCAS Course Code	How UCAT is used
University of Aberdeen	A100 A201	UCAT scores considered alongside actual and predicted academic achievement for interviews. SJT is not scored but may be used in offer making if there are candidates of similar scores.
Anglia Ruskin University	A100	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once academic threshold met. If in SJT Band 4, will not be invited to interview.
Aston University	A100	Consider UCAT alongside other required qualifications.
University of Birmingham	A100 A101 A200	Separate candidates into UCAT deciles and award a score. Award interviews by: 45% academic (GCSE) + 30% UCAT + 25% contextual. SJT is used at the interview stage.
University of Bristol	A100 A108 A206 A208 D108	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once academic threshold met.
Brunel University London	A100	Applicants are invited to interviews based on their UCAT score. Applicants scoring in Band 4 of the SJT will be rejected.
Cardiff University	A100* A200	UCAT is used as part of the selection process, along with personal statement and academic grades.
University of Chester	A101	UCAT threshold needs to be met to be considered for an interview.
University of Dundee	A100 A104 A200	Award interviews based on UCAT + academic ability.
University of East Anglia	A100 A104	After successful primary screening, interview offers are based entirely on UCAT scores. After interviews, offers are based on a combination of SJT, UCAT and interview performance.
Edge Hill University	A100 A110	Once the minimum academic grade is met, interview offers are made entirely on UCAT scores. Candidates in SJT band 4 will not be invited to interview. Offers are made on a combination of UCAT score and interview performance.

University	UCAS Course Code	How UCAT is used
University of Edinburgh	A100	Separate candidates into UCAT deciles and award a score. Also score SJT. Use this along with academic ability to award invitation to Assessment Day. If in SJT Band 4, will not be invited to interview.
University of Exeter	A100*	Use UCAT overall score and academic profiles to award interviews.
University of Glasgow	A100 A200	Interviews are allocated according to UCAT score (once minimum academic requirements and satisfactory personal statement and reference are met). The SJT subtest is not taken into account.
Hull York	A100 A101	Interviews are awarded based on UCAT Cognitive Subtests (40 points) + SJT (15 points) + GCSE results (30 points) + Contextual data (15 points). Candidates in SJT Band 4 will not be invited to interview.
Keele University	A100* A104*	Academic scores are used to invite candidates to interview. UCAT is used in borderline cases and as a cut off score (candidates with UCAT scores less than the second decile or SJT Band 4 are excluded).
Kent	A100	UCAT threshold is used in inviting candidates to interview.
King's College London	A100 A101 A102 A202 A205 A206	Overall UCAT score given more consideration than individual subtest scores. SJT also taken into account. All entry requirements considered for awarding interviews.
University of Leicester	A100 A199	Interviews awarded by 50% UCAT + 50% academic ability. If in SJT Band 4, will not be invited to interview.
University of Liverpool	A100* A200	Candidates are ranked for interview using a combination of UCAT and GCSEs. Candidates in SJT band 4 will not be invited to interview.
University of Manchester	A104 A106 A204 A206	If UCAT is in approximately top 1/3 of results nationally and in Bands 1 or 2 in SJT, will be invited to interview (once academic threshold met). Other candidates may be invited as part of a holistic assessment well based on all information available. If in SJT Band 4, will not be expected to be invited to interview.
University of Newcastle	A100 A101 A206	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once academic threshold met. If in SJT Band 4, will not be invited to interview.

University	UCAS Course Code	How UCAT is used
University of Nottingham	A100 A10L A108 A18L	Each cognitive subset and SJT is scored, with more value placed on Verbal Reasoning. UCAT + GCSE is used to invite candidates for interview. Candidates in SJT band 4 will not be invited to interview.
Plymouth University	A100* A206*	Interviews are awarded based on UCAT and academic ability.
Queen Mary, University of London	A100 A101 A110 A200	Interviews awarded based 50% on UCAT and 50% on academic ability. Will not be considered for interview if UCAT score is below the third decile.
Queen's University Belfast	A100 A200*	UCAT and GCSE grades are used to rank for interviews. SJT will not be considered except for borderline applicants.
University of Sheffield	A100 A101 A200	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once UCAT and academic threshold met. The SJT considered for applicants who attend an interview.
University of Southampton	A100 A101 A102	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once academic threshold met. SJT is not considered.
University of St Andrews	A100 A990	Interviews are allocated according to UCAT score (once minimum academic requirements and satisfactory personal statement and reference are met). The SJT is used in interview process.
St George's, University of London	A100	Interviews are awarded based solely on UCAT once academic threshold met. Candidates are required to score 500 or above in each section. Overall UCAT score required is calculated each year. The SJT is not considered.
University of Sunderland	A100	Scores must be within top 8 deciles of the cohort and SJT must be within bands 1-3. UCAT is used along with Roles and Responsibility and academic requirements for invitation to interview.
University of Surrey	A101	Applicants are invited to interviews based on their UCAT score.
University of Warwick	A101	First round uses verbal reasoning, those with lower than national cohort mean are rejected. Those with above this mean have points awarded for their total UCAT score.
University of Worcester	A101	If applicants pass UCAT to a requisite level they will be asked to perform in the Casper situational judgement test as the next step in the admissions process.

