



# Useful tips & information for the medical school application process

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## TWO HATS

1. Doctor for 28 years – Oncology consultant
2. Mum of daughter who successfully applied for medicine in 2023, and just started at Leeds university.

*BUT I do not have any formal training in medical school application*



The ROYAL MARSDEN  
NHS Foundation Trust

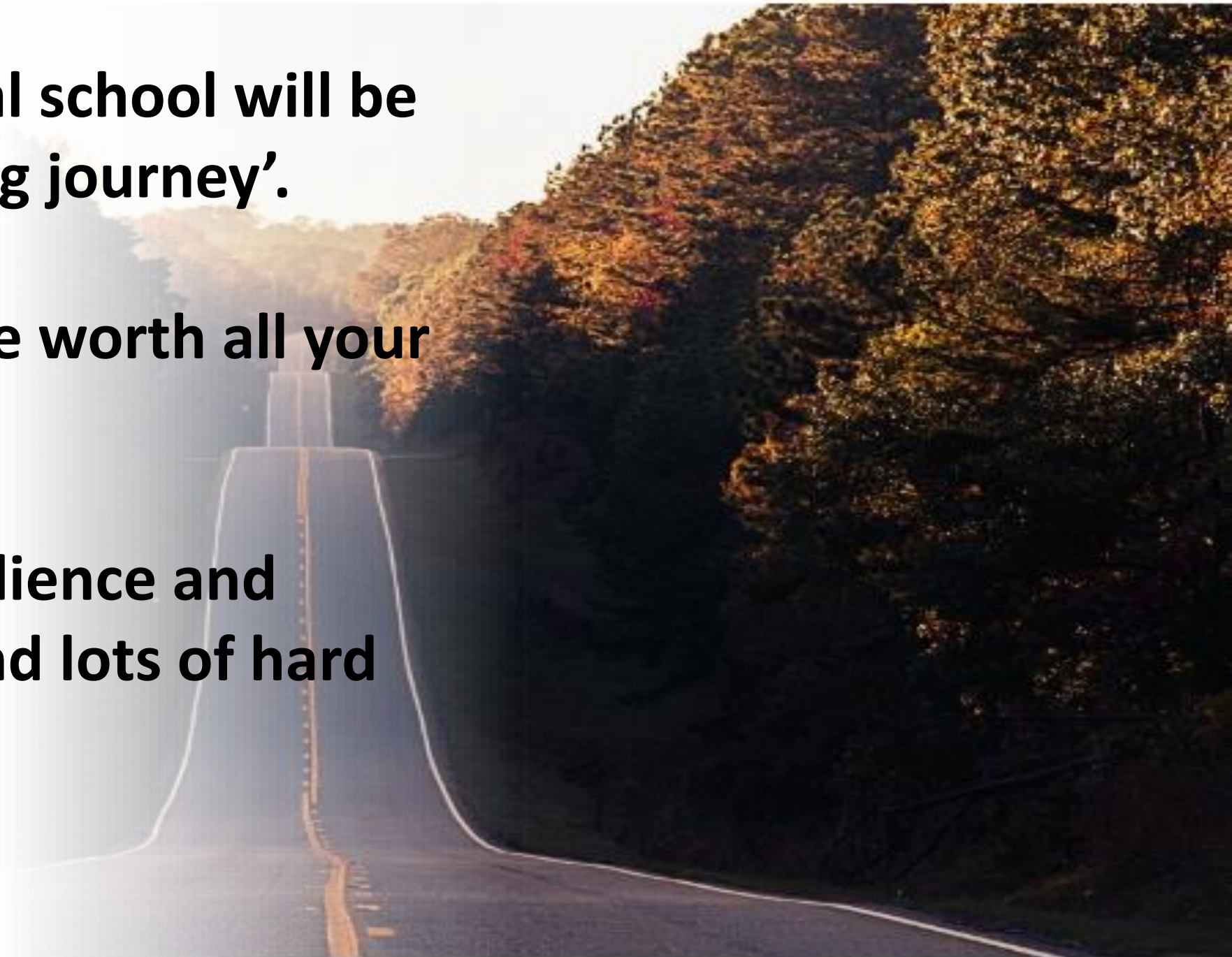


**DISCLAIMER**

**Getting to Medical school will be a 'Challenging long journey'.**

**However, it will be worth all your efforts.**

**You will need resilience and determination, and lots of hard work.**



# Highly competitive

- on one side the NHS faces a staffing crisis, and on the other UK students desperately fight over scarce training places.
- For 2022: number of places fell to 7,500 but applicants rose to a record 29,710. Only **16% of applicants received an offer**
- NHS short of more than 12,000 doctors..... it is a false economy not to train more
- Medical Schools Council has estimated the annual cost of increasing the number of medical students by 5,000 would be approx. **£1 billion.**
- **England's NHS Long Term Workforce Plan - increasing medical and dental school places to 15,000 and 1,100 a year respectively by 2031/32;**

# Examples of competition for places

## University of Leeds Medical School

Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery MBChB (A100)

5 years

Last updated: July 2023

### Competition ratios

Close 

Number of applicants per interview: Home: 3.7 | International: 24

Number of applicants per place: Home: 10.3 | International: -

## University of Birmingham School of Medicine

MBChB Medicine and Surgery (A100)

5 years

Last updated: July 2023

### Competition ratios

Close 

Number of applicants per interview: Home: 2.2 | International: 5.35

Number of applicants per place: Home: 8.4 | International: 21.9

## University of Oxford Medical School

BMBCh Medicine (A100)

6 years

Last updated: July 2023

### Competition ratios

Close 

Number of applicants per interview: Home: - | International: -

Number of applicants per place: Home: 8 | International: 40

**In 2021:**  
1864 applicants  
430 interviewed  
161 places

# Yr 12 - Work experience ideas

- Nursing home volunteering (often have age 18 as a cut off, so look around)
