



**University of  
Nottingham**

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# Medical admissions and UCAT

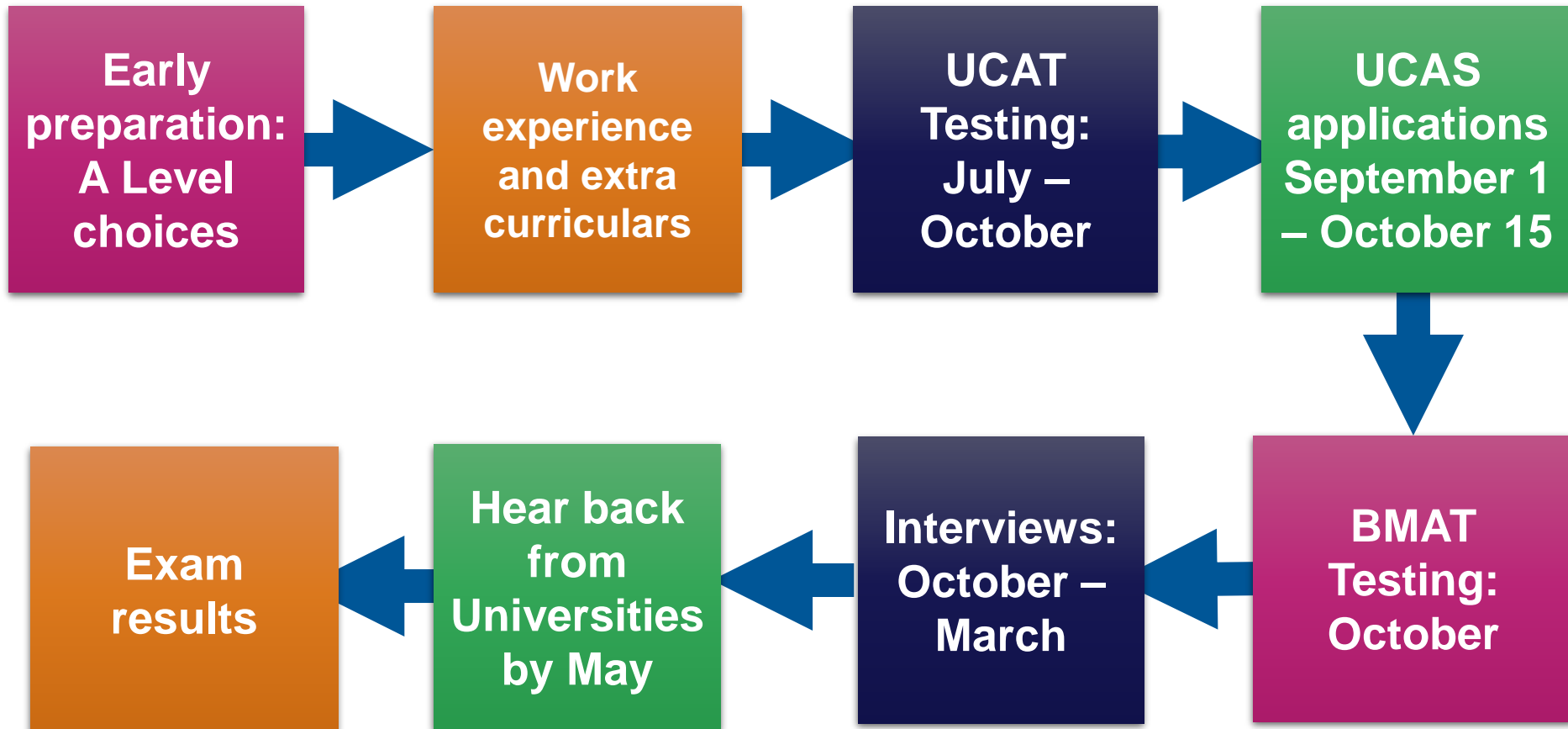


## Aims

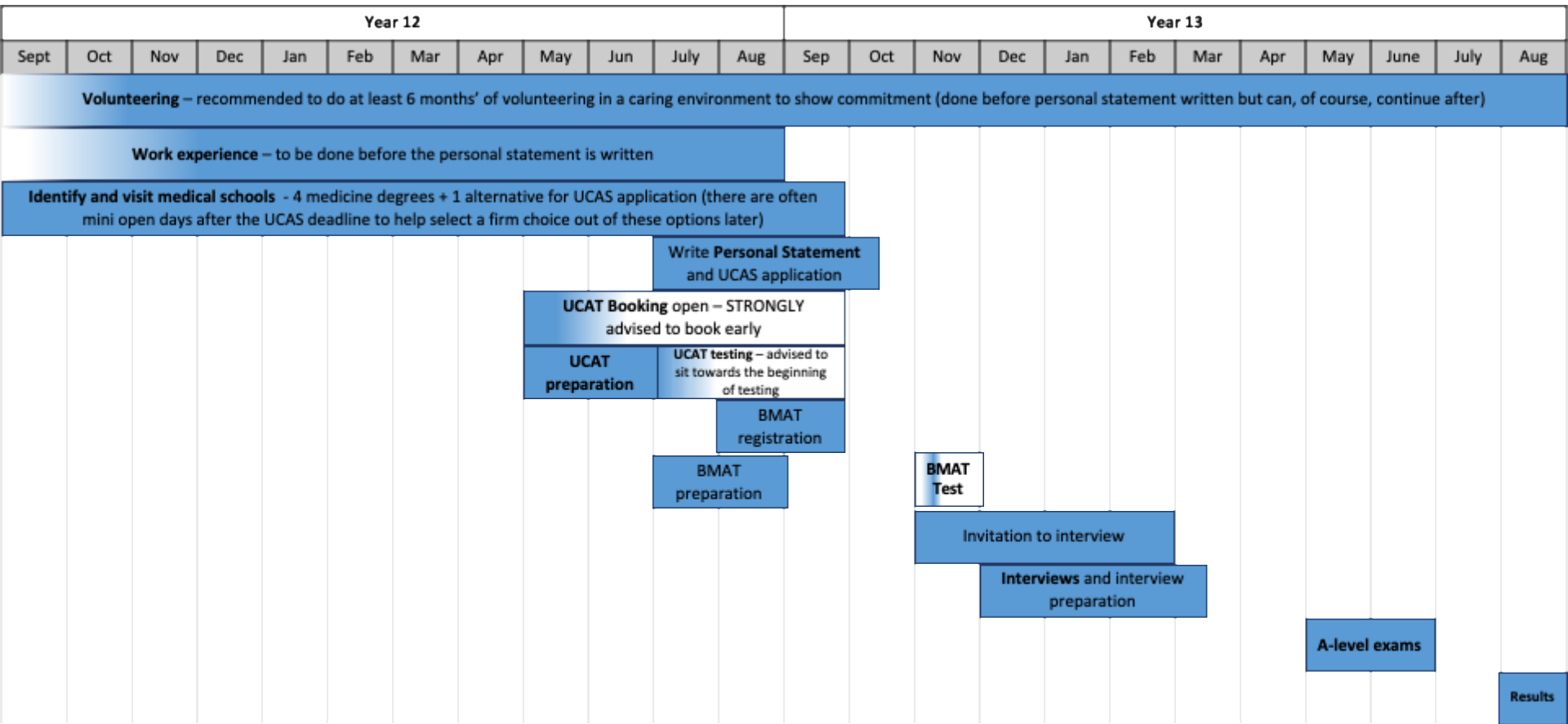
- Outline the admissions process for Medicine
- Understand what the UCAT will involve
- To complete practise questions and have the opportunity for a Q+A with current students