\* Alternative requirements may apply to certain groups of students – see the university website for details.



## HOW BMAT IS USED

University	How BMAT is used
Oxford	Your chances of being short-listed rest on a number of factors, although we do rely heavily on BMAT scores and GCSE performance (where available) during short-listing. You should bear in mind that as we short-list the same number of applicants every year, and we use two variables (which carry the same weight), there is no actual BMAT cut-off. How well you need to do in BMAT will be entirely dependent on how well every other applicant does, and how well you have done in GCSEs (if you have taken them). A slightly weaker performance at GCSE may be compensated for by a very good BMAT score, and vice-versa. However, to offer a rough guide, we would suggest that the typical average applicant should be working towards a 6 (a 7 is still fairly rare) in sections 1 or 2; do note that sections 1 and 2 receive greater weighting (40% each) than section 3 (20%).
Cambridge	Admissions Tutors use BMAT results in conjunction with other elements of students' applications to decide which candidates will be invited to interview, and to help with deciding who should be offered places in the course. Students who achieve higher BMAT results are more likely to be invited to interview but there is not a 'pass' mark for the BMAT at Cambridge.
UCL	BMAT scores used alongside UCAS application. No cut-off but high scores in each section will strengthen an application; Section 3 essay used as discussion in interview.
Imperial	BMAT cut-off scores are calculated each year, as a result of ranked candidate BMAT scores versus number of expected interview sessions. As a result, the absolute BMAT cut-off changes each year. However, the BMAT cut-off scores from previous admissions cycles may be used as a guide. For last year's entry, the minimum scores required were: a score of 4.1 in section 1; a score of 4.2 in section 2; a score of 2.5 and grade C in section 3.
Brighton and Sussex	BSMS scores the BMAT out of 28 (9 marks for Section 1, 9 for Section 2 and 5 marks for each element of Section 3) we then rank all applicants according to their total score out of 28 and work down the rankings to fill our interview places. The cut off score will vary each year.
Leeds	We have decided on a method similar to our previous use of UCAT using the total score offered by each candidate which will be compared with all the other applicants to Leeds scores. Those in the top 20% will receive the full mark available for this part of their application and those in the bottom 20% will receive the lowest mark available for this part of their application. From this you can see that we do not use a pre-determined cut-off threshold. The BMAT total score will be calculated from a sum of the scores achieved in section 1, 2 and 3 although section 3 will have half the weighting of the other sections as it will be revisited during the interview stage of the selection process.
Lancaster	Calculates the total BMAT score by combining the individual scores for Sections 1, 2 and 3. Section 1 is scored out of 9; Section 2 is scored out of 9; and Section 3 is scored out of 5 (for quality of content). We do not use the quality of English score (A-E).