  - could count towards DofE; 6<sup>th</sup> form enrichment
- Hospital or GP work experience- look at their websites

Eg Royal Marsden in July/Aug (apply online in early/mid June- *is competitive application process*)

- Life guarding (first aid)
- Saturday job in a pharmacy
- St John's ambulance cadets
- Working in a restaurant or shop

Other suggestions: leadership roles at school, mentoring younger students, D of E

# Yr 12 - Essay competi

- Good to include in your pe
  - - Look online for options
- [School Competitions And Pr](#)  
or possibly at interview

Cottrell Essay Prize – Lucy Ca

- ‘submit an essay of betwee
- *‘The fact that we can prolc*  
*Discuss.*

https://www.themedicportal.com/blog/school-competitions-for-aspiring-medics/

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## School Competitions And Prizes For Aspiring Medics

Learn about all of the competitions and prizes you can enter at school to boost your  
Medicine application.

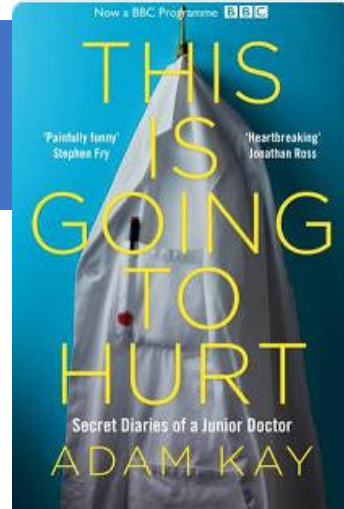
18th April 2023

[MORE](#)

If you're an aspiring medic at school, you can boost your [Medicine application](#) by entering competitions and prizes. Regardless of whether you win or not, you'll be able to include the experience in your [Personal Statement](#) and talk about it at [Med School interviews](#). Here are

# Yr 12 - Some suggested Books to read

'Super-curricular activities'





**YEAR 13**



Driving Test Tips  
Guildford Theory Test Centre

Subtest	Questions	Time	Time Per Question
Verbal Reasoning	44	1 min instruction 21 min test time	29 seconds per question
Decision Making	29	1 min instruction 31 min test time	64 seconds per question
Quantitative Reasoning	36	1 min instruction 24 min test time	40 seconds per question
Abstract Reasoning	50	1 min instruction 12 mins test time	14 seconds per question
Situational Judgement	69	1 min instruction 26 min test time	25 seconds per question

<https://www.ucat.ac.uk>

- free preparation materials to support their test preparation
- Commercial Preparation Materials – *‘can cost candidates a great deal of money’* and *‘we would advise you to be sceptical about claims they can help you do well in the test by coaching’*
- *‘these are not affiliated with UCAT in any way’.*

It is a very hard exam.

