



APPLYING FOR MEDICINE

Wednesday 17 May 2017

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Today's Conference

Part One:

A consistent approach to supporting your medicine applicants

- The GWIST Framework
- Activities in school/college to support your applicants
- **Ross Whistler from Student BMJ** on Medical Schools search tool and how your students can use SBMJ

Part Two

FOUR London Medical Schools: presentations and panel Q&A

- **Philip Addis**, MBBS Admissions Tutor, SGUL
- **Sarah Bennett** : MBBS Admissions Tutor, UCL
- **Kevin Murphy**, MBBS Admissions Tutor, Imperial College London
- **Kim Piper**: Head of Admissions for Medicine and Dentistry, QMUL

Getting in : the stats (2016)

Institution	Applications (approx.)	Interview	Offers
Barts & London	2500	800	440
Birmingham	3700	1100	650
Glasgow	2000	700	230
Imperial	2000	750	480
Nottingham	2700	700	400
Oxford	1600	425	150 places

The GWIST Framework- what is it?

- Grades
- Work Experience
- Interviews
- Subject Interest
- Tests

Crucial to get all these elements right during the application process if an application is to be successful

Grades : GCSE

Key advice:

- Check the exact minimum requirements of EACH choice meticulously
- Don't believe published minimum requirements are enough : ' English GCSE Grade C minimum'
'Last year, over 40% of applicants achieved full marks on our academic scoring system which requires 9 A grades at GCSE.....' Univ. of Leeds*
- Get the advice right about which subjects to choose at A Level : '*Informed Choices*' - Russell Group
- Vital to excel in English, Maths, Sciences at GCSE (Combined Science accepted).

GCSEs:

Manchester- at least seven subjects required at grade C or above; at least five must be at A or A*.

St Andrews - a minimum of eight A grades (or 6 A* grades) at GCSE

UCL expects UK applicants to offer a modern foreign language at GCSE grade C or equivalent

and says 'GCSEs will be used as a general indicator of the candidate's academic background'.

Grades: A and AS Levels

AS/A Levels

- Chemistry compulsory for almost all institutions
- Norwich UEA – Biology compulsory but Chemistry is not
- Barts and London; Newcastle; Keele - also possible without Chemistry
- Maths/ Further Maths- only one will form part of offer
- EPQ?
- Contrasting subjects?
- General Studies, Citizenship?
- A Levels grades must be achieved in ONE sitting
- Can you get in anywhere with less than AAA? Or with resits? BTECs?

Impact of curriculum reform at GCSE/AS/A Level

'There are no AS requirements for the A100 programme. Where an applicant holds AS Levels, they will not be considered as part of the application.'

University of Sheffield Medical School

- Desire to be fair given range of approaches to curriculum in schools and colleges
 - Impact on GCSE requirements? New grading.
- '8 GCSEs at grade A*-C or equivalent, or grades 4-9 in the reformed GCSEs' – Hull/York*
- Is grade 4 or 5 the new minimum or 'C' equivalent?
 - Writing UCAS references / link to school website information

'A statement must be included in the first few lines of the UCAS reference to inform us of the school's policy in this regard.'

King's College

Work Experience

‘Selecting for Excellence’ document from Medical Schools Council

- That you have had people focused experience of providing care or help to other people and that you understand the realities of working in a caring profession.
- That you have developed some of the attitudes and behaviours essential to being a doctor such as conscientiousness, good communication skills, and the ability to interact with a wide variety of people.
- That you have a realistic understanding of medicine and in particular the physical, organisational and emotional demands of a medical career.

<http://www.medschools.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Work-experience-guidelines-for-applicants-to-medicine.pdf>

Work Experience

What they say:

Cambridge: ‘ We are not prescriptive about how this is obtained, recognising the widely differing opportunities available’.

Bristol: ‘You should try to gain as wide voluntary experience as possible in a caring or health environment. This does not have to be in a hospital (which can be difficult to obtain) but a nursing home, local hospice, shelter for the homeless, working with people with disabilities or special needs, or working with a youth group, would all be useful experience’.

King’s: ‘We would normally expect that you will have undertaken some work experience in a caring environment and/or observation in a Medical clinical setting. If this is not possible, we look for evidence that you have worked in a setting where you can interact with the general public, eg in a pharmacy, check-out or restaurant’.

+ St George’s recommend looking at www.tasteofmedicine.com – great tips re work experience!