## HOW PERSONAL STATEMENT IS USED

University of Aberdeen Medical School	Personal statement is reviewed prior to interview for evidence of preparation for medicine. The personal statement is assessed at interview.
Anglia Ruskin University School of Medicine	Personal statement not directly used in the selection process, although parts should be prepared to discuss at interview.
Aston University Medical School	For last year's entry, personal statements were read in conjunction with the reference but were not scored. However, personal statements may have been used to differentiate between borderline candidates.
University of Birmingham School of Medicine	Personal statement is not scored. It is expected that the statement provides evidence of commitment to study medicine.
Brighton and Sussex Medical School	The personal statement is not used in any part of the selection process.
University of Bristol Medical School	Personal statement is not assessed, but may be used to differentiate between applicants who have achieved the same UCAT score.
University of Buckingham Medical School	The medical school may consider all the information provided within a candidate's application including academic qualifications, personal statement and references before a final decision is made to interview or offer a place on the course.
University of Cambridge School of Clinical Medicine	Personal statement is reviewed prior to interview but not scored.
Cardiff University School of Medicine	Personal statements and references are used once the academic requirements have been met to decide on interview invitations.
University of Dundee School of Medicine	The personal statement is used at the interview stage.
Edge Hill University Medical School	Personal statement only used to distinguish between borderline applicants.
University of East Anglia, Norwich Medical School	Personal statement is used in the primary screening to ensure that it is 'satisfactory'.
University of Edinburgh Medical School	Personal statement is used as an important part of the assessment day.
University of Exeter Medical School	The personal statement is evaluated for details regarding mitigating circumstances. The statement is not ranked or scored as part of the selection process.
University of Glasgow School of Medicine	Reviewed prior to interview but not scored.
Hull York Medical School	The personal statement is screened before offer but not scored. All available information, including the personal statement, may be used when assessing applicants who are borderline at selection for offer or selection for interview. At interview the personal statement may also be used to check claims made on your personal statement.

Imperial College London School of Medicine	Last year, personal statement was used as evidence of motivation to study medicine, understanding of medicine as a career, community activities, leadership qualities, ability to work in a team and general interests.
Keele University School of Medicine	Personal statement is used in one of the interview stations. A separate Roles and Responsibilities (R+R) form is also used in selecting students to interview.
Kent and Medway Medical School	Not used as a primary method for selecting applicants for interview, although may be used to differentiate applicants who are holding the same qualifications and have the same UCAT. During the multiple mini-interview process the personal statement may form the basis of a discussion at one of the stations.
King's College London School of Medical Education	Personal statements are used as part of the interview shortlisting process. They are not able to consider applicants whose personal statements are not focused on Medicine.
Lancaster University Medical School	Not assessed but may be used as part of the interview.
University of Leeds Medical School	Not formally scored, but it is essential that applicants take this opportunity to demonstrate their motivation and enthusiasm to study.
University of Leicester Medical School	Not routinely read although used in borderline cases and the Access to Medicine Qualification.
Lincoln Medical School (University of Nottingham Lincoln Pathway)	The personal statement is read but not scored.
University of Liverpool School of Medicine	Personal statement will not be used in making the decision to invite to interview but will be assessed at interview.
University of Manchester School of Medicine	Personal statement not normally used. An electronic non-academic information form will be sent to candidates ahead of the interview.
Newcastle University Medical School	Not used prior or at interview, read prior to offers being made but is not scored.
University of Nottingham School of Medicine	The personal statement and reference are assessed after interview before issuing offers. The personal statement is not scored.
University of Oxford Medical School	Considered by admissions tutors alongside all other aspects of the application. Candidates may choose to explain how they meet the selection criteria, which encompass academic fit and personal characteristics that relate to suitability for medicine.
Plymouth University Peninsula Medical School	Not scored.
Queen Mary University, Barts and The London School of Medicine	The personal statement is assessed as part of the shortlisting process but is not scored. It is used in the interview process for panelists to ask more detailed questions regarding work experience.

Queen's University Belfast, Medical School	Personal statements are not scored as part of the selection process. There should be evidence of commitment and motivation in the personal statement and it should state explicitly that Medicine is their career choice.
University of Sheffield Medical School	Not scored. Interest in medicine, work experience/volunteering and outside interests are all explored at interview.
University of Southampton Faculty of Medicine	Selectors use the personal statement to inform interview questions related to the non-academic criteria if the applicant is invited to attend a Selection Day.
University of St Andrews Medical School	Not scored but health-related work experience required for applicant to be considered for interview.
St George's, University of London	Not scored.
University of Sunderland School of Medicine	Not assessed. Applicants are required to complete a post-application roles and responsibilities form.
University College London Medical School	Used as part of the criteria in inviting candidates to interview.
University of Central Lancashire Medical School	The personal statement, academic reference and transferable skills statement are used to shortlist applicants for interview.



5

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**What Makes MedEntry  
Different?**

# Quality Education That Delivers Results

There are many companies offering UCAT preparation, and it can be difficult to decide which organisation to trust. However, choosing the right UCAT preparation organisation is an important decision and can determine your success in entering medicine.