## Admissions timeline



# Admissions Overview



NB - approximation only





## Academic requirements

- Tend to range from A\*A\*A – AAB
- A wide range of GCSE requirements
- Biology and/or Chemistry normally needed at A level





## Other requirements

- UCAT / BMAT
- Work / voluntary experience
- Personal statement
- Interview





## Do your research

**Newcastle:** AAA at A level. Science subjects not required.

**Cambridge:** A\*A\*A at A level. Applicants must have A level passes in Chemistry and one of Biology, Physics, Mathematics.

**Exeter:** Work experience is not outlined as part of the entry requirements.

**Bristol:** Suggested minimum of two weeks in a care environment.

**Nottingham/Lincoln:** Personal statement is not scored, but may be used alongside UCAT scores to differentiate between candidates with identical scores at interview.

**Imperial College London:** 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.



## Medicine at Nottingham/Lincoln

Stage 1: A levels and GCSEs are checked against the entry requirements.

Stage 2: Scoring of highest 8 GCSE's (including English Language, Maths and double/triple science) and UCAT components.

Top % of applicants then progress to the next stage.

Stage 3: Multiple mini interviews (MMIs). Around 1000 applicants are interviewed each year.

Stage 4: Personal statement and teacher reference are reviewed before making offers.



## Medicine Pathways

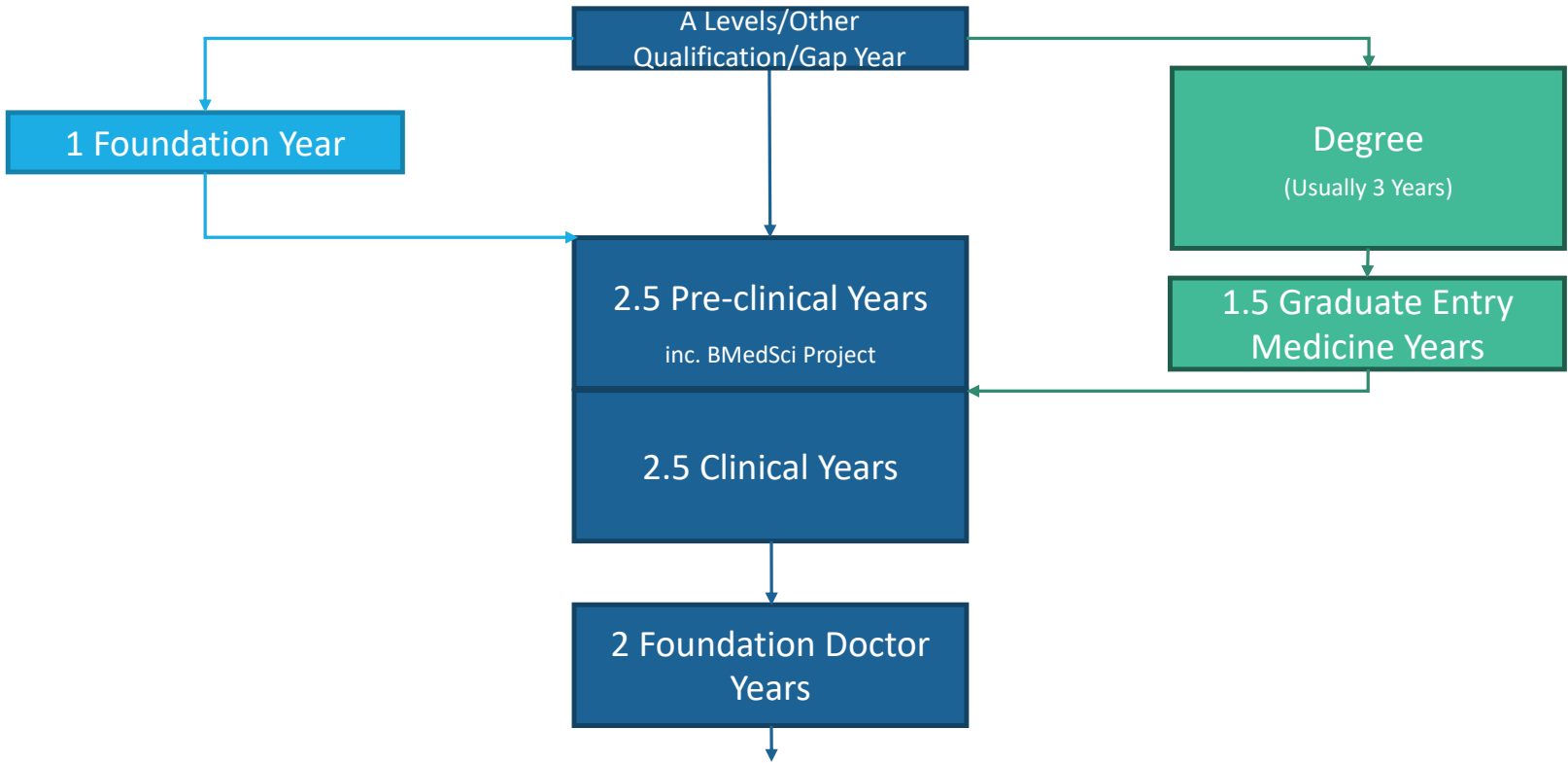
- There isn't just 1 way to do medicine – there are many routes
- Varies depending on the university – worth doing your research
- Nottingham alone offers 5 pathways

