

Graduate Entry to Medicine

Version 9.18

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If you wish to study medicine as a second degree in the UK you can either join a five year undergraduate course, or applied to a four year graduate accelerated course, designed specifically for those who already have an undergraduate degree in another subject.

Why study medicine?

Your reasons will be unique to you but could include:

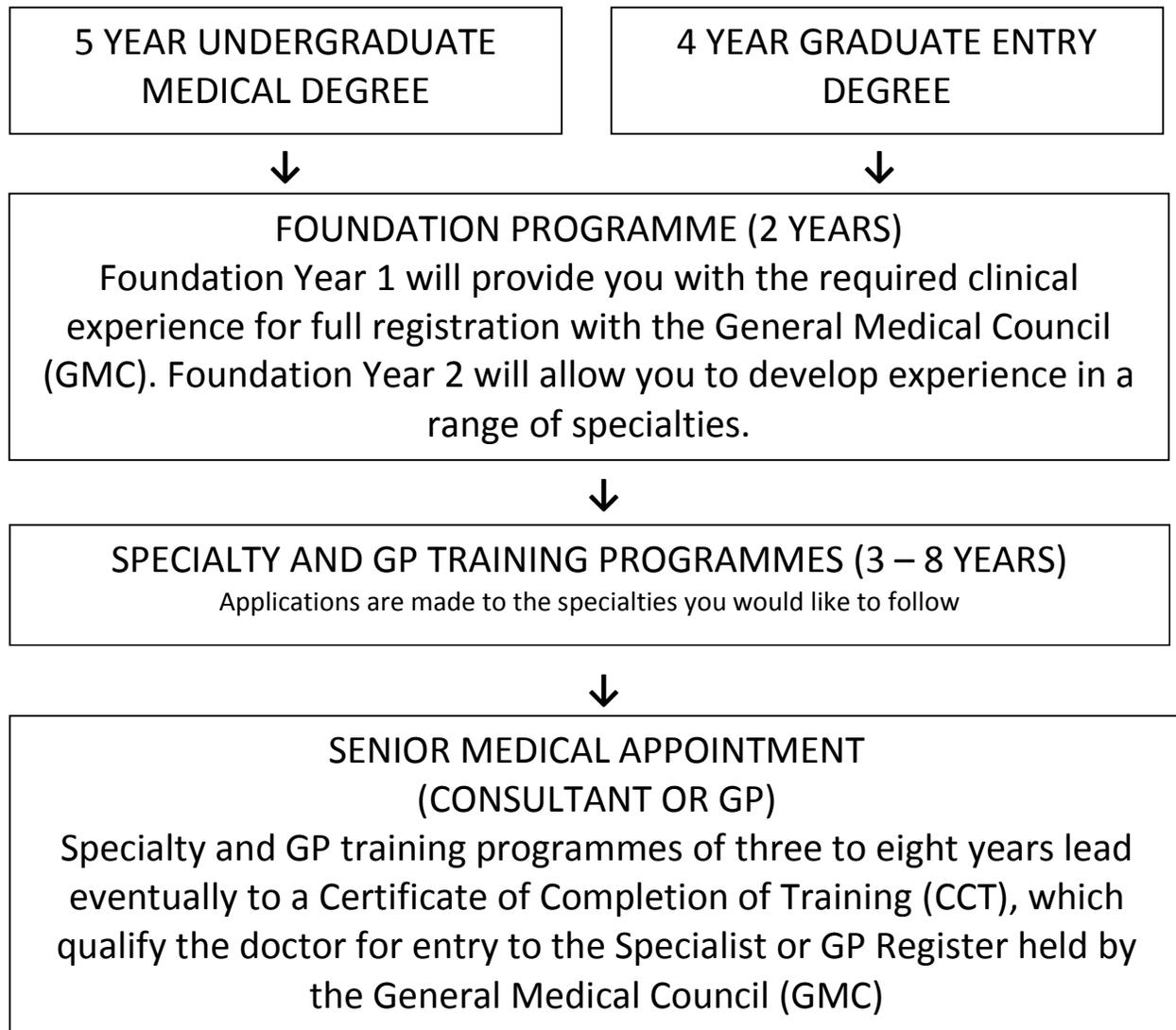
- Practical application of science
- Opportunity to make a positive difference to other people
- Rewards (financial or personal satisfaction)
- Professional job structure
- Challenging work environment
- Academic challenge

As a graduate you have had more time to carefully consider your career choices which may allow you to embark on your training with a more accurate picture of your own strengths and of the work involved. You will also be able to draw upon previous learning experiences to help you get the most out of your study.

