



# Applying for Medicine

*Dr Will Zermansky*

---

LEARNING THE GAME



# Dr Will Zermansky

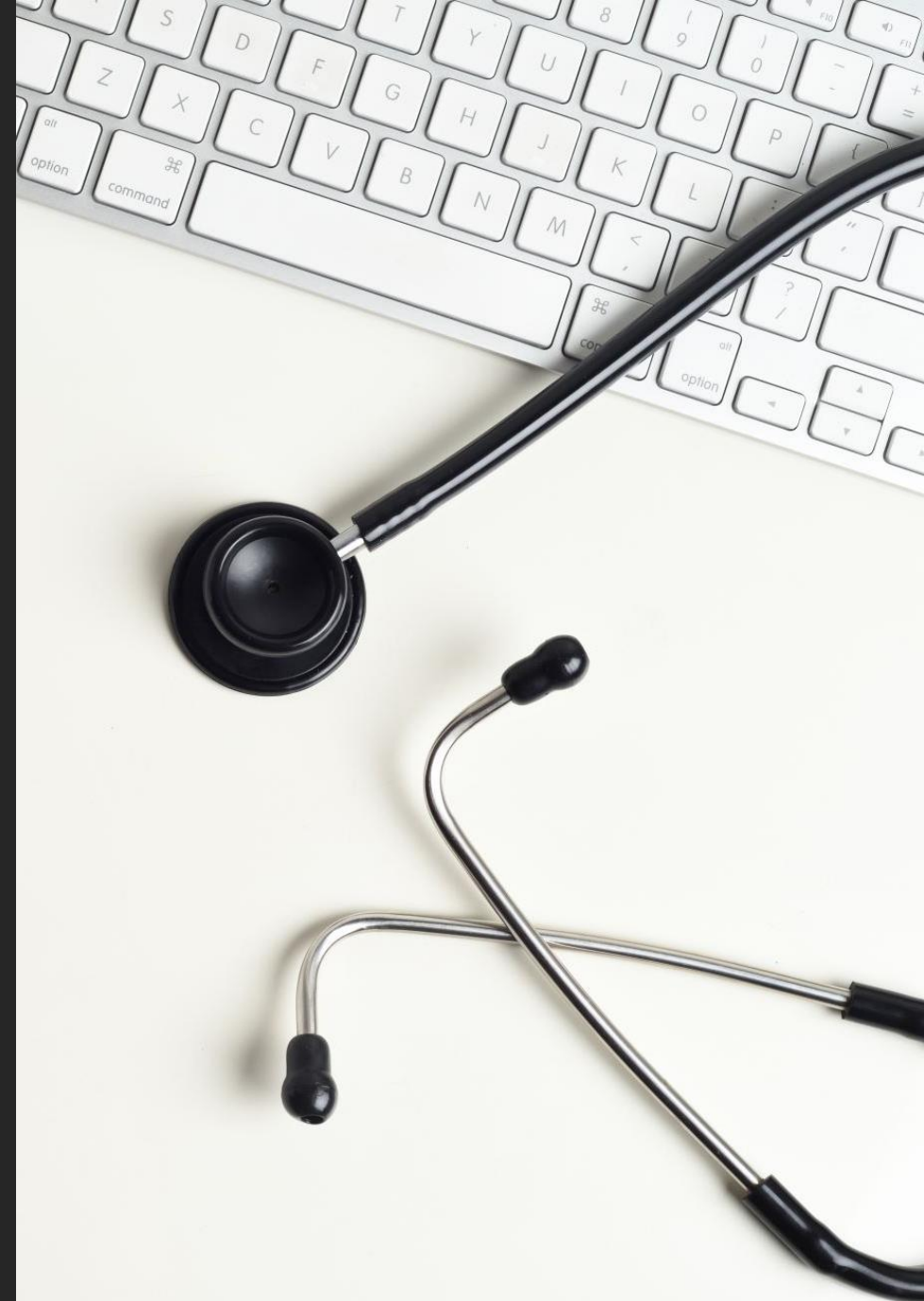
---

- GP at Highgate Group Practice
- Trainer for registrars and foundation doctors
- Was a UCL Fellow for medical students
- Run a course for last 10 years on applying for medicine
- Board representing General practice for workforce
- Son at medical school Yr1 manchester

# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews

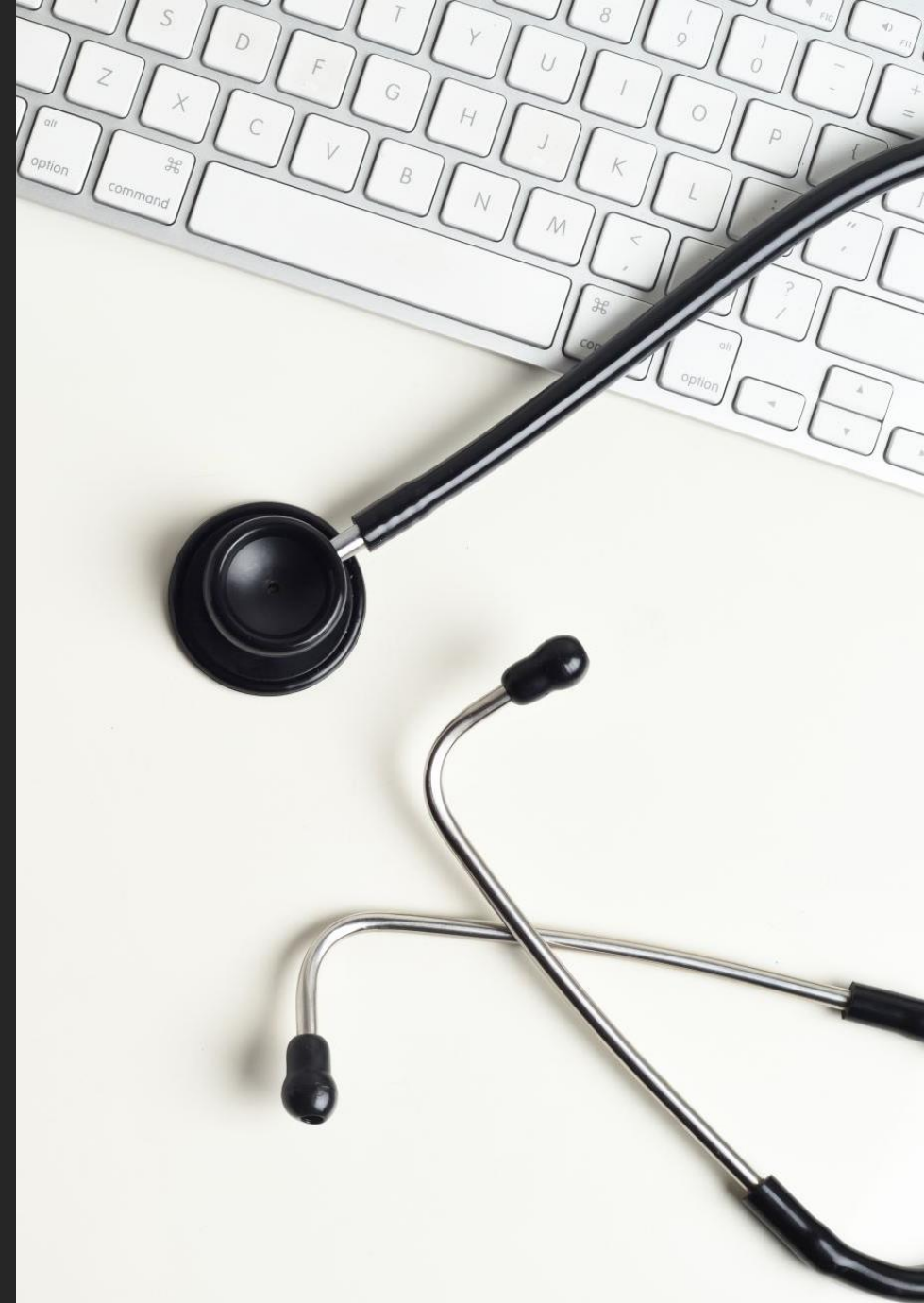




# Agenda

---

- **Being a doctor — a career**
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews



# Being a doctor

*A career in medicine*



- Medicine is a vocation
- Hard work at uni, as a junior doctor and as a consultant or GP
- It is enjoyable, interesting and satisfying
- Varied and challenging
- Exhausting
- It is no longer highly paid but there are highly paid specialities



# It's a long haul....

---

1. 5/6 years at medical school including a BSc
  1. *Phase 1: preclinical years*
  2. *Optional - BSc (biochemistry, anatomy, psychology, history of medicine)*
  3. *Phase 2: Clinical Years*
  4. *Phase 3: final year*
2. 2 years as a foundation doctor (FY1 & FY2)

in hospital and GP
3. 3-8 years as a specialty trainee
4. Optional : research, teaching, other specialties, charity work, elective work, babies, career break