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***Choosing the right UCAT preparation provider can be very important in determining your success***

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Over the last two decades, MedEntry has been the trusted medical entry preparation provider, chosen by the best prospective medical students. MedEntry has become synonymous with 'Medical Entry'.

Here's why:

## **Our Unrivalled Expertise**

MedEntry is the only organisation run by specialist, practicing doctors and academics, with expertise in test development, measurement and analysis. We are the only organisation that has been helping students enter medicine for two decades, and we have helped over 20,000 students to become doctors across the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. Over that time, we have developed unrivalled expertise regarding entry into medicine.

## **Our Obsession with Quality**

We understand how important quality UCAT and interview preparation is for our students, having been through the process ourselves. Our focus is therefore on providing the highest quality and most comprehensive program available.

Working with our IT engineers, we have developed the most advanced, comprehensive and personalised online UCAT platform available. It exactly replicates the live UCAT, provides comprehensive, personalised feedback, offers innovative, exclusive services, and even makes preparing for the UCAT fun! Our workshops have become famous over the years due to their interactive, engaging and enjoyable nature.

## **Our Unique Approach**

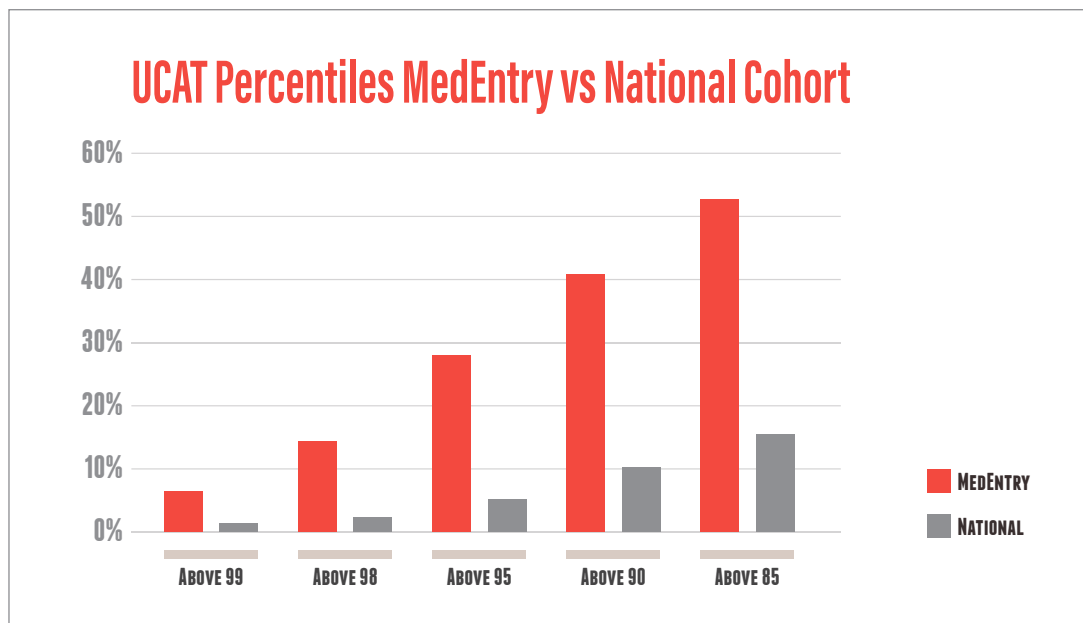
MedEntry's aim is not just to help you prepare for UCAT and interviews. Our aim is to help you develop important life skills, such as critical thinking, emotional intelligence and likeability, which will be useful to you throughout your life. It is not uncommon for past students to describe our courses as life-changing.



## Our Unparalleled Results

MedEntry's reputation is based on results. We are proud to have trained tens of thousands of health professionals.

A survey of a random sample of students who have been through our full training program showed that 92% were offered interviews, and 88% were offered places in one or more medical schools. Feedback statistics show that 99.1% of our students would recommend MedEntry's services to their friends. Over 95% of our students come through word-of-mouth referrals.



***MedEntry has far higher ratings than any other educational institution, including universities!***

## Our Outstanding Reviews

Ultimately, it is easy to find the best UCAT preparation organisation: simply look at independent reviews on Google and Facebook. MedEntry has over 3000 reviews across our United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand offices, at an average star rating of 4.9. This is far higher than any university!