## Medicine Pathways

Medicine with a Foundation Year/  
Medicine at Lincoln with a Foundation  
Year Pathway  
**A108/A18L**  
BMedSci and BMBS

Medicine/Medicine at Lincoln Pathway  
**A100/A10L**  
BMedSci and BMBS

Graduate Entry Medicine Pathway  
**A101**  
BMBS





## Widening Participation Pathways

- Varies between universities
- Must meet 'WP Criteria'
- Contextualised offer
  - 5 year course
  - AAB
- Foundation Year (6 year course)
  - BBC

### Nottingham WP Criteria

- Spent >3 months in care
- Or
- Attend a state school **and either**
  - Live in an eligible area ([postcode checker](#))
  - Taken part in a summer school with Sutton Trust, UNIQ, Realising Opportunities or Nottingham Potential
  - Have refugee status



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# Understand the UCAT



## Overview

- Sat at a local Pearson test centre\*
- 2 hour computer-based test
- Results available immediately
- Majority of medical schools
- Aptitude – not knowledge based

\*See COVID-19 changes later



## Structure

- 5 sections
- 4 cognitive + Situational Judgement Test
- Highly time pressured

Section	Time	Items
Verbal Reasoning	22 minutes	44 items
Decision Making	32 minutes	29 items
Quantitative Reasoning	25 minutes	36 items
Abstract Reasoning	14 minutes	55 items
Situational Judgement	27 minutes	69 items

## UCAT key dates (2020)

1 July 2020 (9am)

Registration opens  
Booking opens  
Bursary Scheme opens  
Access Arrangements / UCATSEN applications open

3 August 2020

Testing begins

17 September 2020 (midday)

Registration closes  
Web booking closes  
Access Arrangements / UCATSEN application deadline

30 September 2020 (midday)

Final booking deadline (for registered candidates)

1 October 2020

Last testing date  
Bursary application deadline (4pm)

15 October 2020

UCAS application deadline

Early November 2020

Results delivered to universities



## Fees, Bursary and Access Arrangements

- £75
- Bursary
  - Full bursary
  - Detailed criteria on [website](#)
  - E.g. free school meals, 16-19 bursary, asylum support (many more)
- Access arrangements
  - Eligible for access arrangements (e.g. extra time) as in other exams

## 2020 Changes

- Choice to sit the test at home or in usual test centre
- Pearson VUE's online proctoring service (OnVUE) or at their nearest Pearson VUE Test Centre.
- Test is the same
- Consider which might suit you best - UCAT recommend to sit at test centre if you have access requirements
- Certain requirements for sitting at home – see website for detailed [candidate guides](#)



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# UCAT Content



## Verbal reasoning

- Assesses ability to think logically about written information
- 11 text passages with 4 questions each
- 2 types of question
  - True/false/cannot tell
  - Statements and ask which can be inferred from the text





## Top tips

- Base answers only on the text  
- not general knowledge (can be hard sometimes)
- Beware of speculative sentences rather than factual.





The core principles of Homeopathy fly in the face of science. If they were true, much of what we learned in physics and chemistry would be wrong. Homeopaths often say that we simply have not yet discovered how homeopathy works. The truth is that we know there is no conceivable scientific explanation that could possibly explain it. Yet as a clinician almost 30 years ago, I was impressed with the results achieved by homeopathy. Many of my patients seemed to improve dramatically after receiving homeopathic treatment. How was this possible?

In order to understand this apparent contradiction, we have to take a step back and consider the complexities of the therapeutic response. Whenever a patient or a group of patients receive a medical treatment and subsequently experience improvements, we automatically assume that the improvement was caused by the intervention. This logical fallacy can be very misleading and has hindered progress in medicine for hundreds of years. Of course, it could be the treatment – but there are many other possibilities as well.