- Requires good preparation to learn the techniques
- Will be unlike any school exam you have taken.



- 36,374 candidates sat the test in 2022
- only **one** attempt per year allowed
- Costs £70
- **mean average total score** for Yr2022 was **2500**
- *highest possible score (which has never been achieved) is 3600*
- *An average UCAT score will put you in the 50th percentile. This means you did better than around 50% of test takers*
- **situational judgement** – 20% got Band 1 / 36% got Band 2



# BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

- Oct 2023 Is final sitting (at school)
- currently six UK medical schools that use BMAT tests as part of their admissions process ('Brighton & Sussex', Imperial, Lancaster, UCL, Cambridge, and Oxford)

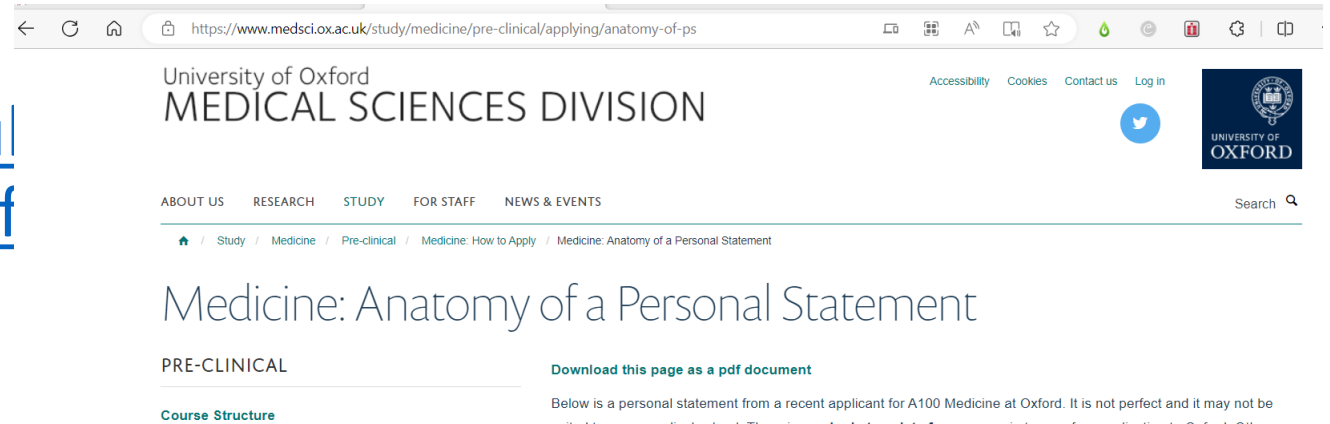
BMAT sections	
<b>SECTION 1: Thinking Skills</b>	
60 minutes	<b>32 questions</b> <i>INCLUDING</i> 16 Problem Solving questions 16 Critical Thinking questions
<b>SECTION 2: Scientific Knowledge and Applications</b>	
30 minutes	<b>27 GCSE-level questions</b> <i>INCLUDING</i> 7 Biology questions 7 Chemistry questions 7 Physics questions 6 Mathematics questions
<b>SECTION 3: Writing Task</b>	
30 minutes	<b>1 essay question</b> You'll be tested on your ability to explain propositions, produce counter-arguments and reconcile opposing ideas

<b>PRICE</b> £78/€91 within the UK/EU £104/\$142 outside the EU October 2023	<b>QUESTIONS</b> Section 1: 32 MCQs Section 2: 27 MCQS Section 3: One essay
<b>TIMING</b> 2 hours to complete Section 1: 60 minutes Section 2: 30 minutes Section 3: 30 minutes	<b>RESITS</b> You can resit an unlimited number of times if you meet the eligibility criteria, but only once per year
<b>SCORE VALIDITY</b> Results are only valid for admission to a course in the following year	<b>GOOD SCORE?</b> Sections 1 & 2: 5 (average), 6 (good), 7+ (very good) Section 3: 3A or higher
<b>HOW LONG SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR?</b> 6 – 8 weeks minimum but ideally you should prepare for as long as possible so that you can master the syllabus	