# MEDENTRY QUALITY GUARANTEE

We are so confident in the quality of our preparation that we offer this Quality Guarantee:

*Find any educational institution with more and higher ratings than MedEntry, and we will offer **OUR COURSE FREE!***



4.9 ★★★★★



4.9 ★★★★★

>3000 reviews



## GIVING BACK

MedEntry started with humble beginnings. The organisation was made possible by a generous grant from the Foundation for Young Australians, which is a voluntary organisation committed to helping young people achieve their goals.

We have a strong commitment to the community, and are particularly passionate about widening access to education to those from disadvantaged and under-served backgrounds.

## Scholarships and bursaries

MedEntry provides scholarships and bursaries to those from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those of low socio-economic status and those from rural and remote areas.

We have provided over £600,000 worth of scholarships and discounts to such students over the years.

## Charity Partnerships

Each year, MedEntry partners with a charity in each country in which we operate. Students have the option of donating to a charity upon enrolment, and MedEntry matches each donation, dollar for dollar.



## Examples of previous charity partners



**United Kingdom**  
Teenage Cancer Trust



**Ireland**  
Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin



**Australia**  
Red Cross' Disaster Relief and Recovery (Bushfire Relief)



**New Zealand**  
Make a Wish



# Our Services

MedEntry provides three main packages and a number of optional extras that can be purchased.

## Main Packages

The most popular package is the Platinum package, and a group discount is available for two or more students.

	Packages		
	Online	Platinum	Diamond
Online Learning Platform	✓	✓	✓
Smartphone App	✓	✓	✓
Personal Support	✓	✓	✓
University Admissions Guide	✓	✓	✓
2-day Online Workshop		✓	✓
One-on-one tutoring			✓
Personal Statement Review			✓

MedEntry also offers UCAT Weekly Classes.

# ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM

Our Online Learning Platform is the most advanced, personalised and comprehensive platform available. It is included in all our UCAT packages.

It includes:

## → >20,000 High quality practice questions

in 20+ practice exams, 40+ subtest mocks and our massive QBank. These questions are delivered on a platform that exactly replicates the live UCAT

## → A Structured Curriculum

that guides students through effective strategies and techniques for each UCAT subtest and type of question, complete with interactive video instruction

## → Exclusive Skills Trainers

that help students develop the skills required to succeed in each subtest, and prepare for UCAT in a fun and efficient manner

## → Comprehensive Feedback

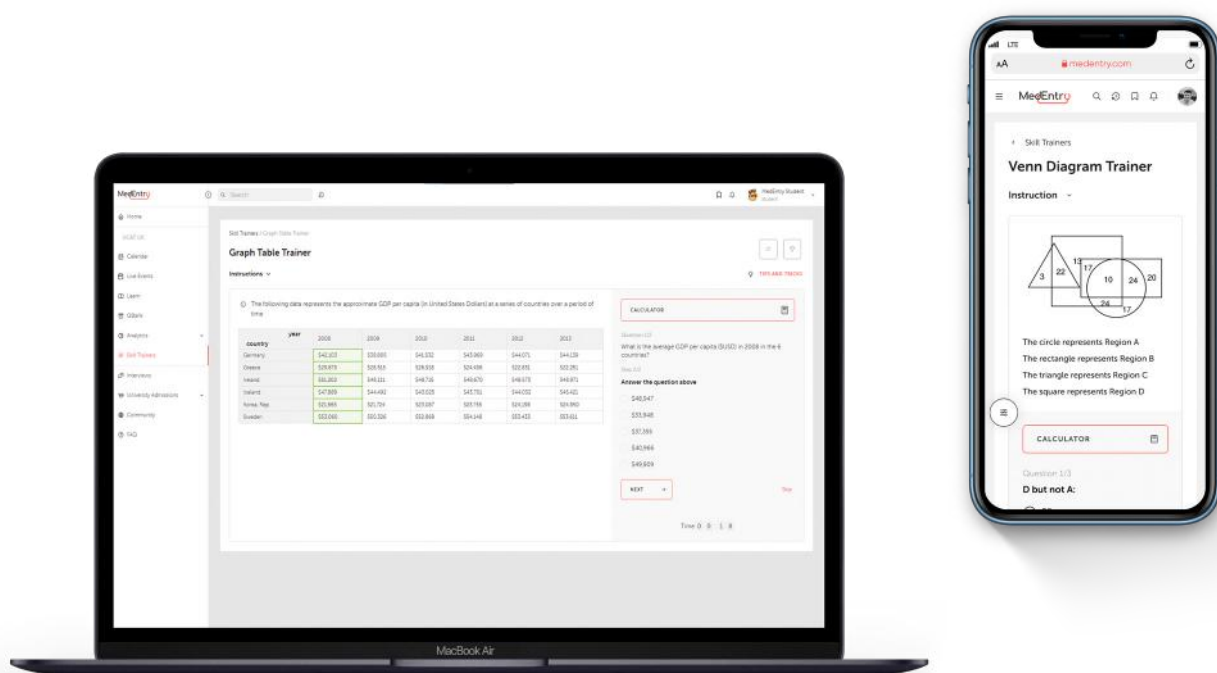
including percentile rankings, predicted scores and feedback on timing