Neonatology



Paediatrics



Liver  
transplant  
medicine



A&E



Elderly  
Care



Fellow &  
Lecturer



Paediatric  
Intensive care



General surgery &  
Orthopaedics



GP



Respiratory  
Medicine



Minor  
surgery



Medical  
director



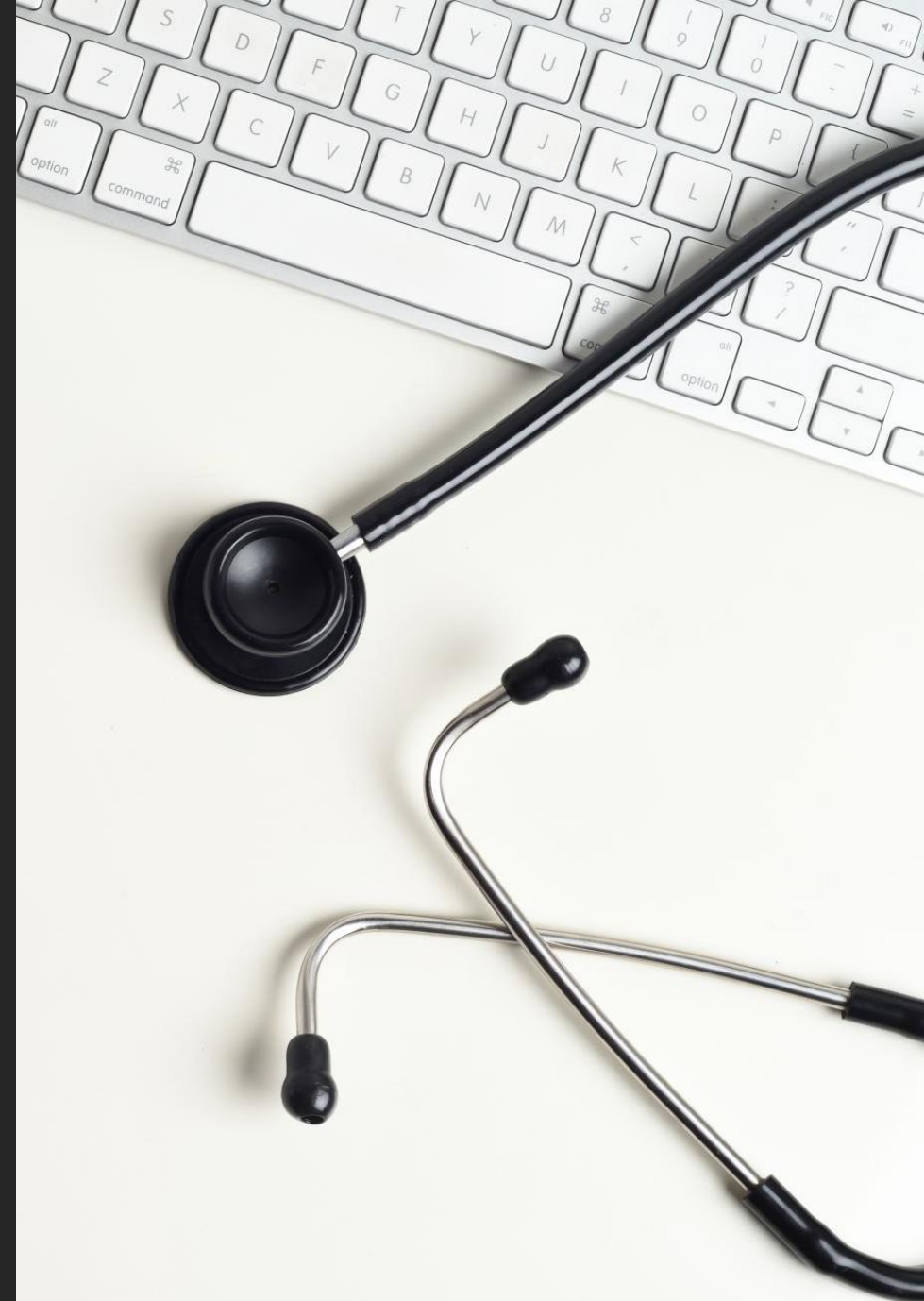
Community  
Paediatrics



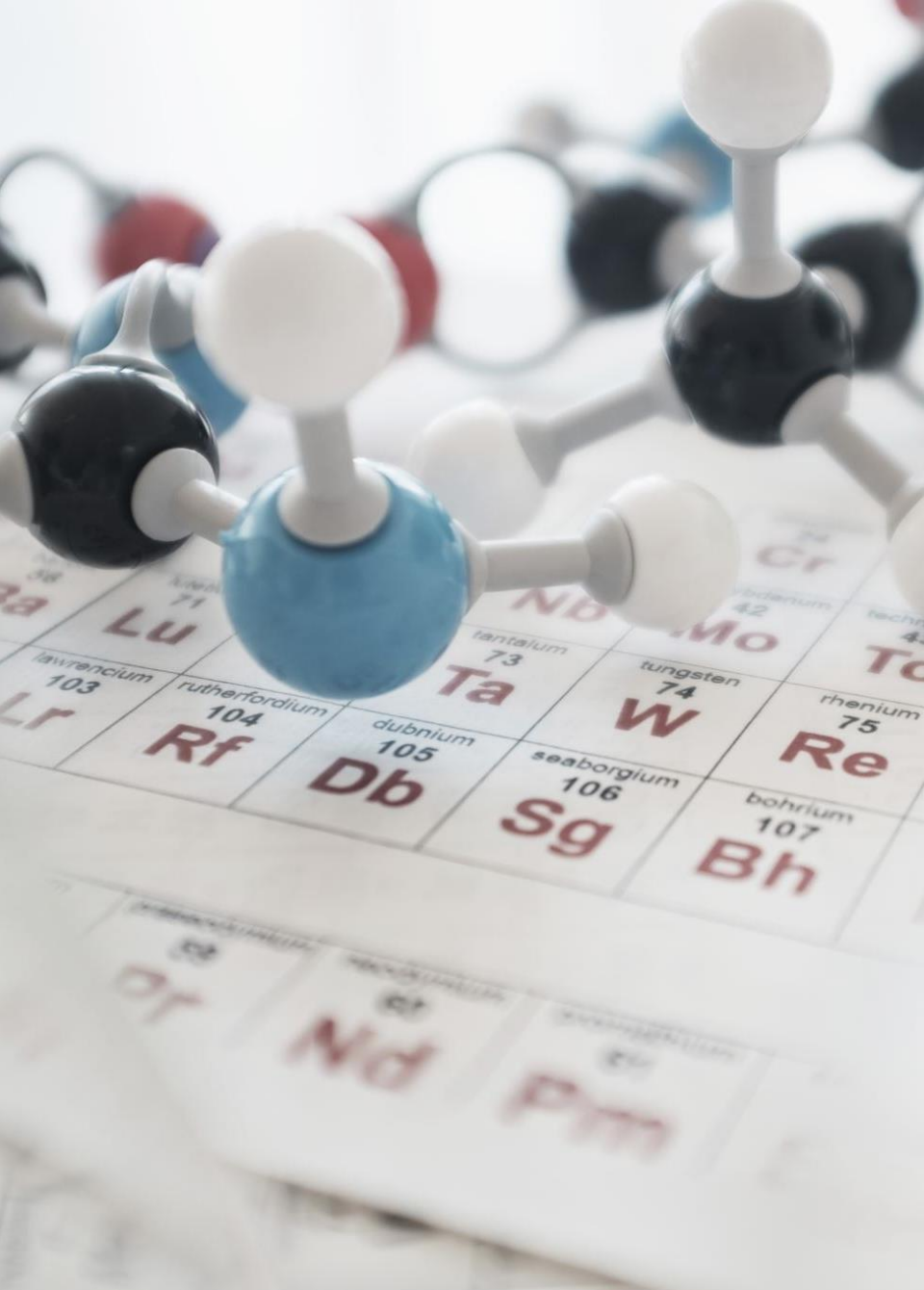
# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- **What you need to apply for medicine?**
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews







# What you need to apply for medicine

---

## Grades

- Good GCSEs
- A levels AAA
- Chemistry, Maths /Physics/ Biology plus one other

## Personal Statement

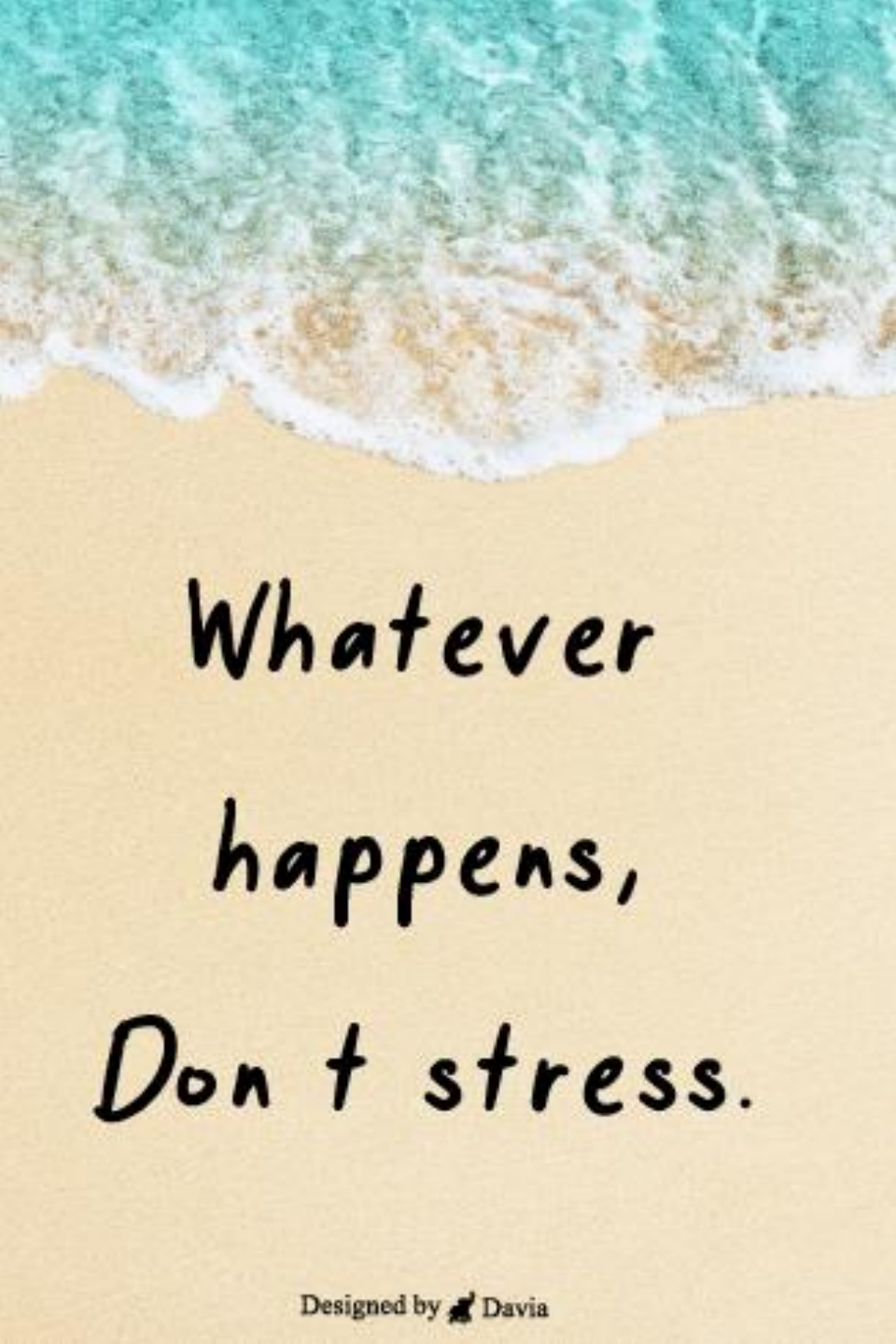
- Well written
- Empathic and reflective