How realistic are my chances?

The number of applications received per place varies from institution to institution. Each year the **UK Medical Schools Council** creates an entry requirements guide which outlines the threshold of qualifications, tests and experiences each course requires. This guide also outlines the number of applications per place for standard undergraduate entry five year courses and the graduate entry four year courses. The guide can be accessed from the website: www.medschools.ac.uk

What does a medical career structure look like?



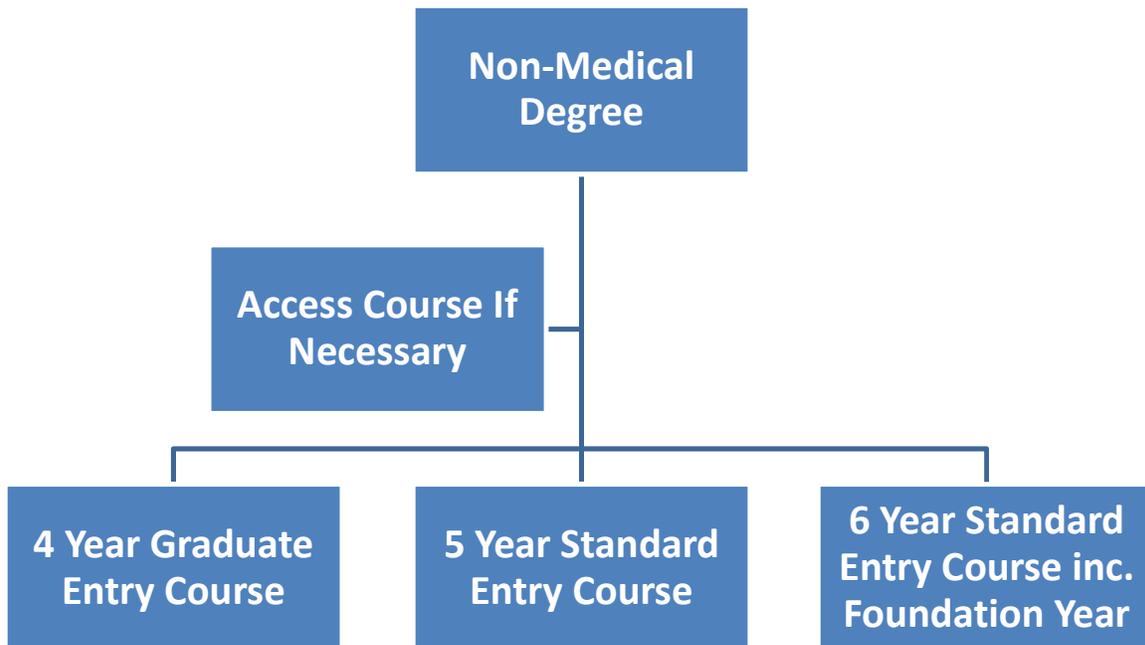
To find out more about medicine as a career

Prospects is a graduate careers website and features occupational profiles. Medical roles that are listed include:

- Doctor, general practice
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/general-practice-doctor
- Doctor, hospital
www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/hospital-doctor

Further information on your career options as an NHS doctor can be found at www.healthcareers.nhs.uk

What are the options for studying medicine as a second degree?



The four year graduate entry course

Designed specifically for graduates, graduate route courses are offered by a small number of medical schools in the UK. Some of these courses are specifically for graduates with a (bio)science based first degree whilst others are open to graduates with any degree background; check the entry requirements of the institution you are interested in applying to. Graduate entry courses are usually more intense with shorter holiday periods than the standard courses, often with more interactive learning and earlier patient contact. Completion of the graduate entry course results in the same qualification as the standard entry course.