Work Experience –other points

- Securing WE is becoming increasingly difficult (safeguarding issues). Students should plan ahead to secure opportunities- eg write to GP practices etc.
- Key issue is 'WHAT YOU LEARN FROM IT'; REFLECTION is essential
- Keep records- verification often required. List in employment section on UCAS.
- Observe patient care and teamwork if in medical/caring setting
- First aid courses, giving blood, youth work, leading summer camps etc- COMMITMENT IS KEY

A student view

“(My work experience) included helping in a nursing home from 2010 till 2013, volunteering at a day school for disabled children from 2011-2012 and spending every Saturday morning from 2012-2014 playing and helping out with a boy who has the rare Mowat-Wilson Syndrome.

I wasn't asked about any of this at my interview at, however I still managed to talk about aspects of my volunteer work, like when they asked me a question about what I'd do in a certain situation with an elderly patient”.

Jenny – King's

The Interview

Traditional panel or Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI) or a hybrid.

- 22 currently do MMI
- Others mostly panel interviews – some with group tasks/ two or three interviews
- Edinburgh- no interview currently but reviewing this.

Key advice for applicants:

- Know your personal statement inside out. Check it prior to interview.
- Consider the interview like a ‘speaking and listening exam’
- Research likely questions- eg on work experience; ethical issues; current NHS issues; science
- Check websites of medical schools - good guidance about what to expect
- Prepare: read websites, articles, go to lectures, keep a press file on current issues...

What are Multiple Mini Interviews?

(OSCE-Objective Structured Clinical Examination)

Typical Format:

- Several 'stations' with an assessor (or two) at each
- Scoring system for each candidate who spends 5-7 mins at each station
- Tests key competences of doctors- eg communication skills, problem solving, empathy, handling data etc
- Confidentiality regarding content of MMIs

King's: 'Consists of eight different stations. Each station will last seven minutes and you will have one minute to move between stations and read the next task. The format of the stations varies; some will ask you to discuss information that is on your UCAS form, or discuss a scenario or question that you will be presented with. Most stations involve discussion with the examiner but the station may require you to write down some information or to interact with an actor who will be playing a role. The skills that we will be assessing will include ethical reasoning, self-evaluation, communication skills and problem solving'.

A Student View

“I think they wanted to get a little insight into who applicant number 543 -aka me- was, and see that I was a decent human being who could hold a professional, calm and interesting conversation and that I had the right people skills to be let loose on a hospital ward talking to sick patients.

Therefore, I think the best interview prep I had was from the interviews that school gave me, as just being thrown in at the deep end, having to talk and sustain conversations with people, gave me the confidence to think I am suited to one day being a doctor.

Phoebe – Leeds

Subject Interest – choosing your medical school

1. The teaching methodology which suits you

- Traditional (eg Oxbridge)
- Integrated (eg Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol)
- Problem based learning (eg Barts, Liverpool)

Distinctions becoming muddled between integrated and PBL (also see 'case based'; systems based')

2. Your BMAT/UKCAT strategy- more on that later

3. Other factors

- Location – urban? Campus? Small city/big city? London?
- Student feedback- alumni from your school + **Which?University** student satisfaction ratings
- Don't rule out the 'lesser known' ones – eg Plymouth, UEA, Leicester, Exeter

Personal Statements : what they are looking for

What they say:

Keele –

- Motivation for becoming a doctor
- Understanding of the role of a doctor
- Examples of regular hands-on caring work experience
- Depth of experience in a role involving personal interaction
- Reflection on what was learnt from these experiences
- Initiative/enterprise
- Work/life balance
- Working in teams
- Communication (particularly outside your peer group)
- Quality of written application

Subject : How you demonstrate your suitability and interest

Personal Statement and Reference

- See as two interconnected and complementary elements of the application.
- Some medical schools score the personal statement; others use it as a tie breaker or as interview material only
- Ensure all the following qualities/attributes/skills addressed:

Motivation

Compassion and empathy

Oral communication

Leadership

Intellectual curiosity

Teamwork

Self-discipline

Work habits

Persistence

Resilience

Reliability

Integrity

Logical reasoning

References

- Around 80 % should be related to subject suitability /academic strengths
- **Why** is candidate suitable - evidence of motivation, leadership, juggling priorities
- Paint a picture of authenticity
- Referee's 'voice'
- Don't forget School policy on curriculum offer

What they say:

Leeds: 'Please work with your referee when they are writing your reference to ensure they include as much appropriate information as possible and direct them to the guidance on the UCAS site (www.ucas.com/advisers/online/references)'

Manchester: 'A 'character reference' is not sufficient. We do, however, want to know what the writer of the reference thinks about you as a whole person, not merely about your academic achievements and potential'.