## BMAT and/ or UCAT

- Exams for medicine
- 8 universities use BMAT
- 30+ medical schools

## Experience

- Healthcare oriented (sitting in clinic, hospital, GP, care home)
- Care oriented work
- Leadership



Whatever  
happens,  
Don't stress.

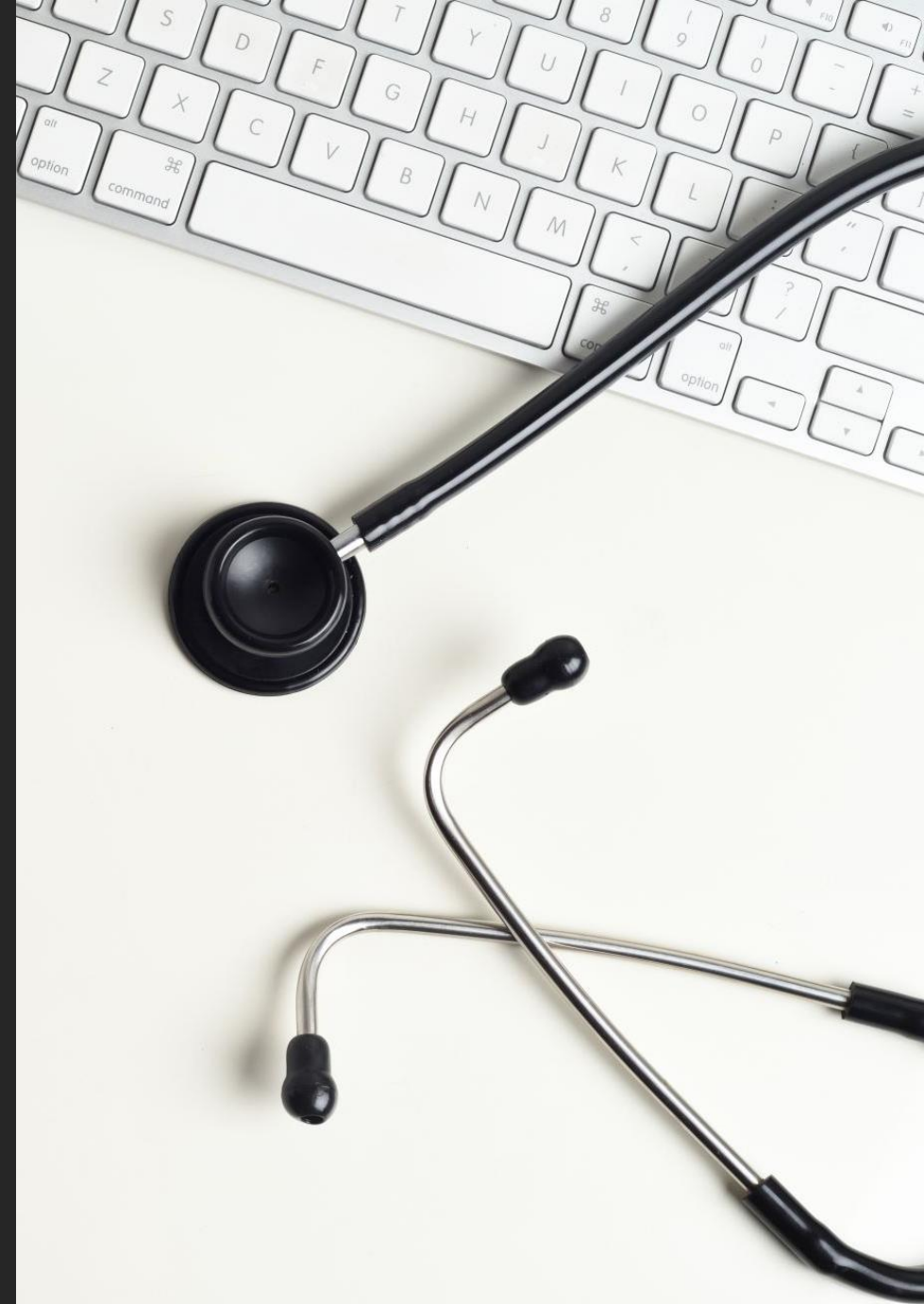
# You may not get into medicine first time!