Institutions currently offering the graduate entry course:

Barts and the London, Queen Mary University of London
University of Birmingham*
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge

University of Cardiff (open only to specific feeder courses)
Imperial College London (5 Year Graduate Entry)
King's College London
University of Liverpool
University of Newcastle
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
University of Southampton
St George's Medical School
University of Swansea
University of Warwick

* The University of Birmingham requires you to be a graduate at the time of application and will not accept applications from final year undergraduate students.

Two courses in this list are a little different. First the University of Cardiff only offers its four-year course to students studying specific feeder courses at the Universities of Cardiff, Bangor or South Wales. Second the graduate route offered at Imperial College London is five years (its standard undergraduate entry course is six years), and the additional year of the course means it IS NOT funded in the same way as the four year graduate route courses.

The five year standard entry course

Designed primarily for school leavers but many now allocate places for graduates. Whilst some look for a previous science degree others are open to graduates of any degree discipline, check the entry requirements of the institution that you are interested in applying to. Most five year courses and some four year courses require applicants to have Chemistry and/or Biology at A-level. A full list of standard entry courses can be found at www.ucas.com

Courses with a foundation year

Designed for students with little scientific background. They are offered by four medical schools. Most courses will require applicants to offer GCSE double award science or two individual sciences from Chemistry, Biology and Physics as well as English language and Mathematics at GCSE. As the GCSE and A-level requirements vary between universities, you should check the specific entry requirements of the institution you are interested in applying to. A full list of courses with a foundation year can be found at www.ucas.com

Courses with a gateway year

Different to courses with foundation year, these courses, offered by 10 medical schools, are designed to encourage applicants from low participation groups, who have perhaps had barriers to their learning.

Access to medicine

Courses usually last for one academic year and are designed for those who do not have the required qualifications to make an application to medical school. Completion of an access course does not guarantee a place at medical school and it is important to note that not all medical schools recognise all access courses so do check with the medical school you are interested in applying to as they will be able to provide you with a list of the access courses that they recognise.

Talk to the admissions tutors at the institution you are interested in applying about your personal situation before deciding whether an access course is the most suitable route. The admissions tutors at the institution you are interested in applying to will be able to advise you on the most appropriate route for you.

Academic entry criteria

It is important to note that each medical school sets its own entry criteria so students should use this advice as a general guide only and should contact the individual medical schools for more detailed information. Details of current entry requirements can also be found at wwwucas.com

Degree background

Most medical schools will require graduate applicants to hold either a 2.1 or 1st class degree although there are a small number who may accept a 2.2. It is important to check the relevancy of your previous degree discipline with the medical school you are interested in applying to as some require a science based degree whilst others will accept all disciplines. Whilst some medical schools require applicants to have completed their prior degree before applying, others accept applications from final year undergraduates.

A levels

Half of the current graduate entry medicine courses require applicants to have A-level Chemistry; some require both Chemistry and Biology at A-level. The remaining half do not specify either Biology or Chemistry at A-level. Some graduate entry medical degree programmes state in their admissions criteria that they do not take A-level subjects and grades (or GCSE grades) into consideration at all.

Graduate applicants to standard medicine courses are usually required to meet the same A-level requirements (or equivalent qualifications) as is required from school leavers. Some universities will consider lower A-level grades from graduate applicants than would normally be required from school leavers.

Check with admissions offices before attempting to re-sit an A-level as many medical schools do not consider re-sit grades.

GCSEs

It is common for medical schools to require applicants to hold a grade B or above in Maths and English at GCSE. Again, check with the medical school you are interested in before you submit your UCAS application.

If you do not satisfy the basic academic criteria for the medical school you are interested in applying to it may be possible for you to take an access or foundation year course. Speak to the admissions tutors at the medical school you are applying to find out if such qualifications could enhance your application.

Admissions tests

All information is accurate at the time of writing. It is important that students check the relevant websites for updates and changes to costs and deadlines for registering and sitting all admissions tests. If you are unsure which tests you need to sit contact the admissions department at the medical school you are interested in applying to in order to check their requirements.

Some medical schools require applicants to sit an admissions test in addition to the normal academic requirements.

There are currently three admissions tests in use by different medical schools, more details of these can be found below. In every case **check with the medical school** you are interested in applying to in order to find out if they require you to sit an entrance exam, and which exam it is as medical schools do change tests from year to year.

