Thinking about applying to Medicine?

Resources for prospective students

Dr Rhiannedd Tudor Jones, Phase One Community Lead
Dr Sue Emerson, Phase Two Community Lead and Admissions Group
Vicki Roylance, Student Recruitment Manager

www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine  medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk
An introduction

We understand that it is a difficult time to get work experience in a healthcare environment. There is still much you can do to gain an insight into a career in Medicine.

Online videos, podcasts and other material can help you to develop your interest and understanding of health care as a profession especially if you learn to reflect on what you see, hear and learn. The value of any activity you undertake including work experience is in thinking about what you have learned from it – how that has helped you to decide that a career in Medicine is right for you (and that you are right for it) or how what you have learned will help you and thereby your future patients and colleagues in your intended career path.

How do you reflect?

Before we suggest resources that may help you gain an understanding of a career in Medicine, you will need to learn how to reflect. When we reflect, we consider deeply something that we might not otherwise have given much thought to. This helps us to learn. Reflection is concerned with consciously looking at and thinking about our experiences, actions, feelings, and responses, and then interpreting or analysing them in order to learn from them. Typically, we do this by asking ourselves questions about what we did, saw, heard and how we did it, and what we learnt from doing it.

One way of reflecting well is to keep a journal. This could include asking yourself certain questions such as ‘what did I learn?’ ‘what went well?’ ‘what could have been done better?’

During or after undertaking any of the suggested activities you may wish to consider;

1. Summarise your interpretation of what you’ve just heard/seen /read/done
2. What did you learn?
3. What did you get out of it? Was it what you expected?
4. What impact has it had on you and your thoughts?
5. Has it changed your way of thinking about things or has it changed your views?
6. Is there anything else you will now do as a result of this activity and associated reflection?

There is a detailed booklet all about reflection in the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) online resource
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The following suggestions and resources may give you some ideas about things you might find interesting and enjoyable and which may help to support your decision making regarding your future career choice and subsequent university application. These are largely aimed at those intending to apply for Medicine but some will also be of interest and relevance to those considering Dentistry, Biomedical Science, Pharmacology and other healthcare professions or science disciplines.

**Work experience**

The current pandemic means that the work experience and/or volunteering you had intended to undertake is likely to have been cancelled or postponed – we will be aware of this when assessing applications. We would expect that as aspiring health care professionals you will understand the reasons why this is the case.

Think about why medical schools want applicants to have undertaken work experience or volunteering. Is it simply to list it on your UCAS application? Instead consider what are we hoping that it has shown you or has allowed you to show. What understanding do we hope you have gained and what core attributes or attitudes are we looking for you to develop and demonstrate? You should then be able to find alternatives that will help you to do this in other ways.

There are some useful on-line resources you could look at as alternatives to in person work experience while this is not possible/significantly restricted.

The RCGP (Royal College of General Practitioners) has this free online resource which provides an insight into General Practice and also contains a resource to help you reflect on your learning - [https://www.rcgp.org.uk/training-exams/discover-general-practice/observe-gp.aspx](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/training-exams/discover-general-practice/observe-gp.aspx).


Brighton and Sussex Medical School also have a free virtual medical work experience opportunity - [https://bsmsoutreach.thinkific.com/courses/VWE](https://bsmsoutreach.thinkific.com/courses/VWE).

**Volunteering**

Volunteering in traditional care settings such as residential homes and hospices may also remain restricted in many areas for the foreseeable future. However, there may be other opportunities for volunteering or supporting activities that you may be able and wish to assist with. Participation in these types of activities can demonstrate important attributes and transferrable skills which may be sought by medical schools in their applicants such as commitment, organisational skills, resilience, and empathy.

Volunteering opportunities may be either remote or in person and when choosing the most appropriate you should take into consideration your educational commitments and both your own health and that of those with whom you share a household – please discuss with your parent/guardian/carer before making a commitment to volunteer.

Specific Covid-19 support groups and activities have been set up in many communities to help and support those isolating, shielding or otherwise impacted by the pandemic. In addition, many pre-existing groups who rely on volunteers have now been able to resume or adapt some or all of their activities.