---

- However bright you are
- However experienced you are
- It may take more than 1 year to be accepted
- 7000 places and 30 000 applicants
- A year off is good !!
  - Life experience
  - Travel
  - Earn money
  - Break before what is a demanding course

# Agenda

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- **Work Experience & Medical Experience**
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews





# Personal statement Work Experience & Medical Experience

---



Most hospitals now have a formal system for getting work experience

- Look through Hospital websites and contact them

GPs don't often take medical students but if they do usually year 12 or 13

**On placements**

- If you are in hospital / GP be polite and assertive
- Don't just sit in clinic , ask to shadow junior doctor
- Ask questions and see patients
- Don't just talk to doctors – medicine is a team sport (nurses, Physios, OT, radiographer)

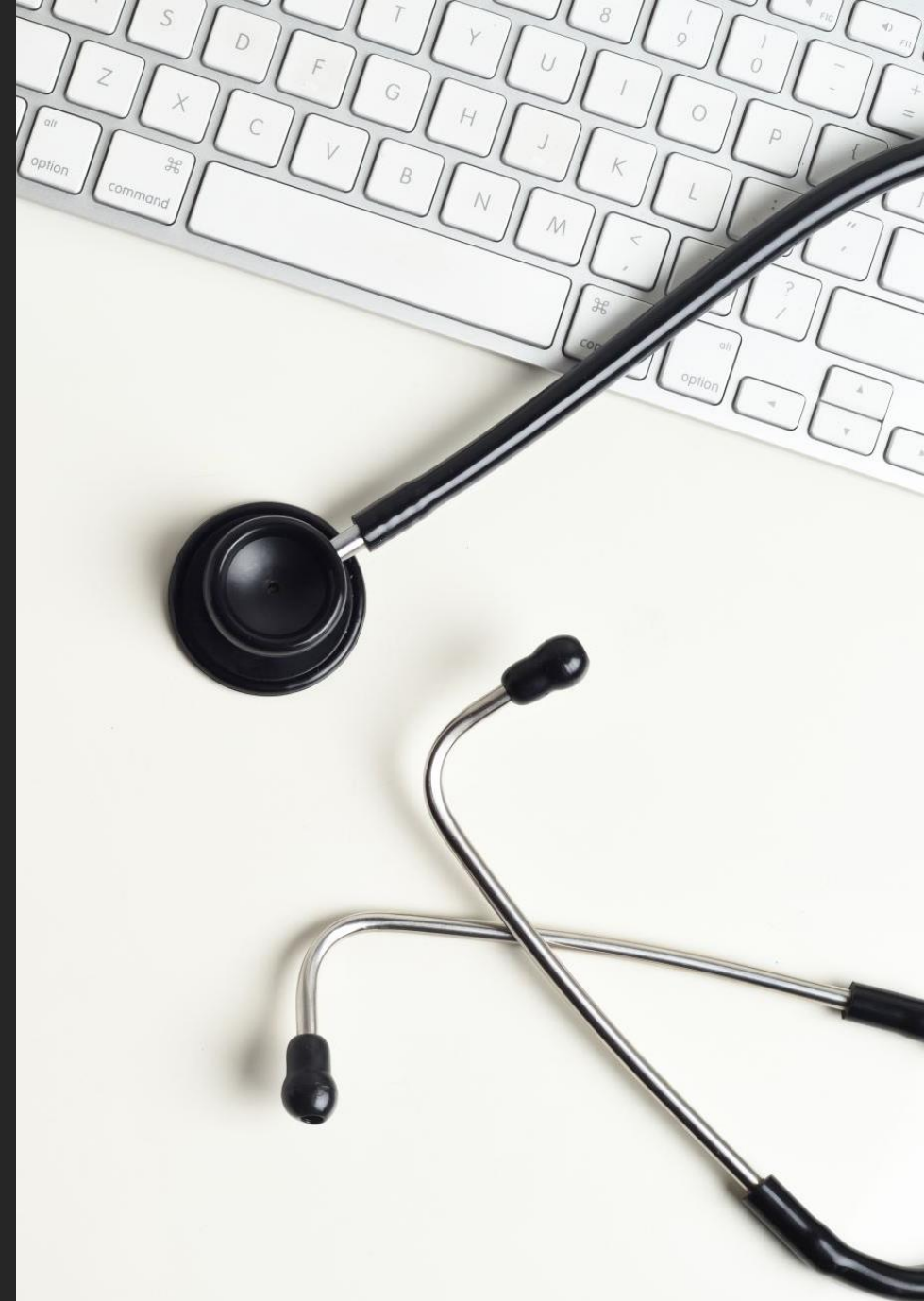
**Doesn't have to be Hospitals or GPs**

- Childrens centre
- Care home
- Learning Disability centre

# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- **Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership**
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews



# PERSONAL STATEMENT 101



- 1 LESS IS MORE: DON'T WAFFLE
- 2 AVOID A GRAND NARRATIVE: "FROM THE AGE OF 2..."
- 3 THINK OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM
- 4 STRUCTURE IT COHERENTLY
- 5 CHECK CLAIMS OF KNOWLEDGE
- 6 INCLUDE WORK EXPERIENCE ONLY WHEN RELEVANT
- 7 DEMONSTRATE INDEPENDENT RESEARCH
- 8 STAY RELEVANT
- 9 ENSURE YOU CAN EXPAND IF INTERVIEWED
- 10 EXTRA-CURRICULARS

## Personal statement Work Experience & Medical Experience

What are they looking for

- ☐ Motivation
- ☐ Understanding role of a doctor/wider context / NHS
- ☐ Examples of relevant work experience
- ☐ Reflection on what was learnt from such experiences
- ☐ Evidence of initiative/enterprise
- ☐ Work/life balance
- ☐ Evidence of working successfully in teams
- ☐ Ability to Communicate
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Compassion and resilience