# Personal statement

- Look online for advice and examples eg

- <https://www.medsci.ox.ac.uk/clinical/applying/anatomy-of>



- Be reflective, don't just list the work experience.
- Bring it back to the qualities of a doctor eg leadership skills, teaching, empathy, time management.
- think of a good answer to 'Why do you want to be a doctor'? – for the PS and for interviews

# Choosing your Uni - *Types of courses*

- **traditional pre-clinical and clinical course-** Oxford/Cambridge
- **integrated/systems based course** *eg circulatory system and consider the anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, pathology of it all at once. early patient contact and self-directed learning*
- **problem-based learning (PBL)** - very patient-oriented approach, given medical cases to resolve and learn from
- **case-based learning (CBL)-** a case is used to think about the knowledge and skills needed and why these might be useful.

# UNIVERSITY choices

need to be chosen **strategically**:

Depending on:

- A level predictions
- GCSE results
- **UCAT Score** - *many universities have a threshold. If you score below this threshold your application may not be accepted*
- **Contextual criteria** – e.g. *live in a neighbourhood that has low participation into higher education, eligible for free school meals or PIP or in local authority care*
- **Personal statement** – some review prior to interview, or assess during interview, some not at all eg Brighton, Leicester
- **BMAT result** is *unknown* at time of UCAS application deadline – risky to apply for 2 as if have bad day, could wipe out two of your 4 choices

# Where to get information?

[About us](#)[Our work](#)[UK MLA](#)[Study](#)[News](#)[Contact](#)

Select a [course type](#) above then use the filters below to learn about the courses. This information is provided directly by the medical schools but can change. Always confirm the information on medical schools' websites. You can see when this information was last updated under the name of each course.

This information relates to entry requirements for entry into medical school in Autumn 2024, with UCAS applications to be submitted by 16 October 2023.

A PDF version of this information can be downloaded here: [Entry requirements for UK medical schools: 2024 entry](#).

[Go](#)[Reset](#) Competition ratios Degree (graduate applicants) A Levels and Scottish Highers GCSEs and Scottish Nationals International Baccalaureate Access to HE Diplomas Admissions test Personal statement Interview method Work experience Widening participation Contextual admissions Additional information



[← All Medicine courses](#)

## MB ChB Medicine (A100)

- For 2023 entry, the final UCAT threshold score to be invited to interview was 2910

# EXAMPLE: LEICESTER 2024 – scoring system

## 3.0 UCAT

UCAT will form 50% of the pre-interview scoring system (less for Access candidates).

**Applicants with band 4 in the Situational Judgement Test will be automatically rejected pre-interview.**

Points will be awarded by the total score using the following sequence until the bottom 2 deciles:

TOTAL UCAT SCORE	Points	TOTAL UCAT SCORE	Points	TOTAL UCAT SCORE	Points
>3,200	32	2850 - 2899	28.5	2500 - 2549	25
3150 – 3199	31.5	2800 - 2849	28	2450 - 2499	24.5
3100 – 3149	31	2750 - 2799	27.5	2400 - 2449	24
3050 – 3099	30.5	2700 – 2749	27	2350 - 2399	23.5
3000 – 3049	30	2650 - 2699	26.5	2300 - 2349	23 or 16*
2950 – 2999	29.5	2600 – 2649	26	If bottom 2 deciles	Max 16
2900 – 2949	29	2550 - 2599	25.5		

\*depending on where bottom two decile begins

Applicants with a total score in the bottom two deciles of that year's results will typically be rejected as they will not score sufficient to get to interview, *(for 2022/3 entry this would have been less than or equal to a total UCAT score of 2250).*

# Interviews

- multiple-mini interview (MMI) – most common
- panel interviews eg Oxford
- Mostly online