Similarly, a part-time job or involvement in supporting other pupils/participants in school, sport or other recreational groups you may be involved with is another good way to develop and demonstrate core attributes sought in medical school applicants such as communication skills, leadership, teamworking, initiative and problem solving.

**Life as a medical student**


There are many YouTube videos illustrating a day or week in the life of undergraduate medical students in a range of medical schools. These may help you to both understand what being a medical student is really like and may also help you to decide which type of course/school you are best suited to.

These podcasts from two medical students describe their experiences as well as discussions with a wide range of clinicians and organisations - [https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/how-to-become-a-doctor/id1510360579](https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/how-to-become-a-doctor/id1510360579).

In Wales - the Cardiff University student WAMMS group (Widening Access to Medicine Mentoring Scheme) offer support and guidance to state school pupils including discussions about life as a Cardiff medical student - [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine/teachers-and-careers-advisers/search-activities/activity/1538674-widening-access-to-medicine-mentoring-scheme-wamms](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine/teachers-and-careers-advisers/search-activities/activity/1538674-widening-access-to-medicine-mentoring-scheme-wamms).

www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine
Life as a Doctor

As in person work experience where you may have had opportunities to discuss this with individual doctors is likely to remain restricted there may be other ways in which you can explore this.

Some schools will have connections with local healthcare professionals or former pupils who have studied medicine.

For Welsh applicants, groups such as RCGP Wales continue to offer widening participation activities converting these to remote delivery such as the recent [https://twitter.com/RCGPWales/status/1310568188069982209/photo/1](https://twitter.com/RCGPWales/status/1310568188069982209/photo/1).

This lecture from the Cardiff Science in Health public lecture series will take you on an ITU night shift with one of our local ITU Consultants Dr Matt Morgan - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kqXr6Td2UI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kqXr6Td2UI).

Many Welsh pupils targeting medicine will be involved with Seren, who organise a range of supportive activities and opportunities.

In North Wales Dr Dylan Parry runs an extensive range of activities [https://twitter.com/gp_schools](https://twitter.com/gp_schools) as does Dr Carol Amos in mid Wales - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_yyCxLw39Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_yyCxLw39Y).

Many of these groups and activities will offer talks by current doctors with opportunities for Q and A from participants.

For anyone accessing this resource pack from outside Wales it is likely that there are similar activities and programmes in other areas often organised by local clinicians with an interest in school engagement and widening access. Following your local medical school(s) on social media may help you access these (please exercise your usual safe online behaviour caution).

Books, podcasts, television programmes (see below) can also be useful in describing or showing life as a clinician.

Outreach Programmes

All medical schools have outreach programmes designed to support under-represented groups. Find information about ours here – [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/teachers-and-careers-advisers/widening-participation](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/teachers-and-careers-advisers/widening-participation) and learn more about our specific post-16 programmes here - [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/teachers-and-careers-advisers/widening-participation/post-16-activities](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/teachers-and-careers-advisers/widening-participation/post-16-activities).

We strongly encourage all those eligible to participate.
Ethics

The four core ethical pillars in medicine are:

**Autonomy, Beneficence, Non-maleficence and Justice.**

You should understand what these terms mean but also how we apply them in practice. You may be asked an ethics type question in an MMI where rather than simply stating what the principles are, you may also be asked to apply them in an ethics-based scenario. The resources below may help you with this.

The GMC ethical Hub contains resources and guidance illustrating the application of the core ethical principles in practice - [https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-hub](https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-hub).

You may enjoy working through this ethics tool kit from the BMA - [https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/ethics/medical-students/ethics-toolkit-for-medical-students](https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/ethics/medical-students/ethics-toolkit-for-medical-students).