Comparison of the 3 test used for entry to graduate medicine

	UKCAT	GAMSAT	BMAT
Used by*	29 medical schools	Nine medical schools	Nine medical schools
Registration dates	May-Sept in application year	Nov-Feb (March test) Jun-Aug (Sept test date)	Sept/Oct in application year
Test date	Between July - Oct (choice of centres)	1 day in March or mid Sept	1 day in Nov
Test cost**	£65-£115	£262-£322	£80-£115
Test validity	1 year	2 years	1 year
Test length	2h	1 day	2h
Test content	Multiple choice questions	Aptitude, skills and scientific knowledge to A-level standard	Reasoning in Chemistry, Biology and Physics, plus more general skills in problem solving, critical thinking and writing

*check with the admissions department at the institution you are interested in applying to for the relevant year's requirements

**Bursaries can be applied for from the test providers to those unable to pay the cost of the test

UKCAT – UK Clinical Aptitude Test www.ukcat.ac.uk

Used by 29 UK Medical Schools, UKCAT is the most frequently used pre-entry test for Medicine.

Results from the UKCAT are only valid for the year in which you are making your application to medical school. If you are unsuccessful in your application and wish to apply again the following year you will need to sit the UKCAT again.

You must register to sit the test well in advance of your UCAS application. Registration usually takes place in May of the year that you make your application to UCAS. **Closing dates for registration are usually at the end of September. Warning – closing dates for registration to sit this test are BEFORE the UCAS closing date for medical school applications.**

Register early to sit your test at your chosen testing centre. Testing centres are situated around the UK and testing usually takes place between July and October.

The test lasts for two hours and consists of multiple choice questions relating to:

- quantitative reasoning
- abstract reasoning
- verbal reasoning
- situational judgement
- decision analysis

It is not a test of your knowledge.

Prepare by:

- Looking at some example test papers beforehand in order to familiarise yourself with the format and style of the test (available from UKCAT website)
- Practice reading and answering questions under test conditions in preparation (available from UKCAT website)
- The Careers Service runs practice psychometric tests throughout the year, whilst these are not the same as the UKCAT, they test two of the same areas. Check www.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink for upcoming practice test dates

Both the UK Medical School Council and UKCAT publish how medical schools use the UKCAT in selection.

Results are provided before the UCAS deadline for medical school applications, and you may wish to decide upon your final choice of applications to medical school based on your UKCAT score, as some schools place greater importance on UKCAT scoring than others.

GAMSAT – Graduate Australian Medical Schools Admissions Test

Used by nine UK medical schools.

You can also register for the test through GAMSAT Australia and take the test in London in March; registration for the March sitting takes place between November and February. GAMSAT scores are valid for two consecutive years. This means that candidates may apply for admission to medical schools up to two years after the date on which they sit the test.

For more information and to check current deadlines and up to date information on costs see <https://gamsat.acer.edu.au> for the UK GAMSAT.

The test lasts a whole day and covers reasoning in:

- chemistry
- biology
- physics

Plus general skills in:

- problem solving
- critical thinking
- writing
-

Success in GAMSAT is unlikely without knowledge and ability in the biological and physical sciences.

Prepare by:

- using A-level and first year undergraduate level science textbooks and revision books
- practicing example test papers

- talking to friends and family with science knowledge in biology, chemistry or physics

Results are provided in late November after the UCAS deadline and sent electronically to both the person sitting the test and medical schools requesting the data.

The following publication is available in the Careers Service library at The Atrium on the first floor in University Place:

Title: '*GAMSAT - Practice Questions*'

Publisher: Australian Council for Educational Research

<http://gamsat.acer.edu.au/prepare/preparation-materials>

BMAT – Biomedical Admissions Test

There are currently nine UK medical schools listed as using the BMAT.

You must register to sit the test well in advance of your UCAS application. Registration takes place during September for a November test date. You will sit the test on one day in the September or November of the year that you submit your application to UCAS.

The test will last for two hours and will include questions to test:

- aptitude
- skills
- scientific knowledge to A-level standard

Results are available to download for 60 days from a date in later November. Results are sent directly to any institution you have applied to.