## → Personalised Adaptive Learning

which means the platform learns from you and suggests resources to help you prepare for UCAT efficiently and effectively

## → Much more

including an interactive UCAT study planner, community page and resources section



## 2-DAY ONLINE UCAT WORKSHOP

Our workshops have become famous over the years – they are carefully crafted to cover the key strategies to UCAT success in a fun, engaging and interactive environment.

Workshops are run by expert doctors who have each taught tens of thousands of students. Workshops are included in all Platinum and Diamond packages.

Workshops include:

- Discussion of each UCAT subtest with strategies on how to answer questions quickly and accurately
- Question and answer sessions with students who have recently excelled in UCAT and are currently studying medicine
- Short mini-tests to provide students with hands-on experience
- Formal instruction and group learning
- Medical Entry interview advice





## MEDENTRY SMARTPHONE APP

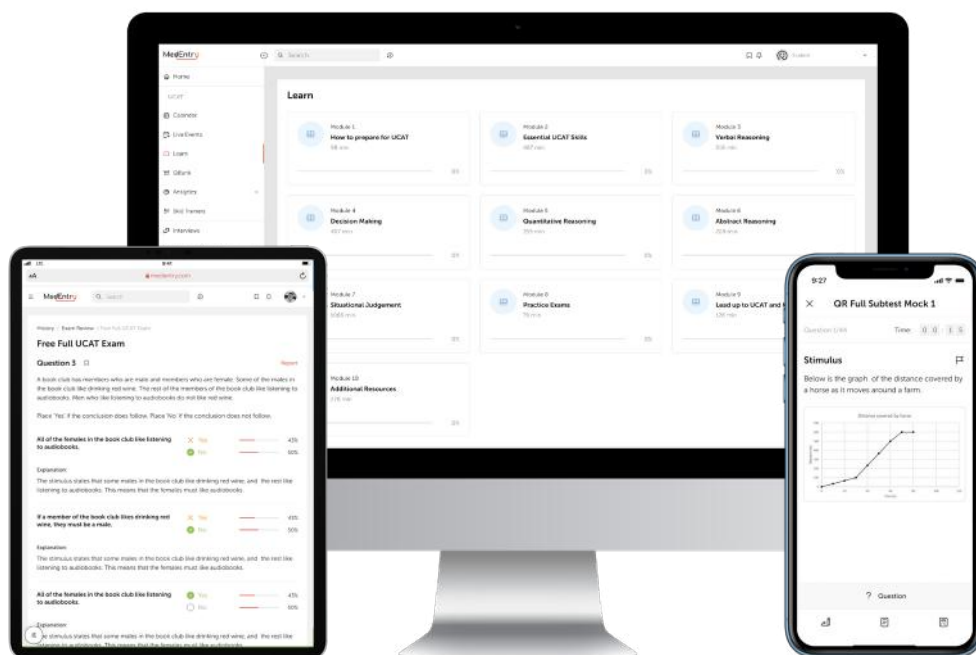
MedEntry's exclusive UCAT preparation App allows you to practise for the UCAT anytime and any place. The App is included in all MedEntry packages.

MedEntry is the only UCAT preparation organisation with a dedicated UCAT preparation App.