Your school or local library may stock or be able to access for you this short book that you may also find useful - 

**Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction – Tony Hope**

Once you have read and reflected on these sources of ethical guidance you may enjoy applying your knowledge in these scenarios where you get to choose what the doctor should do - [https://www.gmc-uk.org/gmpinaction](https://www.gmc-uk.org/gmpinaction)

Medical Schools Council (MSC)

This guide from the Medical Schools Council (MSC) will provide useful insight into the core values and personal attributes expected of medical students in the UK. Understanding what we expect and seek may help you to reflect on your own experiences and learning and how they may help you to demonstrate your suitability for medical training. This might be particularly useful when preparing for interview as well as when writing your personal statement. Try to think of examples when you have used particular skills or traits or, conversely, recognised that you needed to learn or develop these skills and how you did so.

[https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2542/statatement-on-core-values-to-study-medicine.pdf](https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2542/statatement-on-core-values-to-study-medicine.pdf)

Online courses (MOOCs)

For any courses that have an interactive element with other learners/participants, particularly those under 18, should get consent from their parent/guardian/carer before enrolling and exercise their usual caution for safe online behaviour.

**The Open University** has lots of free online courses - [https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue) and is open to learners 13+.

**Coursera** – [https://www.coursera.org](https://www.coursera.org) hundreds of short (and some longer) online modules from universities around the world. You need to register (free) then browse – there are lots related to science and healthcare. Some of the courses are free to enrol on and complete but may have a fee to receive a certificate – remember that the value is in the learning and reflection rather than the certificate. Some courses have a fee for any participation but plenty don’t.

Similarly – **Futurelearn** - [https://www.futurelearn.com/courses](https://www.futurelearn.com/courses) - also has lots to choose from of variable length, many are free to complete again but may have a fee to receive certificate – the comment above re: the value being in the learning holds true.

Learning a new skill like some basic sign language - [https://www british-sign.co.uk/learn-online-british-sign-language-course](https://www british-sign.co.uk/learn-online-british-sign-language-course) (pay what you can if you can during Covid) or First Aid - [https://www.sja.org.uk/courses](https://www.sja.org.uk/courses) may be both of direct relevance to your intended career path and demonstrate independent/self-directed learning.

Online lectures

The Cardiff Science in Health Public Lecture Series offers a range of interesting lectures which include discussions around current important or topical healthcare issues. The series has resumed in remote format - [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine/about-us/engagement/science-in-health](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/medicine/about-us/engagement/science-in-health).

The back catalogue of recorded lectures can be found here (post 2016) [https://cardiff.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx#folderID=%22f7fff78a-ff73-456e-b88a-2b335bd0987d%22](https://cardiff.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx#folderID=%22f7fff78a-ff73-456e-b88a-2b335bd0987d%22)

And here (pre 2016) - [https://vimeo.com/channels/176195](https://vimeo.com/channels/176195).

This recent lecture by Professor Sir Michael Marmot provides a topical discussion regarding health inequalities and the impact of Covid - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAbCPZS1r6I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAbCPZS1r6I).

Several other universities have similar banks of recorded public lectures or podcasts e.g. Imperial - [https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/social-and-multimedia/lectures-online](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/social-and-multimedia/lectures-online)

Oxford - [https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series](https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series)
Books

This is just a small selection of the many books you might enjoy and find useful learning from - your local or school library may stock some of these or be able to request books for you:

The Soul of Medicine: Tales from the Bedside
Sherwin Nuland

The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer
Siddartha Mukherjee

The House of God
Samuel Shem

When Breath Becomes Air
Paul Kalanithi

The Man Who Mistook his Wife for a Hat
Oliver Sacks

Being Mortal
Atul Gawande

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks
Rebecca Skloot

Do No Harm
Henry Marsh

Complications
Atul Gawande

In Shock: How Nearly Dying Made Me a Better Intensive Care Doctor
Rana Awdish

The Language of Kindness
Christie Watson

Medical Ethics - a very short introduction
Michael Dunn and Tony Hope

Hippocratic Oaths: Medicine and its Discontents
Raymond Tallis

War Doctor: Surgery on the Frontline - David Nott
(his Desert Island Discs discussion can be found here - https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b07dzsyq

This historic diary https://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/283/6307/1656.full.pdf - by Alex Paton who went to assist in Belsen in 1945 whilst still a medical student may allow you to consider the role and expectations of medical students (and how that may differ from other students) and draw parallels with current undergraduate medical students, many of whom have volunteered in clinical settings during the pandemic - https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-52444504 and https://www.facebook.com/CardiffC21/posts/3582991401716096.