For instance, the condition could have improved on its own. Or the encounter between the therapist and the patient could have been therapeutic without any meaningful contribution from the treatment itself. Or the patient could have had high expectations of the treatment that prompted a powerful placebo response. Or the patient self-administered some other treatments concomitantly that caused the improvements. In other words, it is not the effect of the remedy per se, but the non-specific effect of the context in which it is given that benefits the patient



A) True

B) False

C) Can't Tell

**According to the passage the principles of homeopathy are not scientifically valid.**

A) True

**According to the passage, homeopathic remedies cannot be effective because they contradict scientific principles.**

B) False

**According to the passage, patients must expect treatments to work before they will do so.**

C) Can't Tell

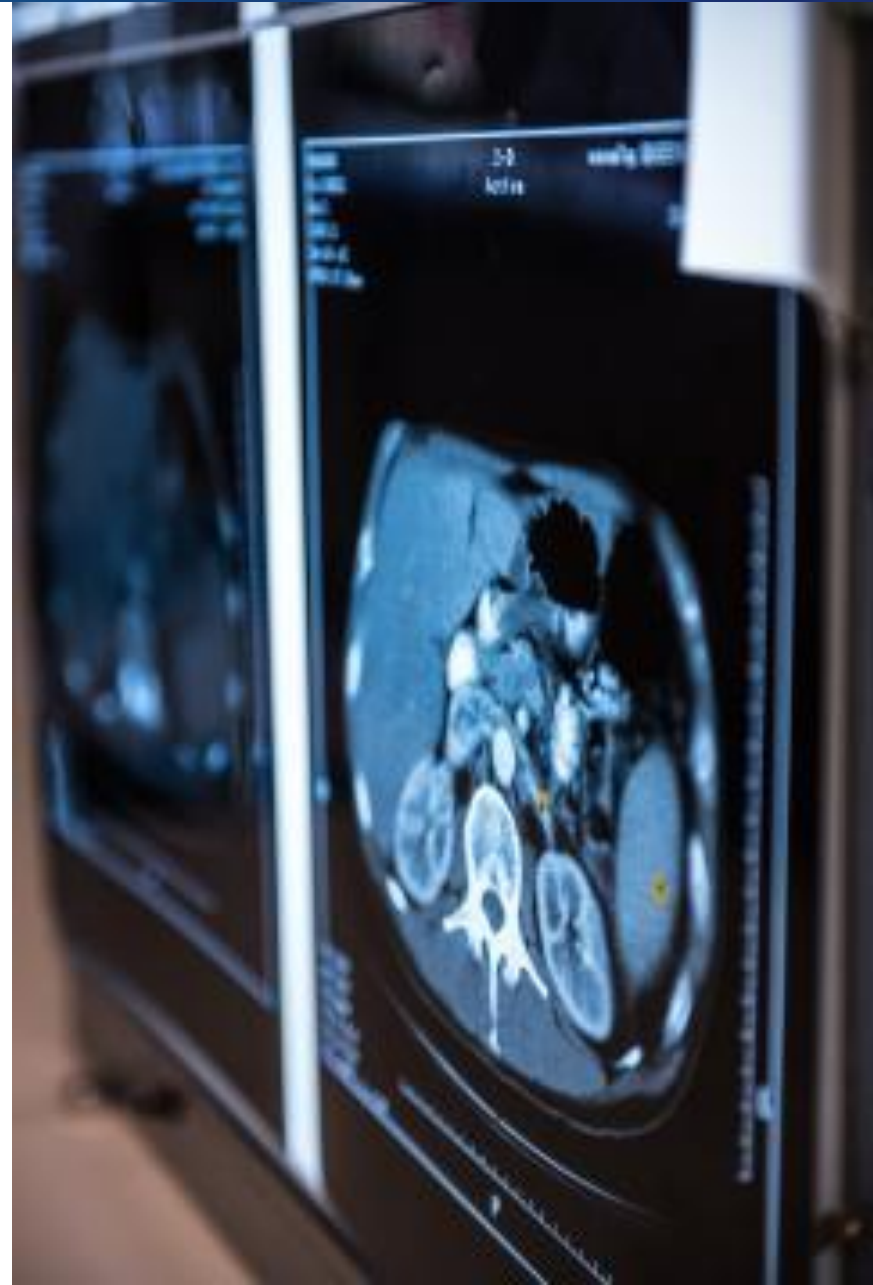
**According to the writer, it is the treatment itself that is more important than the context in which the medical treatment is given**

B) False



## Decision making

- Tests your ability to apply logic to reach a decision or conclusion, evaluate arguments and analyse statistical information
- 29 items in 32 minutes
- Questions refer to diagrams, texts, charts or graphs.
- Onscreen calculator