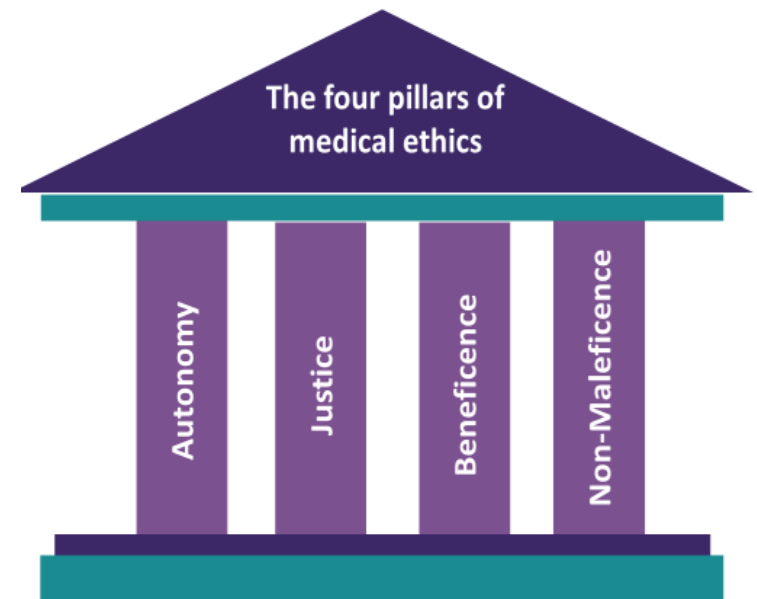
## PREPARATION tips:

- Read The GMC's Ethical Guidance – eg consent, confidentiality, mental capacity [www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)
- Read free advice on the web e.g.- [www.themedicportal.com](http://www.themedicportal.com)
- Know about the specific course and locality eg high level of homelessness, elderly population etc
- re-read your personal statement – ‘Why medicine question’



# Four Pillars of Medical Ethics

1. Beneficence (doing good)
2. Non-maleficence (to do no harm)
3. Autonomy (giving the patient the freedom to choose freely, where they are able)
4. Justice (ensuring fairness)



# NHS Core Values



Understand the NHS values & try to use them in context to your discussions.

# Year 13 timeline – our experience

- **July/Aug** - UCAT prep / EPQ research/ read relevant books for Personal statement & interview /Gold DofE residential /Work experience /personal statement prep
- **July- Sept** – UCAT exam (Instant result)
- **Sept** – start Yr 13 – back to A level work /EPQ lessons begin / personal statement prep /BMAT prep/research Uni choices
- **Early Oct** – hand in personal statement (4,000 characters) – format is due to change in 2025.
- **Mid Oct:**
  - UCAS deadline – finalize Uni choices
  - BMAT exam (for 2023 only)
  - non-medical applicants start to get offers (often with no interviews...)
- **Nov:** Interview prep
  - end Nov – BMAT result (2023 only)
- **Dec**
  - Interviews – (Oxford, Leicester)
  - Revise for A Level mocks
- **Jan** – 2 weeks of mock exams (Oxford results day 10/1/23)
  - Leeds interview (26/1/23)
- **Feb** – Liverpool interview (7/2/23)
- **March** – hand in EPQ /presentation / 2<sup>nd</sup> round of mock exams
  - Liverpool offer (27/3/23 – two months later)
- **April /May:** A level course /revision
  - Leeds offer (3/4/23 – three months later)
  - Leicester offer (5/5/23 – five months later)
- **Mid May - end June** – A level exams
- **Mid Aug** – A level results day

# TIPS

- Start preparing early
  - Yr 12 – Exams are in April , so start UCAT Prep and read books May-June.
- Do UCAT in mid -July – then you can have a summer break
- Think twice about doing a 4<sup>th</sup> A level– most Unis don't give you extra points
- EPQ – pros & cons – useful for personal statement, good practice for research projects at med school, but no extra points for application process
- Ensure a good work/life balance – need time for exercise /seeing friends/ watching a movie etc. To maintain resilience through the stressful and tiring Year 13
- Concentrate on your A Levels- don't let your grades slip
- Only apply if you are SURE Medicine is for you.
- In Aug - have a PLAN B – eg GAP year, graduate entry, ??Medical Doctor Apprenticeship (provisionally able to apply from Sept 2024)

*And finally.....*

- GO FOT IT & GOOD LUCK!
- 

I WOULDN'T DO ANY OTHER CAREER!

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