The Guardian’s science pages can be found here: https://www.theguardian.com/science

Wales-specific health news and developments are updated regularly here: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/clw2y682n5dt/nhs-wales

The British Medical Journal’s open access information: https://bmjopen.bmj.com


Bright Knowledge has a bank of resources and news articles: https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare

Podcasts

Here is a link to regularly updated medical podcasts https://journals.bmj.com/sites/default/files/podcasts/index.html

Bedside Tales is an interesting collection of podcasts discussing the human stories that have shaped modern Medicine - http://bedside-rounds.org/category/podcasts

The Doctor Paradox
https://www.listennotes.com/podcasts/dr-paddy-barrett-podcast-dr-paddy-barrett-McKy7X2UHwK/#podcast – discusses some of the challenges faced by doctors and strategies we may use to overcome them.

Everyday Emergency from Médecins Sans Frontieres
https://www.msf.org.uk/everyday-emergency-msf-podcast discusses and gives insight into providing healthcare in some of most challenges faced in global situations.

Inside the Ethics Committee
https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007xbsd/clips – discusses ethical issues arising from real-life patient cases.

Current events and medical and scientific developments

It would be worthwhile considering current topical issues and health concerns and how they may impact on the health service and those working within it.

Your school or local library may have subscriptions to New Scientist/Nature which will keep you well informed about current scientific discussions and areas of development. You can sign up for Nature’s free daily email update which brings together global scientific breaking news and up to date developments here - https://www.nature.com/briefing/signup. Richard Lehman’s BMJ weekly medical journal round up is free and publicly accessible - https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/category/richard-lehman-weekly-review-of-medical-journals - the back issues are also available.
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The King’s Fund monthly podcast discusses important and topical issues related to the NHS, social and healthcare - [https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/audio-video/podcast](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/audio-video/podcast). Their website is a useful and interesting source of information and discussion on these themes that you may enjoy - [https://www.kingsfund.org.uk](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk).

The BMJ brings - [https://www.bmj.com/sharpscratch](https://www.bmj.com/sharpscratch).

You might also enjoy listening to Health Check [https://www.bmj.com/sharpscratch/episodes/downloads](https://www.bmj.com/sharpscratch/episodes/downloads) - or Inside Health - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b019dl1b/episodes/downloads](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b019dl1b/episodes/downloads).

Inside Science [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b036f7w2/episodes/downloads](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b036f7w2/episodes/downloads) – gives a broader update on scientific developments and Analysis [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4vz/episodes/downloads](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4vz/episodes/downloads) and

Health Matters from the Royal Society of Medicine - [https://www.rsm.ac.uk/resources/podcasts](https://www.rsm.ac.uk/resources/podcasts).

Science weekly is currently providing a regular update/discussion regarding the current pandemic which you may find interesting [https://www.theguardian.com/science/series/science](https://www.theguardian.com/science/series/science).

File on Four - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006th08/episodes/downloads](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006th08/episodes/downloads) discuss topical and current events.

The Reith Lecture series on Radio 4 [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00729d9/episodes/guide](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00729d9/episodes/guide) - you may find many of this back catalogue interesting but particularly the 2014 Future of Medicine Series by Dr Atul Gawande:

Why do Doctors Fail? [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04bsgvm](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04bsgvm)

The Century of the System [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02cr1hs](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02cr1hs)

The Problem of Hubris [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04tjdjl](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04tjdjl)

The Idea of Wellbeing [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04v380z](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04v380z)

As with all the resources don’t just listen to the podcasts, reflect on them. Ask yourself questions and try to understand the views of others as they may be different to yours.
TV programmes/documentaries

The Horizon archive is well worth a browse - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mgxf](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mgxf)