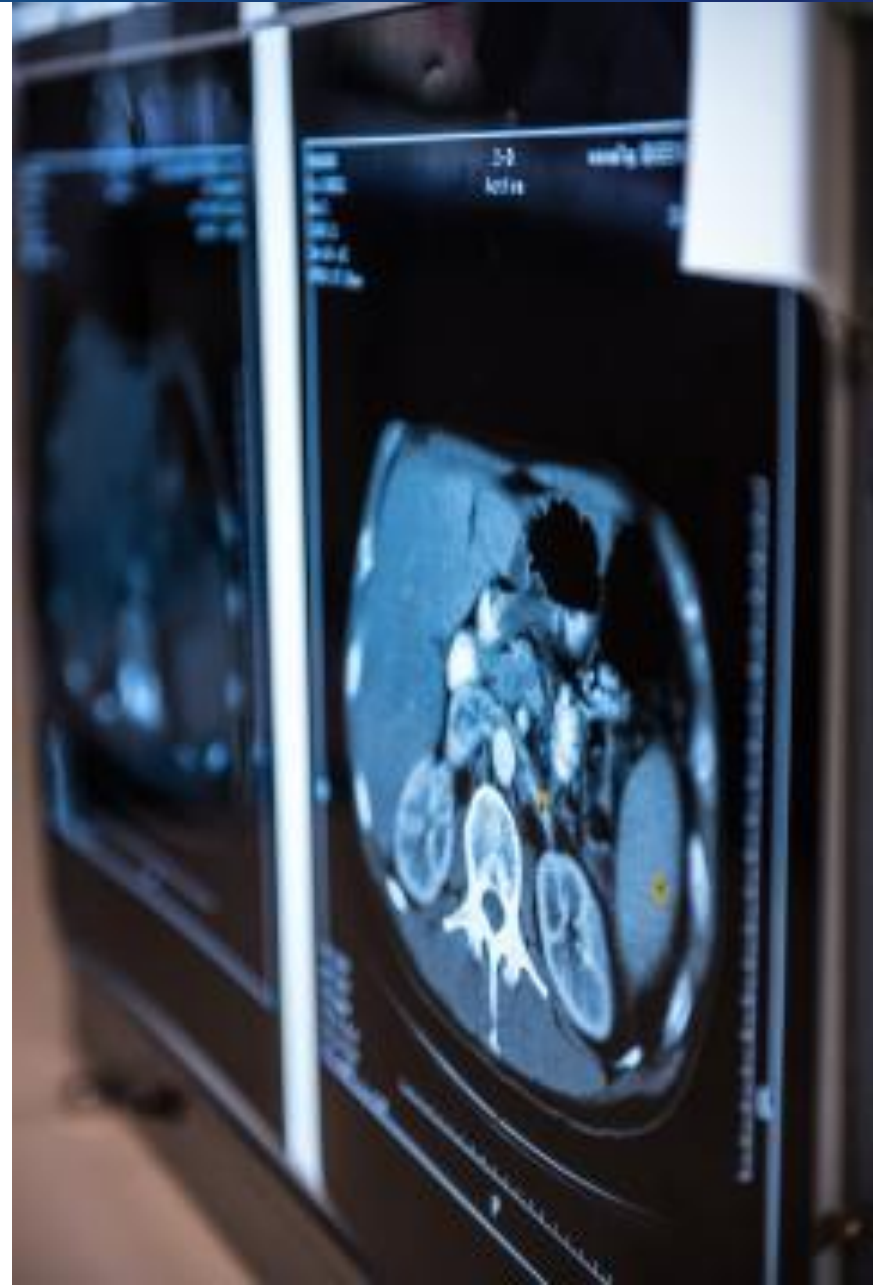






## Top tips

- All questions are stand alone and do not share data.
- Notebook and pen provided can be of use



Four people H, I, J, K are a Doctor, a Manager, a Teacher and a Lecturer, not necessarily in that order. They each own a different type of vehicle.

H is a Doctor

J owns a sports car

K owns an electric car

The person who owns a motorbike is not a teacher

The manager polishes her scooter every weekend.

Four people H, I, J, K are a Doctor, a Manager, a Teacher and a Lecturer, not necessarily in that order. They each own a different type of vehicle.

H is a Doctor

J owns a sports car

K owns an electric car

The person who owns a motorbike is not a teacher

The manager polishes her scooter every weekend.

Which of the following **MUST** be true?

**K is a Teacher**

**J is a Teacher**

**I is a Manager**

**K is a Manager**



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## Quantitative reasoning

- Assesses ability to solve numerical problems (GCSE level)
- Data identification and manipulation
- 36 items associated with tables, charts, and/or graphs.





## Top tips

- Calculator is available.
- If some answers have a wide range, try estimating some details to find the approximate answer.
- Try to understand the scenario first to help you identify the crucial information.



The table gives information about the cost of buying one leaflet from a printing company. VAT is charged at 20% of the total order.

	Number ordered				
	1-9	10-49	50-199	200-599	600+
Single sided black/white	70p	60p	40p	30p	20p
Double sided black/white	£1.30	£1.00	70p	55p	40p
Single sided colour	£1.60	£1.10	80p	60p	50p
Double sided colour	£2.90	£2.00	£1.40	£1.00	90p

The table gives information about the cost of buying one leaflet from a printing company. VAT is charged at 20% of the total order.

	Number ordered				
	1-9	10-49	50-199	200-599	600+
Single sided black/white	70p	60p	40p	30p	20p
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Single sided colour	£1.60	£1.10	80p	60p	50p
Double sided colour	£2.90	£2.00	£1.40	£1.00	90p

Karin buys 150 single sided black and white and one and a half times as many single sided colour leaflets. The total cost, including VAT is:

**£222**

**£234**

**£288**

**£330**

**£342**





## Abstract reasoning

- Assesses your ability to identify patterns amongst abstract shapes
- Irrelevant and distracting material may lead to incorrect conclusions
- 4 question types
  - Decide if presented tiles belong to Group A, B or neither
  - Next tile in a sequence
  - Which shape completes a statement
  - Select a response option that matches a set A or B