Practice questions are available on the BMAT website.

www.bmat.org.uk

University of Manchester entry criteria for graduates

A brief overview of the entry requirements for graduates interested in the Medicine degree programme at Manchester can be found at:

www.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/medicine

Undergraduates should be in their final year. All should have achieved or be predicted at least a 2:1 degree and should have achieved minimum BBB at their first attempt at A-levels. The University does not accept - level re-sits from graduates.

The GCSE and A-level results of those who have moved straight from school to university are taken into account. Please see essential requirements for English and Mathematics.

If there was a gap between leaving school and starting university, applicants must contact the Admissions Office by letter before completing the UCAS form.

The University of Manchester Medical School also require all applicants to sit the UKCAT admission test before applying. Plus complete a separate online non-academic information form.

Admissions email: ug.medicine@manchester.ac.uk ; telephone: 0161 275 5025.

Process for applications

All applications are made online through UCAS, register online at www.ucas.com

As a graduate entrant you will be applying through UCAS as an individual rather than through a school or college and so you will not require a centre number for your application.

Applications should be submitted in the academic year prior to your intended year of entry. The UCAS website is open to receive applications for medical school between 1 September and 15 October.

The deadline for applications is 15 October

You may only choose to apply to up to four medical schools on your UCAS form. This can be made up of all four year graduate programmes, all five year standard programmes or a combination of both.

You will be required to complete a personal statement detailing your suitability for the course and a career in medicine. Guidance on how to complete this section can be found later in this document.

You will also be required to submit an academic reference. As a graduate entrant you will need to enter the e-mail address of the person who will be providing your academic reference into your UCAS application. UCAS will then contact your referee by e-mail and ask them to upload their reference electronically.

The usual choice for an academic reference would be a personal or academic advisor who can comment on your academic performance and suitability for the medical degree. Any mitigating circumstances which may affect not only academic performance but any aspect of the information contained in the UCAS form should usually be included in the referee's report. Your referee will be asked to comment on a number of areas. Guidelines to help them do so can be found on the UCAS website and should also be available from the admissions team of the medical school you are applying to. It is advisable to meet with your referee to discuss your application in order to assist them in making an accurate representation of you.

Warning – Your UCAS application cannot be submitted until your reference has been uploaded by your referee. It is in your best interests to complete your application early to allow time for your referee to upload your reference before the 15 October deadline.

Choosing a medical school

The structure and teaching style of a medical degree varies between institutions. Candidates have been rejected by medical schools in the past because the interview panel felt the study style of the particular course would not suit them. It is therefore important to do your research. You might want to consider the following:

i. **Learning and teaching styles**

Some courses are lecture and tutorial based whilst others incorporate problem based learning. You could think about doing a learning styles indicator test to find out which styles suit you best. Visiting a medical school open day will give you the chance to discuss teaching styles with tutors and current students.

ii. **Geographical location**

The medical degree is a lengthy course. Think about your personal support network and the potential cost of living.

iii. **Reputation**

All medical degree courses at UK universities are validated by the General Medical Council. There are no league tables available for graduate entry courses but the five year standard course does feature in tables such as the Times and the Guardian.

What do admissions tutors look for in an applicant?

- Strong motivation for medicine – both the course and the career
- Clear personal reasons for choosing medicine
- Regular work experience in a caring capacity
- Range of hobbies and interests
- Knowledge of the healthcare system in the UK
- Team working skills
- Communication skills
- Intellectual potential
- Commitment

Work experience

Try to gain a variety of experiences. The following are all looked at positively by admissions tutors:

i. Part time work

Not necessarily in a healthcare setting. Roles that involve dealing with people in stressful situations, communicating with a range of people, working as part of a close team. Part Time vacancies can be found through www.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink

For paid part-time caring roles in Greater Manchester:

www.creativesupport.co.uk

ii. Volunteering

Working with vulnerable people, practical hands-on caring experience, motivating/teaching others, mentoring, raising awareness, volunteering with other healthcare professionals to gain an appreciation of the wider healthcare team. Volunteering opportunities can be found through the following websites:

- www.volunteers.manchester.ac.uk
- www.do-it.org.uk
- www.timebank.org.uk

iii. Experience of healthcare

Some medical schools require you to have held a paid role in healthcare before making an application; others accept a period of volunteering. Bear in mind that many paid roles begin as volunteering. Support roles include hospital receptionist/porter, care home staff, and auxiliary nursing/healthcare assistant roles. To find paid roles, use www.jobs.nhs.uk and www.manchester.ac.uk/careerslink and register with healthcare recruitment agencies.