Louis Theroux has made some interesting documentaries some of which look at health topics - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b05gzmgd/louis-theroux](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b05gzmgd/louis-theroux)

This one exploring brain injury might encourage you to think about the effects of health not only on the individual but also on those around them - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07c6fjk/louis-theroux-a-different-brain](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b07c6fjk/louis-theroux-a-different-brain)

You might enjoy Michael Moseley’s recent Diagnosis Detectives series - [https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m000m7ll/the-diagnosis-detectives](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m000m7ll/the-diagnosis-detectives)

TED talks

There are Ted talks to cover any area of health - [https://www.ted.com/talks?sort=newest&topics%5B%5D=health](https://www.ted.com/talks?sort=newest&topics%5B%5D=health)

and healthcare - [https://www.ted.com/talks?sort=newest&topics%5B%5D=Healthcare](https://www.ted.com/talks?sort=newest&topics%5B%5D=Healthcare)

You might enjoy this one about health behaviour and behaviour change - [https://www.ted.com/talks/david_asch_why_it_s_so_hard_to_make_healthy_decisions](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_asch_why_it_s_so_hard_to_make_healthy_decisions)

And this one which discusses compassion in healthcare (US-based clinician talking but the lessons are relevant in the UK also) - [https://www.ted.com/talks/stephen_trzeciak_healthcare_s_compassion_crisis_jan_2018](https://www.ted.com/talks/stephen_trzeciak_healthcare_s_compassion_crisis_jan_2018)

Empathy

What is empathy?

Watch this GMC video [https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/learning-materials/what-do-patients-think](https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/learning-materials/what-do-patients-think) and then consider the patient perspective and how we can be alert and responsive to this. What might the patient be thinking about while waiting for their consultation, what might the patient want from their consultation?

Information on studying Medicine

Including personal statements, how to apply and many other topics can be found at [https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/studying-medicine](https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/studying-medicine)

We hope that these resources are helpful. If you are interested in learning more about Medicine at Cardiff these links will provide further information

Our C21 course – [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/2513241/Undergraduate_Medicine_2022_entry2.pdf](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/2513241/Undergraduate_Medicine_2022_entry2.pdf)

Admissions information – [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-criteria/medicine/medicine](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-criteria/medicine/medicine)


Our friendly admissions team are always happy to help at medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk

UCAT preparation, information and resources

This information is correct as of May 2021 – applicants should check the most up-to-date guidance at [https://www.ucat.ac.uk](https://www.ucat.ac.uk)

The UCAT (previously UKCAT) – University Clinical Aptitude Test is one of the tests used by UK medical and dental schools as part of the assessment of your UCAS application. The others are the BMAT (Biomedical Admissions Test) and GAMSAT (Graduate Medical Schools Admissions Test).
If you are applying to medical school straight from sixth form you will sit either the UCAT or BMAT or both depending on which medical schools you are intending to apply to. In Cardiff, undergraduate applicants are asked to take UCAT (graduate applicants should check which test is required using the admissions guide for that specific admissions cycle and the admissions team will always be happy to answer any queries).

Check the specific requirements of the medical schools you are interested in – the Medical Schools Council Guide to applying to UK medical schools is updated annually and contains information regarding (minimum) entry requirements for each of the UK medical schools. This is the link for the current admissions cycle (2021 entry) - [https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2701/msc-entry-requirements-for-uk-medical-schools-2021.pdf](https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2701/msc-entry-requirements-for-uk-medical-schools-2021.pdf)

Admissions requirements can and do change and this document is updated annually - please check the requirements for your intended year of application.

Some schools require their applicants to take the required admissions test at a particular sitting – again, check the Medical Schools Council Guide (once updated) and the specific admissions page on the individual medical school’s website e.g. ours is here - [https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-criteria/medicine/medicine](https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-criteria/medicine/medicine). The admissions teams for each medical school will also be available (currently likely to be by e-mail but more usually also by phone) to answer queries – they will be friendly and approachable – do not be afraid to contact them.

The [UCAT](https://www.ucat.ac.uk) website is here - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk](https://www.ucat.ac.uk)

UCAT also have Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages - the links are on their homepage.