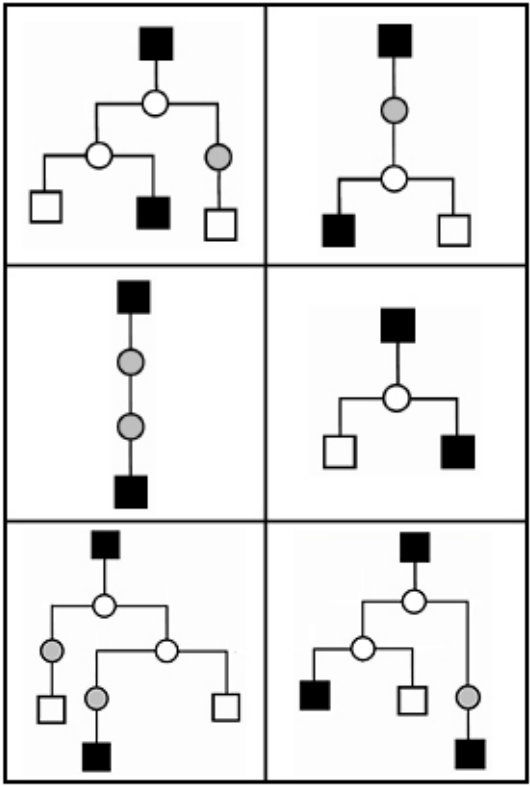


## Top tips

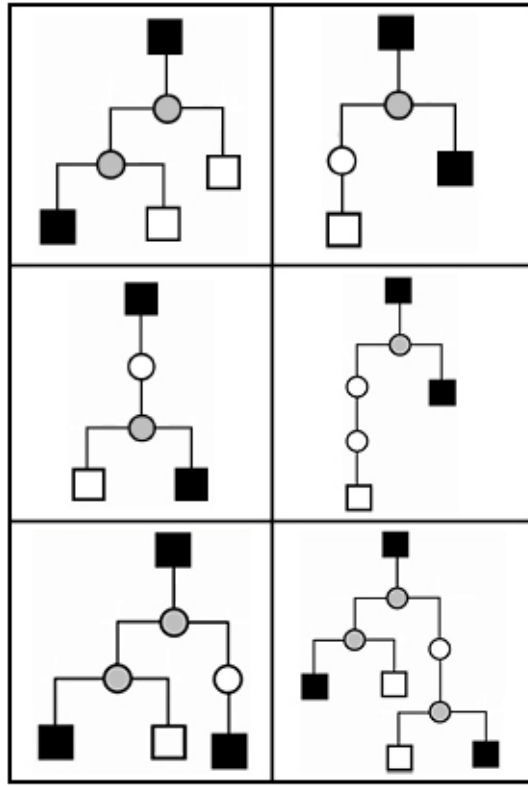
- Work through the mnemonic SCANS when looking for a pattern within the shapes:  
  
S – Shape  
C – Colour  
A – Angle/arrangement  
N – Number of  
(sides/shapes/intersections)  
S – Symmetry



Set A

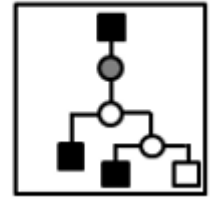


Set B

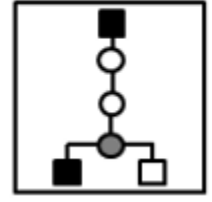


Which of the following test shapes belongs in Set A?

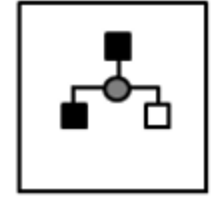
A.



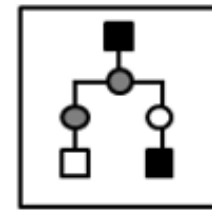
B.



C.



D.





## Situational judgement

- Set of hypothetical scenarios based in a clinical setting or educational training
- Assess ability to understand real world situations and identify critical factors and appropriate behaviour in dealing with them
- Will give you possible actions and have to give importance or appropriateness
- No knowledge required



## Top tips

- Responses should relate to what an individual should do, not what they are likely to do
- Treat responses independently
- Not all possible options will be available (often lots of the options are not ideal)
- Consider options irrelevant of timeframe (e.g. still appropriate if it is something that should be done at a later time)
- Don't damage doctor-patient relationship
- Confidentiality
- GMC 'Good Medical Practice'



During a busy weekend on call, Jagdeep, a first year junior doctor, is called to see Mr Morley, an elderly patient on the ward, who is complaining of a headache. Jagdeep has never met Mr Morley before. On his arrival at the patient's bed, Mr Morley takes one look at Jagdeep and states that he does not look old enough to be a doctor. Mr Morley says he should send someone more qualified instead. Jagdeep knows his seniors are busy seeing sick patients on other wards, and Jagdeep has many other tasks he must complete before the end of his shift.



Tell Mr Morley that he can examine him now or he will likely not be seen by another doctor for a few hours

**A very appropriate thing to do**

**Appropriate, but not ideal**

**Inappropriate, but not awful**

**A very inappropriate thing to do**

Ask Mr Morley how old he thinks he is whilst having a read of his notes

**A very appropriate thing to do**

**Appropriate, but not ideal**

**Inappropriate, but not awful**

**A very inappropriate thing to do**



Tell Mr Morley that he does not look his age either

**A very appropriate thing to do**

**Appropriate, but not ideal**

**Inappropriate, but not awful**

**A very inappropriate thing to do**



Tell Mr Morley he will send another doctor to see him

**A very appropriate thing to do**

**Appropriate, but not ideal**

**Inappropriate, but not awful**

**A very inappropriate thing to do**



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# UCAT Preparation



## How to Prepare

- **Read the whole of the UCAT website**
  - Candidate guides
  - 2020 changes
  - Bursaries
  - Dates and fees
  - Official advice
- Tour Tutorial
- Question Tutorial
- UCAT Question Bank – over 1000 questions FREE
- OFFICIAL UCAT app
- Practice tests
- Start 4-6 weeks before
- 25-30 hours in total

# UCAT Preparation

**TOP TIP**

Our highest scoring candidates said they spent 25-30 hours preparing for the test and that it's better to build up your preparation by doing just an hour or so each day.

**TOP TIP**

Get familiar with the 'Flag' and 'Review' functions within the test which can help you manage your time and practise using the on-screen calculator too.

**TOP TIP**

Consider creating a mnemonic to help you remember some of the key things to look for in Abstract Reasoning (e.g. shape, number, position, symmetry, reflection).

**TOP TIP**

Browse the GMC's Good Medical Practice to inform your responses in the Situational Judgement Test.

**+6 weeks to go**

**4 weeks to go**

**3 weeks to go**

Visit the UCAT website or read our Official Guide to find out the key information you need to know

Use the interactive Question Tutorial to guide you through each subtest and learn strategies on how to approach and answer questions

Check out advice from high scoring candidates on our website and on the Official UCAT YouTube channel

Take Practice Test A on the UCAT website; these tests closely mimic the test experience and questions are of equivalent standard to the actual test



Use the Tour Tutorial to understand the format of the UCAT and learn the functions of the computer-based test

Use our FREE question banks to practise hundreds of example questions

Download the Official UCAT App to practise some additional questions in your spare time

Take Practice Tests B & C - step up your practice by sitting the timed versions to improve your speed as you get closer to sitting your test

**TOP TIP**

Challenge yourself by reading newspapers or articles to improve your speed reading and critical reasoning skills which will help with Verbal Reasoning.