# Interests & leadership

---

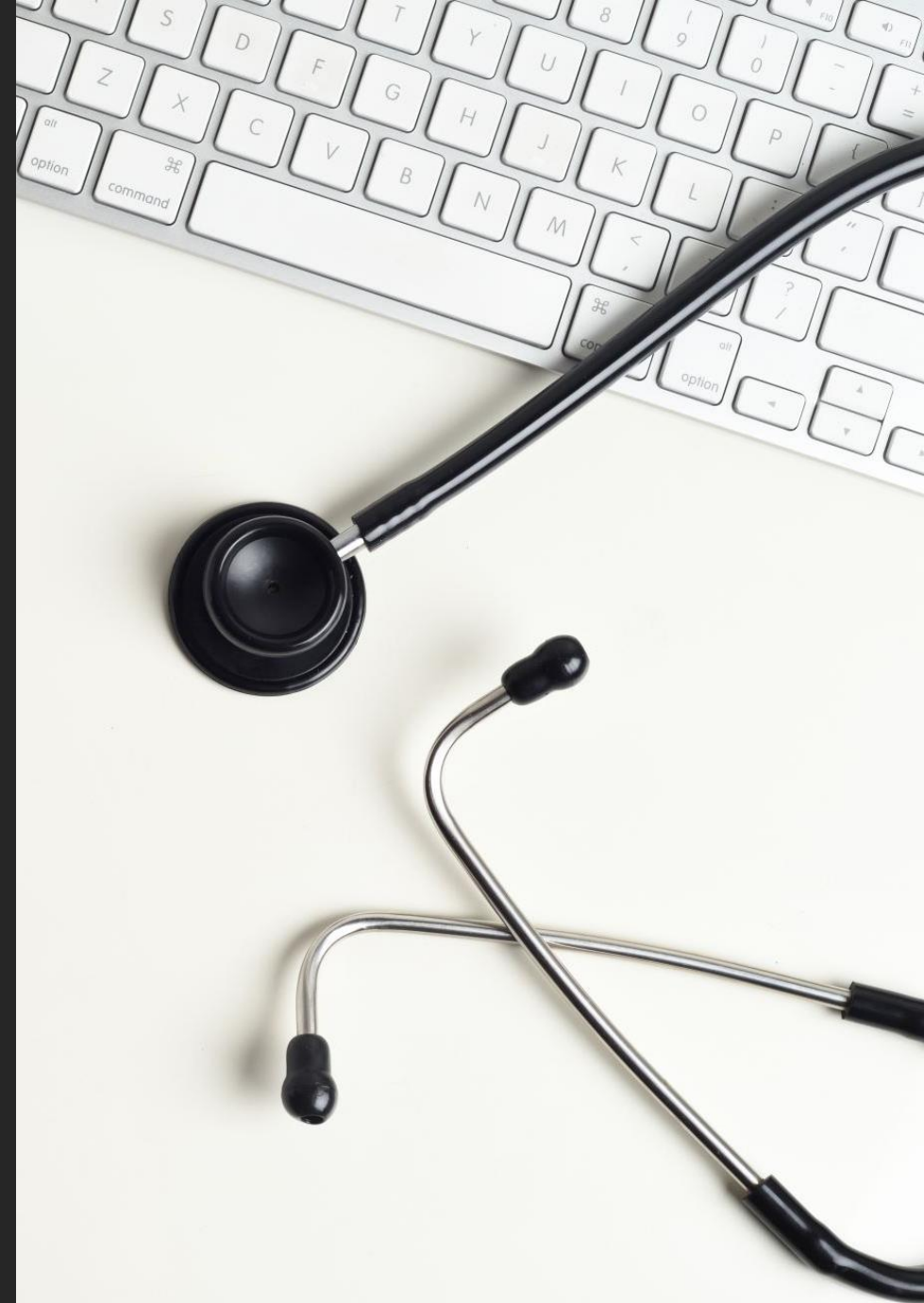
Show you are balanced and how you relax

- ☐ Sports
- ☐ Hobbies
- ☐ Leadership (school and beyond)
- ☐ Societies (med soc, debating, chess)
- ☐ Shul stuff
- ☐ Tutoring
- ☐ Weekend/ holiday jobs
- ☐ Youth organisations (BA Habonim FZY etc)

# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- **Choosing Medical schools**
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews



# Choosing medical schools

---

4 choices and 5<sup>th</sup> Science eg natural sciences

Be realistic (Oxford Cambridge Edinburgh Bristol Birmingham)

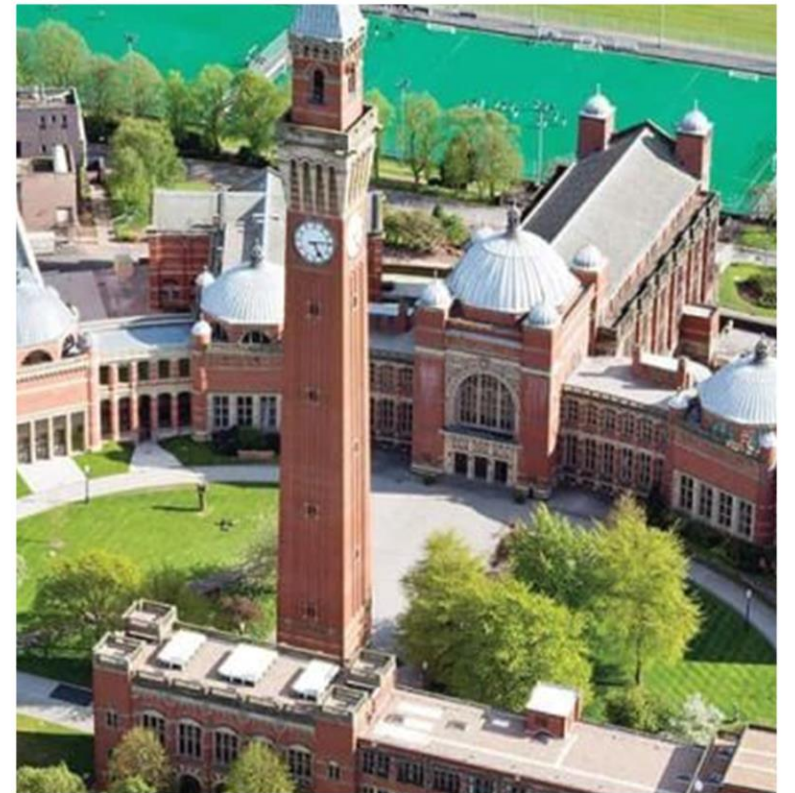
Spread your bets

Review every medical school and their entry criteria

- GCSEs & A levels
- UCAT & BMAT scores threshold (may need to change depending on score)
- Score for private vs state schools
- Background
- Ratios to patient

Look at courses

- Traditional vs Problem based learning





# Choosing medical schools

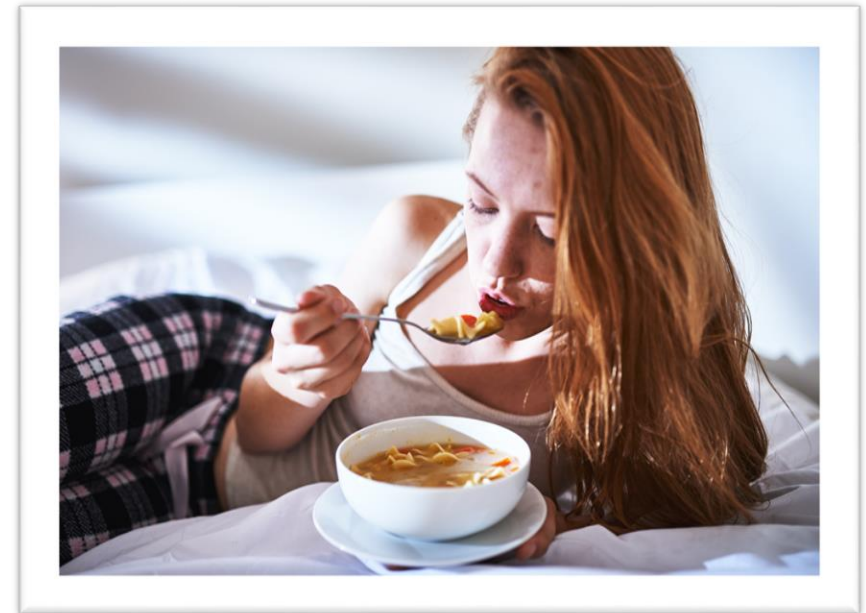
---

## The Jewish bits

- You will be there for 6-7 years minimum
- Some Jewish community important even for those atheist Jews