[Bright Knowledge](https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/ucat-explained) also have advice on UCAT.

The [BMAT](https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat) website can be found here - [https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat](https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat) They also have a twitter account.

With some additional information here [https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/bmat-explained](https://www.brightknowledge.org/medicine-healthcare/bmat-explained)

The official UCAT and BMAT websites and social media accounts are regularly updated – this might be particularly important in the current situation.

Both the UCAT and BMAT websites contain clear information about the tests and lots of free materials you can (and should) use in preparation.

UCAT is usually taken between July and October and BMAT in September or November (check specific school requirements re: which sitting they require).

This information sheet will focus on UCAT as that is the admissions test used here at Cardiff University School of Medicine.

UCAT is a two-hour online test which assesses potential rather than knowledge – that said, good preparation can and is likely to make a big difference to your score. You can only take the test once in each admissions cycle and you will get your result the same day when you leave the test centre. You can therefore use this knowledge to help decide which medical schools you will apply to – check how different schools weight the UCAT score using the Medical Schools Council Guide. You do not need to know or tell UCAT which medical schools you will be applying to when you register for or take the test. UCAT communicate directly with the central university application organiser (UCAS) to transfer your result directly to the medical schools once you have applied.
Detailed guidance has been released here - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/ucat-2021](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/ucat-2021) regarding arrangements for 2022 (or deferred 2023) entry. Provisional dates for registration booking and testing have been released. Please check the UCAT site regularly for updated information and dates.


You have to register in advance - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/generic-pages/ucat-registration-2021](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/generic-pages/ucat-registration-2021). It might be sensible to book in plenty of time once bookings open as sessions may fill up especially towards the end of the test period.

If you are eligible for access arrangements in public exams then access arrangements can be made for the UCAT test (UCATSEN) – information is available on the website - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/access-arrangements](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/access-arrangements)

There is a fee payable for the test. Financial support is available – do not be afraid to ask – this should not be a barrier to applying - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/bursary-scheme](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/bursary-scheme). You can apply for the bursary in advance of booking your test so you have the bursary voucher code ready when you book, but if you didn’t you can still get the bursary retrospectively.

Register using your legal name which matches that on your photographic ID.

On the day of the test arrive in plenty of time to allow for getting lost, finding parking, delayed bus and so on. You will need to take a printed or electronic copy of your appointment confirmation e-mail AND photographic ID – details on what can be accepted can be found here - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/test-day](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/test-day) - don’t forget to take these with you as they will have to turn you away.

This short video shows you what to expect on the test day - [https://vimeo.com/269816550](https://vimeo.com/269816550)

The test is broken down into 5 sub-sections – each have different numbers of questions and time allocated – use the (free) practice materials to get familiar with this – the UCAT needs good time management to maximise your chances of a high score. The questions are presented as multiple choice and there is no negative marking. Once the test starts it cannot be paused.

Information regarding the breakdown of the subtests can be found here - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/test-format/ucat-subtests](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/test-format/ucat-subtests)

The subtests are summarised below - please note the timings are for standard UCAT and may differ where specific access arrangements are in place, candidates for whom this applies should check their timings for each section before taking the test

**Verbal Reasoning** – 44 questions, 21 minutes test time.

**Decision Making** – 29 questions, 31 minutes test time.

**Quantitative Reasoning** – 36 questions, 24 minutes test time.

**Abstract Reasoning** – 55 questions, 13 minutes test time.

**Situational Judgement** – 69 questions, 26 minutes test time.

It would be well worthwhile revising some GCSE level maths if you are not doing Maths A level – the quantitative reasoning section of UCAT will be around the level of a good GCSE pass and many medical schools will include a numeracy station in an MMI circuit. Practice using the onscreen calculator [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/practice-tests/practice-tips](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/ucat/practice-tests/practice-tips) using the practice materials. Refreshing your quick mental maths is also likely to be helpful.