Some hospitals and hospices have work experience/volunteering schemes. The Manchester Royal Infirmary usually takes applications

for volunteers at set times of the year, for more information and to check whether applications are being accepted visit the website: www.cmft.nhs.uk/information-for-patients-visitors-and-carers/patient-advice-and-support/volunteer-service
email: volunteer.services@cmft.nhs.uk

- iv. Work shadowing
Formal and informal opportunities. Talk to a wide range of people to develop your understanding of the profession.
- v. Positions of responsibility
Committee membership, leadership positions, project management, making a difference.

Writing your personal statement

Commitment to medicine

Remember to include how this interest developed. Could be science background, personal experiences, work experience etc. Make sure the things that you claim interested you in medicine show a realistic picture of the profession e.g. a helping profession, a practical use of science, making a difference, continually developing yourself, social and scientific base. How have you followed up this interest?

Experience

Detail the tasks that you have undertaken – hands-on experience is better than simply observing, even if the tasks were very basic. Include experience of talking with patients. How did you feel about this experience? What did you learn about the caring profession and about yourself? What did you learn about patient care – keep this realistic. What sort of an insight into the daily life of health professionals did you gain? You will most likely have seen a number of different health care teams in action – what do you understand about multidisciplinary teams? Also include any shadowing experience. Insight and reflection is again important here. Have an awareness of the pace and pressures of life as a

doctor. How do doctors build relationships with their patients? What have you learnt about this relationship? How important is good communication?

Again, how have you built on this experience? Did you proactively organise any of this with a learning outcome in mind? Show evidence of self-directed learning and development.

What skills can you bring from other work/extracurricular experience? Interests – show that you are a rounded individual and have a good work-life balance.

It is important to develop your own narrative throughout the statement to show how your thoughts and experiences have developed.

Education

How has your academic background prepared you for medicine? Do you have any practical scientific skills? Have you undertaken any relevant projects or studies? How have you worked with your peers? How have you managed your time? What do you know about your learning style and that of the courses you are applying to?

The course

How do you feel you are suited to the particular course? What can you bring to the course? How will you approach the demands? What are you hoping to gain?

Conclusion

End with enthusiasm and commitment as well as a sense of the careful consideration that you have taken over this application.

Character limit: up to 4,000 characters, including spaces, or 47 lines.

Resources:

Read the GMC's *Outcomes for Graduates* report which outlines all the competencies you should learn at medical school. This should give you

some idea on how to demonstrate that you are a future doctor
www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/undergrad_outcomes.asp

Also read the General Medical Council's *Good Medical Practice* which outlines the characteristics and behaviours of good doctors. Some medical schools are using the four domains described in this document as a basis for their competency and behavioural-based interviews.
www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/good_medical_practice/contents.asp

This website also has an interactive tool presenting ethical and decision-making case studies - great for preparing for Situational Judgement Tests, UKCAT and situational interview questions. www.gmc-uk.org/gmpinaction/

The Interview

Interview structure varies between medical schools. All will expect you to cover your motivation for medicine, your commitment, your previous caring experience and your ability to reason around an ethical/social issue. Some medical schools will ask you to work with other interviewees on a group task as part of the selection process.

The NHS Health Careers website offers helpful advice on preparing for medical school interviews: www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/considering-or-university/studying-be-doctor/applying-medical-school/interviews-medical-school

Frequently used is the Multiple Mini Interview (MMI). These interviews involve a series of stations or rooms in which the candidate will find either a scenario or an interviewer to assess a specific attribute. Each station/room will last a short amount of time (usually 5-10mins) before you are asked to move on to the next. For more details see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiple_mini_interview

MMI scenario based questions: <http://multipleminiinterview.com/mmi-questions>

Useful list of questions to practice: www.medical-interviews.co.uk/interview-questions-medical-school-interviews.aspx

You may be asked to discuss an ethical issue or comment on an aspect of medical practice. To help you to prepare for these types of questions, have a look at some of the online resources from the GMC:

- Ethical Guidance - www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance.asp
- Interactive case studies - www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/case_studies.asp

Funding

The information contained here is a guide and assumes an English-domiciled graduate, studying at an English University. You should seek up-to-date information relevant to your particular circumstances from the sources listed. You should also check your eligibility with each organisation, as eligibility criteria are in place for bursaries and loans.