## Location

- How far to come home
- Even the most independent students will want to come home regularly
- Edinburgh 5 hrs away, Manchester 2 hrs on train



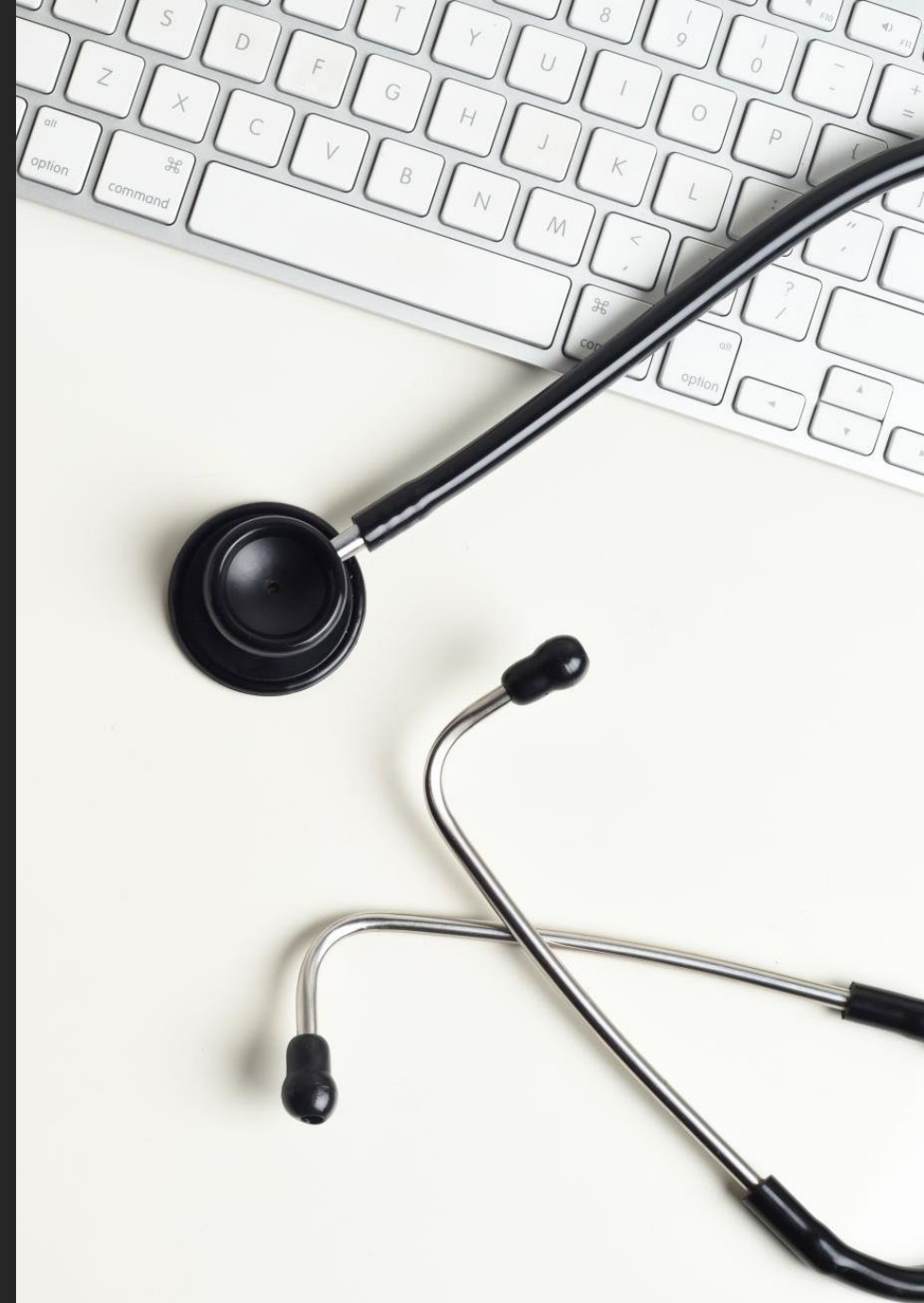
# Choosing medical schools

[illegible]

# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- **BMAT & UCAT**
- Interviews





# BMAT & UCAT

---

2 exams

- Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT)
- University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT)

# University Requirements

---

## BMAT

- Oxford
- Cambridge
- University College London
- Imperial College London
- Leeds
- Lancaster University
- Brighton and Sussex

## • UCAT

- |               |                         |                       |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Aberdeen    | • Hull York             | • Queen Mary's London |
| • Birmingham  | • Keele                 | • Queen's Belfast     |
| • Bristol     | • King's College London | • Sheffield           |
| • Cardiff     | • Leicester             | • Southampton         |
| • Dundee      | • Liverpool             | • St Andrews          |
| • East Anglia | • Manchester            | • St George's London  |
| • Edinburgh   | • Newcastle             |                       |
| • Exeter      | • Nottingham            |                       |
| • Glasgow     | • Plymouth              |                       |

*N.B. UCAT for new schools: Aston, Anglia Ruskin, Edge Hill, Kent & Medway, Sunderland*



# BMAT

---

How are you tested ?

- Mix of MCQs, short answers and essay

What does it test?

- [Section 1 - Aptitude Skills](#) ( Score / 9 : Problem Solving & Data Analysis)
  - 35 questions in 60 minutes
- [Section 2 – Scientific Knowledge & application](#) ( Score /9: GCSE level Science & Maths)
  - 27 questions in 30 minutes
- [Section 3 – Writing Task](#) (Score /5 for quality and Score A-E for quality of written English)
  - 1 of 3 questions – 30 minutes

When can I take it?