**TOP TIP**

Brush up your Maths skills (percentages, ratios, fractions, etc.) as this will help with the Decision Making and Quantitative Reasoning sections. Practise your mental arithmetic too as this can save you valuable time.

**TOP TIP**

Make sure you know where your test centre is (print off a map) and ensure you have the correct ID to take with you; otherwise you will not be permitted to test.



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# Taking the Test

## Test Centre

- Arrive 15 minutes before your start time
- Take the correct ID
- Can ask for headphones/earplugs – other people will be taking tests of different timings
- COVID-19 additional measures - face coverings are strongly recommended (see website)
- Notify the invigilator immediately if there are any issues



## Home

- Run a system test
- Obtain a whiteboard/pens if you want to use
- Allow 30 minutes before the test for the check-in process
- Ensure you have the right photo ID and if you are under 18 that a parent/guardian is present during the check-in process with their photo ID
- Make sure no one else enters the room during your test
- If you experience any issues during your test, notify the Proctor



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# Marking

## Marking

- 4 cognitive components
  - Each scored from 300-900
  - Total of 1200-3600
- Situational Judgement
  - Banding 1 (highest) – 4
- Receive score on the same day if completed in the test centre or within 24 hours if at home
- Different universities use it very differently



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# Top Tips



## Top Tips

- **Read the whole of the UCAT website**
- Make use of online practice materials
- Practice under **timed conditions**
- Take the test early
- Practice mental maths and speed reading
- Don't leave blanks
- Use the Flag and Review functions of the test effectively to manage your time

UCAT	BMAT
University Clinical Aptitude Test	Biomedical Admissions Test
Not knowledge based	More knowledge based
Can't really revise for but can definitely prepare/practise	Can (and probably should) revise and practise
Online	Paper
Get results immediately	Wait for results
Majority of medical schools	Few medical schools
Sat in driving test theory centres (and now home) at any time in the testing window	Sat in exam centres (e.g. schools) <del>on one of two dates</del> (only November sitting this year)



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# Personal Statement





## Overview

- How it is used depends on the medical school
- Usually include
  - Motivation for studying medicine
  - Qualities that make you a good candidate
  - Proof that you are a rounded person/have hobbies/coping strategies
- Start early



## Activities

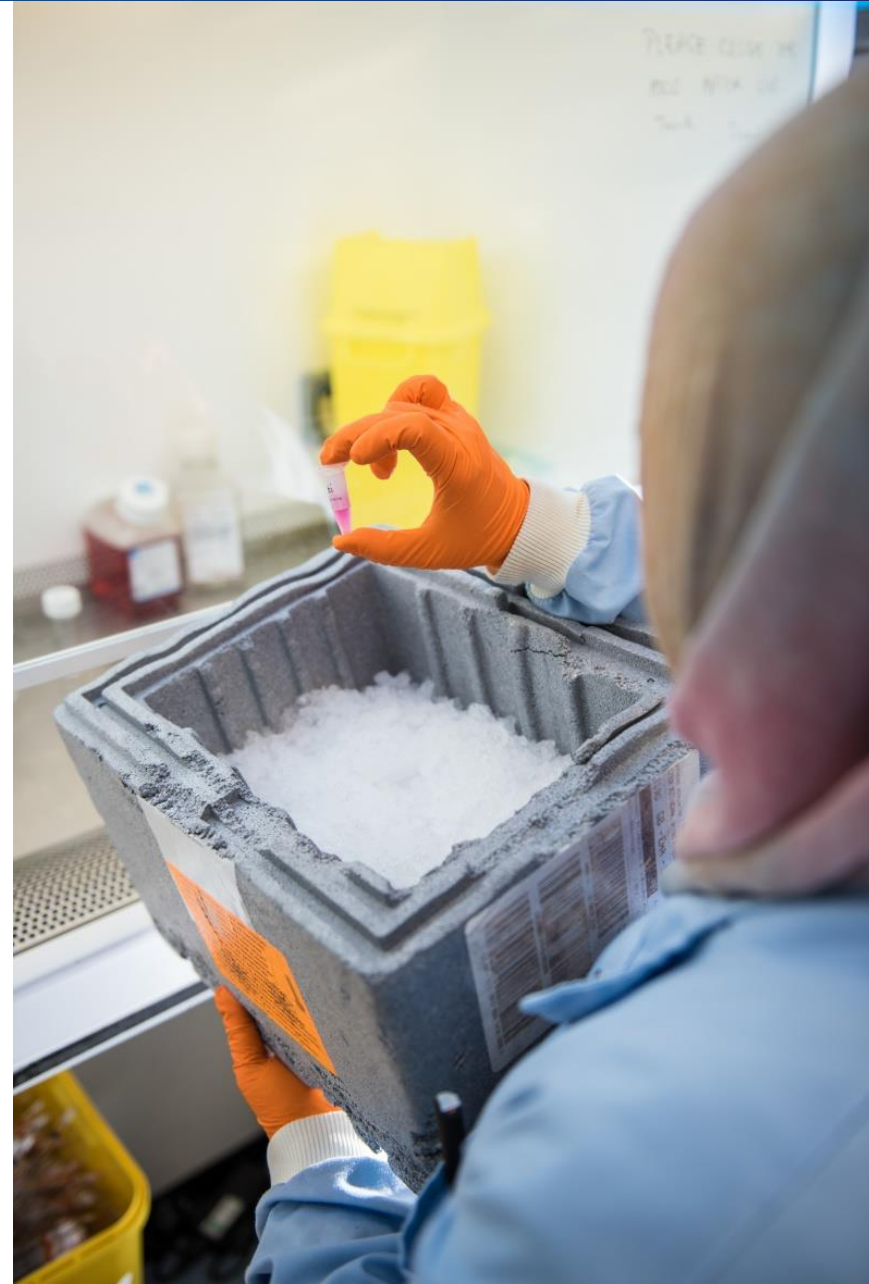
- Work experience and volunteering
- Shadowing, attending public events, taster days
- Knowledge and insight into the career
- Wider reading
- Extracurricular activities