Your score for the SJT section will place you in one of four bands – check the MSC Guide for the medical schools you are interested in applying to as some may not progress applications where the SJT score falls into band 4. Using information from the GMC website [www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors](http://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors) and the NHS constitution [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england) and [https://www.wales.nhs.uk/nhswalesaboutus/thecoreprinciplesofnhswales](https://www.wales.nhs.uk/nhswalesaboutus/thecoreprinciplesofnhswales) may help you prepare for this section as well as interview.

The UCAT website includes a tour tutorial which demonstrates the onscreen functions, how to navigate the test, how to check how much time you have remaining and how to use the flag and review functions - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/uploads/ucat-tour/index.html](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/uploads/ucat-tour/index.html)

It also has guidance on how to approach the test and each subsection - [https://www.ucat.ac.uk/uploads/ukcat-tutorials/2019/story_html5.html](https://www.ucat.ac.uk/uploads/ukcat-tutorials/2019/story_html5.html)

And a large bank of free practice questions [http://questions.ucat.ac.uk/pages/menu.aspx?pack=736eea8d-ff06-4777-adcb-95c8f2f42c04](http://questions.ucat.ac.uk/pages/menu.aspx?pack=736eea8d-ff06-4777-adcb-95c8f2f42c04) and timed tests - [http://practice.ucat.ac.uk/pages/menu.aspx?pack=bd52c8e6-da13-44a8-ac5d-3a02d2c1e21b](http://practice.ucat.ac.uk/pages/menu.aspx?pack=bd52c8e6-da13-44a8-ac5d-3a02d2c1e21b)

Their YouTube channel has additional free resources - [https://www.youtube.com/user/OfficialUKCAT](https://www.youtube.com/user/OfficialUKCAT)
Thinking about applying to Medicine? Resources for prospective students

GAMSAT (Graduate Medical School Admissions Test) information

Candidates should check the most up to date information at the official GAMSAT website - https://gamsat.acer.org

If you have already completed a first degree you will need to meet the graduate admission criteria. The Medical Schools Council Guide contains the (minimum) admissions criteria for all UK medical schools – www.medschools.ac.uk/studying-medicine/making-an-application/entry-requirements?type=graduate-entry-medicine. Cardiff-specific graduate entry requirements can be found here - https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applying/admissions-criteria/medicine/medicine. Check back once these are updated for the 2022 entry admission cycle.

Like other applicants, graduate entry applicants will need to sit an admissions test. This may be UCAT, BMAT or the test specifically for graduate applicants – GAMSAT. You should check the Medicals Schools Council Guide and admissions pages of specific medical schools carefully.

At Cardiff University we currently ask our graduate entry applicants (those who apply for entry to A100, A101 and A102) in 2022 to complete the GAMSAT. Applicants to study Medicine at Cardiff from 2023 onwards will sit UCAT and the requirement for GAMSAT will be discontinued. You can find the latest information on this in the Essential Requirements section of our website. https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/search?collection=ug-courses&query=mbbch?

Our friendly admissions team are always happy to help at - medadmissions@cardiff.ac.uk.

GAMSAT can be taken in either March and September usually in either the penultimate or final year of a first degree although some medical schools may accept the test being taken at other times – https://gamsat.acer.org/about-gamsat/eligibility.

Key registration information, test dates and fee information can be found here - https://gamsat.acer.org/register and information about test centre locations here - https://gamsat.acer.org/register/test-centres.

The GAMSAT is made up of three sections –

- Reasoning in Humanities and social sciences
- Written communication
- Reasoning in Biological and Physical Sciences.

It assesses critical thinking, analytic skills, problem solving, skills in written communication, reasoning and interpretation as well as knowledge

Applicants with specific needs may apply for reasonable adjustments - https://gamsat.acer.org/register/reasonable-adjustments - this must be done well in advance of the test date.


The test takes place over several hours on a single day at one of the test centres - https://gamsat.acer.org/sit with an admissions ticket - https://gamsat.acer.org/sit/admission-ticket and ID being required - https://gamsat.acer.org/sit/identification


Covid-19 specific information can be found - https://gamsat.acer.org/covid-19-advice