- August OR October - when you take the test is your choice but **Oxford only accept October sittings**





# UCAT

## How are you tested ?

- All MCQ! – this is done on a computer at a local test centre
- 

What does it test? (Each section scored 300-900 and Situational Judgement Band 1-4)

- Verbal Reasoning - *Assesses the ability to critically evaluate information presented in a written form*
  - 44 questions in 21 minutes
- Abstract Reasoning - *Assesses use of convergent & divergent thinking to infer relationships from information*
  - 55 questions in 24 minutes
- Quantitative Reasoning - *Assesses the ability to critically evaluate information presented in a numerical form*
  - 36 questions in 24 minutes
- Decision Making - *Assesses the ability to make sound decisions and judgements using complex information*
  - 29 questions in 31 minutes
- Situational Judgement - *Understand real world situations & identify critical factors & appropriate behaviour in dealing with them*
  - 69 questions in 26 minutes

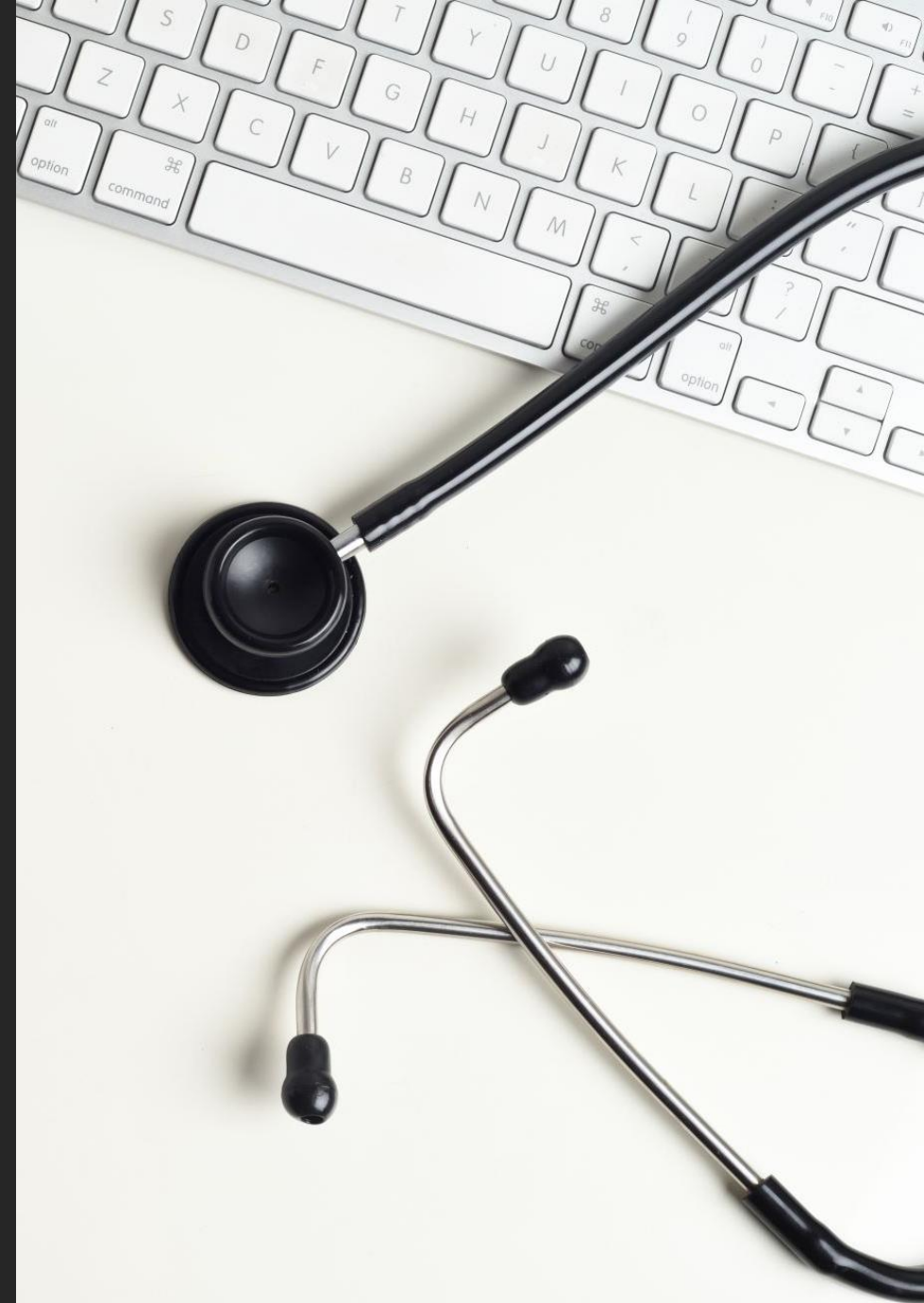
## When can I take it?

- July – (first week) of October

# Agenda

---

- Being a doctor – a career
- What you need to apply for medicine?
- Work Experience & Medical Experience
- Personal statement & Interests/ qualities/ leadership
- Choosing Medical schools
- BMAT & UCAT
- Interviews



# Interviews

---

MMI common in most medical schools

Multi Mini Interviews

6-8 short interviews

Each station marked separately

Answer question, complete a task, role play



# Interviews

---

Most questions will be **predictable** but still they are often answered badly

- *Why do you want to do medicine*
- *What are your strengths and weaknesses*
- *What inspired you to do medicine*
- *What is it like to be a doctor*
- *What does a doctor do*

Some questions will be designed to show your knowledge

Some questions will be designed to test your thinking?

Some will be politically relevant

Some will be personal?

Some will be relating to experience eg work/ conflict

# JFS School Process and Support

## JFS provides:

June : 'Futures' programme

Medic mentoring programme with JFS alumni medic.

Thinking Medicine workshop (July - tbc)

BMAT/UCAT test preparation (September onwards)

Interview practice - individual mock interviews with feedback (November)

## IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES:

Get the best end of year 12 grades and predictions

Organise volunteering/work experience ( given Covid constraints)

Research choices to draw up shortlist

Practise the Tests – start now!

# Reading



---

*Being Mortal*

Atul Gawande

*The Emperor of all Maladies ( a biography of cancer)*

Siddhartha Mukherjee

*Do no harm*

Henry Marsh

*Your life in my hands: a junior doctor's story*

Rachel Clarke

*Breathtaking: Inside the NHS in a Time of Pandemic*

Rachel Clarke

*In Shock: my journey from Death to Recovery*  
( how nearly dying made me a better doctor)

Rana Awdish

*This is going to hurt*

Adam Kay



# Further Information

---

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

Medical Schools Council guide to all UK Medical Schools plus lots of other useful information for applications

<https://medify.co.uk>

Some content and test materials behind paywall but free advice as well on applications process

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/career/studying-medicine/becoming-a-doctor/application-process>

British Medical Association

[www.healthcareers.nhs.uk](http://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk)

NHS Careers site- for all careers in medical professions, resources, advice etc

<https://www.themedicportal.com/application-guide/choosing-a-medical-school/comparisontool/>

---