## Skills

- Leadership and teamwork
- Care and empathy
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Motivation and initiative
- Managing time and balancing commitments inside and outside of school





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# Interviews



## MMIs at Nottingham

- Each medical school is different and always changing
- Most are Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)
- Generally test everything about being a doctor that isn't knowledge based e.g. ethics, professionalism, communication, problem solving, prioritization
- How you think/act
- Tips
  - Current affairs
  - GMC publications e.g. Tomorrow's Doctors, Outcomes for Graduates
  - Be yourself
- **Highly likely Nottingham and many others will be virtual for the 2021 cycle**



## MMIs at Nottingham

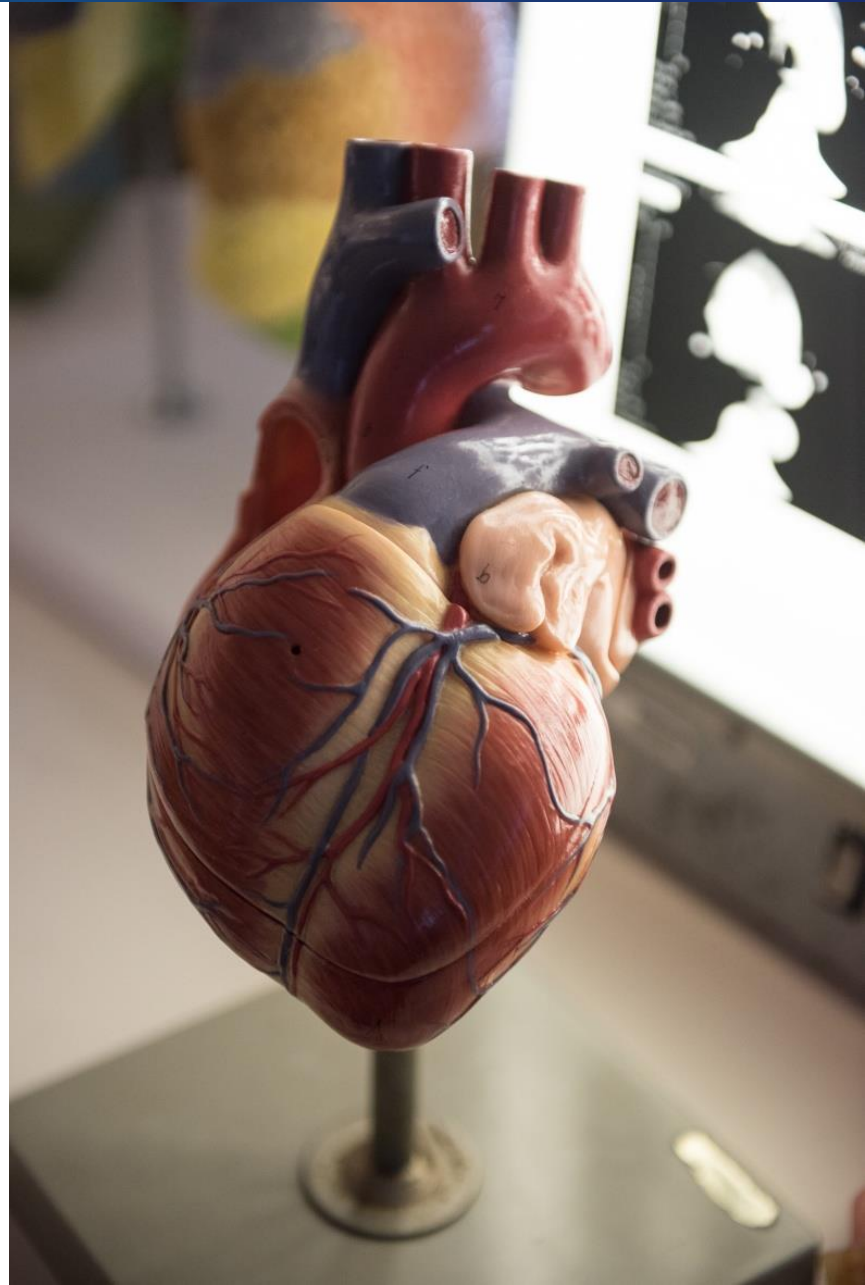
- 8 stations
- “Ice breaker” questions at the first station
- One minute to read the instructions at each station
- Five minute assessment at each station





## MMIs at Nottingham

- Two stations involve role play
- Six stations involve answering questions based on instructions or scenarios.
- Designed to assess personal qualities we consider essential for medicine.
- Conducted by a combination of health care staff and University staff.





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# Work Experience





## Work Experience

### Medical Schools Council

*“There are many different types of work experience that are valuable including paid employment, volunteer work and formal work experience schemes. In the General Principles section there are useful points for you to consider when you plan your work experience.*

*Remember: it is what you learn about yourself; about other people and about how effective care is delivered and received that counts, not what you did. What you did is only half the story: make sure you show us what attributes you demonstrated and what you learned.”*

- During COVID-19 pandemic

*“In these circumstances, first time applicants to medicine will all be in the same situation. All medical schools are aware that the opportunities open to you have been affected and will take this into account. Consequently, medical schools will have to adapt their expectations to the situation applicants find themselves in”*

See Guidance:

[Guidance on Relevant Work Experience for Applying to Medical School](#)  
[Work Experience During COVID-19](#)

## Top tips

- Be organised and prepared
- Research selection processes
- Speak to medical professionals and students
- Have a realistic backup plan





# Discover something extraordinary

Virtual open day (24 June-17  
July)

[Join us online](#)





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# Thank You

Experience our award winning UK  
campuses in 360 degree images and videos

*[nottingham.ac.uk/virtualnottingham](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/virtualnottingham)*



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