Tests

BMAT : used by 7 medical schools

- Taken in school/college (£45 fee- 2017)
- 2017 test on 2 November
- 2 hrs of traditional exam (pen/paper)
- 3 sections
 - Aptitude and skills (60 mins)
 - Scientific knowledge/applications(30)
 - Writing task (30)
- Practice - do past papers on website

www.admissionstesting.org

UKCAT : used by 25 medical schools

- Clinical aptitude test – 2 hours
- Student arranges entry for this on- line test
- £65 minimum to register . Bursaries available
- Taken at Test Centres (5 in London)
- Five sections on verbal, quantitative , abstract reasoning, decision making + situational judgement
- Practice tests and tutorials on website
- You receive result immediately

www.ukcat.ac.uk

How would you do ? (BMAT)

Example 1:

The 400 seats in a parliament are divided amongst five political parties. No two parties have the same number of seats, and each has at least 20. What is the largest number of seats that the third largest party can have?

A 22 B 118 C 119 D 120 E 121

Example 2:

“A little learning is a dangerous thing.” (Alexander Pope) Explain what this statement means. Argue to the contrary to show that a little learning is not dangerous. To what extent do you think learning can be a dangerous thing?

Tests: Preparation and Tactics

Preparation:

Do the practice tests on respective websites

BMAT- past Science papers- GCSE and AS Level

BMAT/UKCAT prep courses and books on market???

Tactics:

Do UKCAT in summer – can shape final choice of where you apply to

Don't put all your eggs in either basket

A Student View

“With UKCAT, I sat down with my head in the 500 questions book for quite a lot of the summer and just worked my way through it and some online practise papers. I really don't think there's much else that can be done as the questions aren't that difficult and so you just have to work on your timing. I'd say a lot of it is just natural ability that you either see the patterns in the boxes or not.

It helped having all summer to prepare for it and I recommend students taking the exam during/after summer and not whilst they're in the middle of term time with all the other stresses”.

Ben - Nottingham

Supporting applicants in your school/college

- Get interested students to set up a Medicine Society – invite speakers
- Visits to relevant places
- Taster Courses (including Science – based ones)
- Mock interviews- panel and MMI types
- Use any alumni/contacts at medical school or newly qualified doctors
- Link with nearby schools for interview practice, BMAT prep.
- Get your prospective medicine applicants to run activities/talks for younger students on human biology or medical related science topics

Supporting your applicants: timeline for applications

Term	Autumn/Spring Yr 12	Summer Year 12	Autumn Year 13	Spring Year 13
Key Dates and deadlines		August – AS results (?) - impact on choices/decisions	Sept : BMAT registration Oct 15: UCAS deadline Nov 2 : BMAT	By May - student to finalise firm/insurance choices
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research choices - Establish Medicine applicants group - Alumni - Taster Courses - Invite speakers - Parents' information events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UCAS: draft Personal Statements - Interview prep. - Open day visits - BMAT practice sessions (ask Science dept to lead) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -BMAT/UKCAT prep. continues -Interview prep. -Uni finance session 	Advice re responding to offers or about post A level application

Supporting your applicants: Some other sources of advice and guidance for choosing the right medical school.

www.medschools.ac.uk - Medical Schools Council

www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk

www.nhscareers.nhs.uk

www.studentbmj.com – articles about medicine: applying, studying, research

www.bma.org.uk (+ look at their Guide to Access Schemes for Medical schools)

www.ucas.com

www.unistats.direct.gov.uk

www.tasteofmedicine.com

www.university.which.co.uk

Showing 25 results out of ...

university.which.co.uk/search/course?utf8=✓&c%5Bq%5D=medicine&button=&c%5Bgrade_ALEVEL_0%5D=2&c%5Bgrade_ALEVEL_1%5D=2&c%5Bgrade_ALEVEL_2%5D=2&c%5Blower_points_bound

Which? University Find a course University profiles Get advice Teachers

Imperial College London

Medicine [1 of 5 related courses](#)

UCAS Points	% applicants receiving offers	Student satisfaction score	Average graduate salary
152	19%	Not Available	£30k HIGH

MB BS 6 YEARS FULL-TIME 2017

[Course information](#) [5 related courses](#)

Shortlist +

Taskbar: hp, File Explorer, HP, Chrome, Word, PowerPoint, 13:21 09/05/2017, HUB

After the break.... the London Medical Schools

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- **Sarah Bennett**, Admissions Tutor, UCL
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but first.....