**MedEntry is the only UCAT preparation organisation with a dedicated UCAT preparation App.**

The App includes:

- ➔ Access to thousands of questions from each of the five UCAT subtests
- ➔ Detailed guides and solutions which show you exactly how to approach each question
- ➔ Features to keep you in touch with other MedEntry students via our community page



With MedEntry you'll be able to access your UCAT materials anywhere, anytime and any place. Whether you're at home, at school or on the bus you can access and use the online platform from your laptop, smartphone, tablet or desktop. All you need is an internet connection and you're good to go!

## PRIVATE UCAT TUTORING

This service is included in the Diamond package. It can be added on to the Platinum Package and some Online Packages. It involves one-on-one, online, personalised tutoring to help guide students through the medical entry process.

Personalised UCAT coaching is provided by an experienced tutor/mentor who has performed exceptionally well in UCAT, interviews and school.

MedEntry tutors are the best of the best - they have come through a very stringent vetting process, and are continually assessed to ensure they meet the highest quality that is expected of the MedEntry brand.

## MEDENTRY INTERVIEW TUTORING

We passionately believe that all young people have a fascinating and individual life experience. Our role is to help these experiences and the passion you have for medicine shine through in a potentially stressful interview setting.

MedEntry's personalised interview tutoring will:

- 
- ➔ Reduce stress - you should not go into your interview unaware of the questions that you will be asked
- 
- ➔ Help you communicate effectively to help present your 'best-self' to the interview panel
- 
- ➔ Provide strategies on how to succeed
- 

Sessions are conducted one-on-one, online, allowing personalised feedback and interaction to occur.

## MEDENTRY INTERVIEW GUIDE

You should not go into your interview unaware of the questions that you will be asked.

The guide includes:

- common questions asked in medical and dental interviews throughout the UK
- how to approach answering common and difficult questions
- what interviewers are looking for
- invaluable information on interview technique
- how to manage stress and perform at your best in the interview

This guide was written by a team of experts on interview technique, students who have been successful in interviews and those who have been on interview panels.

## PERSONAL STATEMENT REVIEW

Personal statements are a required part of your UCAS application. It is important that these are completed effectively and in a manner that will maximise your chances of gaining a place.

This service enables you to gain feedback from expert application reviewers, who will check your statement and make detailed suggestions. You will also gain access to a comprehensive personal statement guide that will provide strategies to craft an effective and powerful personal statement

This service is included in the Diamond Package, or can be purchased as an add-on.

# Free Resources

MedEntry is pleased to offer free, comprehensive and high-quality resources to students, parents and teachers to help with the medical entry process.

To access these resources, please visit the MedEntry website and click on 'Free Resources' along the top navigation bar.

## FREE RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

### Full UCAT Practice Exam

Attempt a free, full length diagnostic exam covering all five UCAT subtests, on an advanced platform that exactly replicates the live UCAT. Receive detailed feedback including predicted scores and worked solutions.

### Bootcamp

An Online UCAT Bootcamp session (two hours duration) is available for viewing on the MedEntry website. This session is invaluable for anyone who is serious about getting into medicine.

### Complete UCAT Guide

A complete guide to UCAT, which covers everything you need to know about UCAT, sample questions, and strategies to approach each type of question.

### UCAT Sample Questions

Get a feel for UCAT with sample questions which cover each type of UCAT question across the five subtests.

### UCAT Blogs

Hundreds of articles on a variety of topics including UCAT, medical interviews, medicine, dentistry, secondary school and much more!

# Resources For Teachers

MedEntry understands how important teachers are in guiding students through the medical entry process. We provide valuable resources for teachers which are outlined below.

If you are unsure of the answer to any of your student's questions, please ask them to read this Handbook or contact us. Medical entry is a complex and constantly changing area and we realise you are busy with other important work for the benefit of your students. Leave it to the experts: ask them to email [info@MedEntry.co.uk](mailto:info@MedEntry.co.uk).

## Resources that teachers can pass on to students:

- ➔ Free Diagnostic UCAT exam
- ➔ Free UCAT online bootcamp (2 hours duration)
- ➔ Free UCAT guide

## Information about UCAT

MedEntry is pleased to be able to provide teachers with information about UCAT, including answers to common questions.

## Discount Codes

MedEntry has a commitment to helping as many students as possible access our quality resources. As a valued teacher, you can help nominate them for discounts.



We look forward to helping you on your journey to becoming a doctor!



Have a question?

If you have any questions about UCAT, interviews or the medical entry process, please do not hesitate to contact the MedEntry team.

**RRP £5**

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