Funding the five year standard entry course:

Graduate students **are not** eligible to receive a tuition fee loan whether or not they have previously received funding, and universities will charge them the full cost of their tuition for years one to four. Students may be able to apply to Student Finance England for a full, income based, maintenance loan to cover living expenses. Fees payable to medical schools by graduate students vary and details are available from the schools themselves. From year five onwards, tuition fees will be paid by the NHS Bursary Scheme and students will be eligible to apply for a means-tested NHS bursary to cover maintenance costs from the NHS Student Bursaries Unit, and a reduced maintenance loan from Student Finance England (equivalent to approximately half the full rate). These

funding arrangements will continue to apply for students starting their studies in academic years 2017/18.

Funding the four year graduate entry course:

At present, in year one, graduate entry students have to self-fund the first £3,465 towards their tuition costs. In years 2- 4, the NHS Bursary pays £3,465 towards tuition costs. In years 2-4 of the graduate programme, a Student Finance England loan will be available to cover the difference between £3,465 and the tuition charges of the university, to a maximum charge of £9,250. Graduates are eligible to apply to Student Finance England for a full maintenance loan from their first year to cover living costs. In the next three years of your course, you can apply to the NHS Student Bursaries Unit for a means-tested NHS bursary to cover maintenance costs and students can apply for a reduced maintenance loan from Student Finance England.

See the NHS Careers website <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/> for updates.

See www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students for up to date information on NHS bursaries.

Downloadable documents outlining available financial support, including the NHS Bursary Scheme are accessible via the Department of Health website www.dh.gov.uk (search term: bursary scheme)

Funding for International Students

The availability of financial support varies between individual institutions and arrangements may change periodically. International students from within and outside of the EU should check their eligibility through www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students and www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm

Other sources of funding

If you are in financial hardship, you may be eligible for extra financial support through the Student Loans Company, or an Access to Learning Fund. NHS funded students who have taken up their full entitlement to an NHS Bursary, student loan and other grants may be entitled to ask for support from the Access to Learning Fund. Applications are made through the student support office or student union of the university or college at which you are studying.

If after you've exhausted all other sources of financial help, you are still in financial hardship you may be eligible for an NHS Hardship Grant.

NHS Hardship Grant

All medical and dental students who are holders of an income-assessed NHS bursary, except those holding fee-only awards, are eligible to apply for additional assistance from this grant.

You must have taken up your full student loan entitlement and any Access to Learning Fund entitlement.

To apply for NHS hardship funds you must write to NHS Student Bursaries including full details and evidence of your personal financial circumstances and documentary evidence that you have applied for a student loan and Access to Learning funds.

The Operations Manager (Hardship)
NHS Student Bursaries, Hesketh House
200-220 Broadway,
Fleetwood, Lancashire, FY7 8SS

Alternative sources of funding (not related to the NHS Bursary Scheme)

The BMA Medical Education Trust offer financial awards for those studying medicine as a second undergraduate degree and who are not normally eligible for an NHS Bursary or other financial support.

- Benefits for Students – some students may be entitled to apply for benefits such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. See www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions

- Foulkes Foundation - a possible source of funding for postgraduate and post-doc researchers looking to retrain in medicine and clinical research.
www.foulkes-foundation.org
- Money4MedStudents – information on charitable trusts, scholarships, competitions and grants.
www.money4medstudents.org
- National Association of Student Money Advisers – contact for advice and information.
www.nasma.org.uk

Key resources

UK Medical Schools Council - for a yearly official guide to courses.
www.medschools.ac.uk/Pages/Default.aspx

The Medic Portal - Partners with the Royal College of Medicine to provide free advice on getting into medicine, including sample questions, test and more. www.themedicportal.com

The Student Room - for advice and tips from others' taking the same journey.
www.thestudentroom.co.uk/university/courses/medicine/graduate-entry-medicine-a-guide

For a full list of resources use our online careers library:
www.manchester.ac.uk/careers/library

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