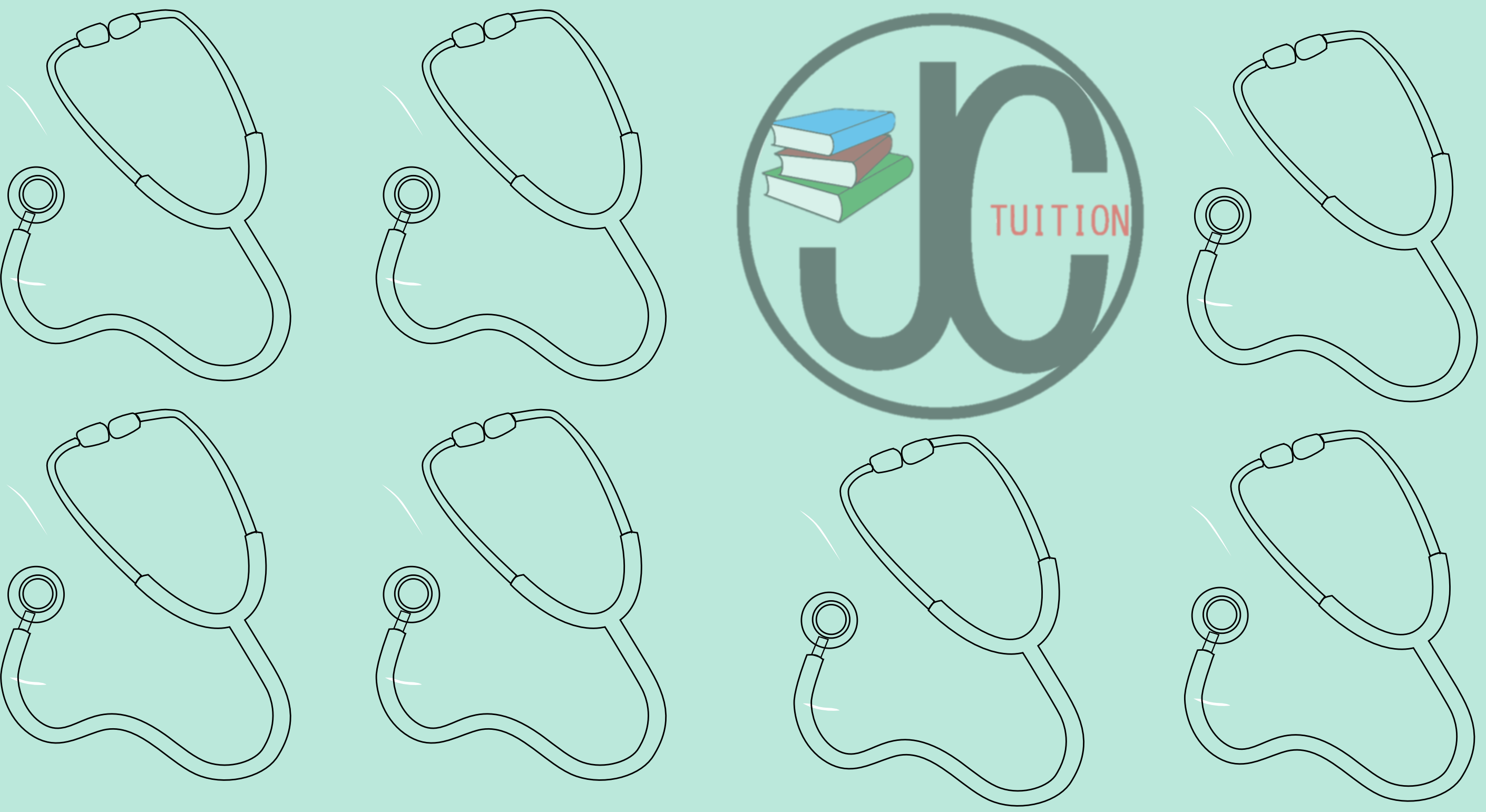


JISHAN CHOUDHURY

# GETTING INTO MEDICAL SCHOOL

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



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# INTRODUCTION






So you want to get into medical school? Are you finding the process too overwhelming? This is a feeling that every student that aspires to get into medical school experiences. After all, you need to balance medical admission exams, interviews, personal statement, A-levels whilst juggling your commitments and your health.

My name is Jishan Choudhury, and I am a medical student at St Barts and The London medical school. I am the founder of [www.jctuition.net](http://www.jctuition.net), and we have helped dozens of students around the country to achieve outstanding grades.

This process can be physically and emotionally draining, and I can remember exactly what it was like as I was once in your shoes. Hence, I thought I would write this guide to break down the step-by-step journey that will take you into medical school and take the weight off your shoulders a bit. We will explore each step of getting into medical school and I will give you tips along the way; follow these tips and you will have the best possible chance of getting into medical school!

# WORK EXPERIENCE

The first step of getting into medical school is getting yourself some work experience. Medical school admissions can be thought of as an 'arms race.' The more work experience and medical books you can express on your personal statement and interview, the more likely you are to be selected by the admissions panel. This is because the panel are seeking one thing... PASSION. That's it. So get as much work experience under your belt as possible. Also, make it varied; you can show your passion through the variation of medical environments you choose for your work experience. Examples of places to get work experience are as follows:

-  Medical wards
-  General practice surgery
-  Surgical wards
-  Outpatient clinics
-  Nursing homes

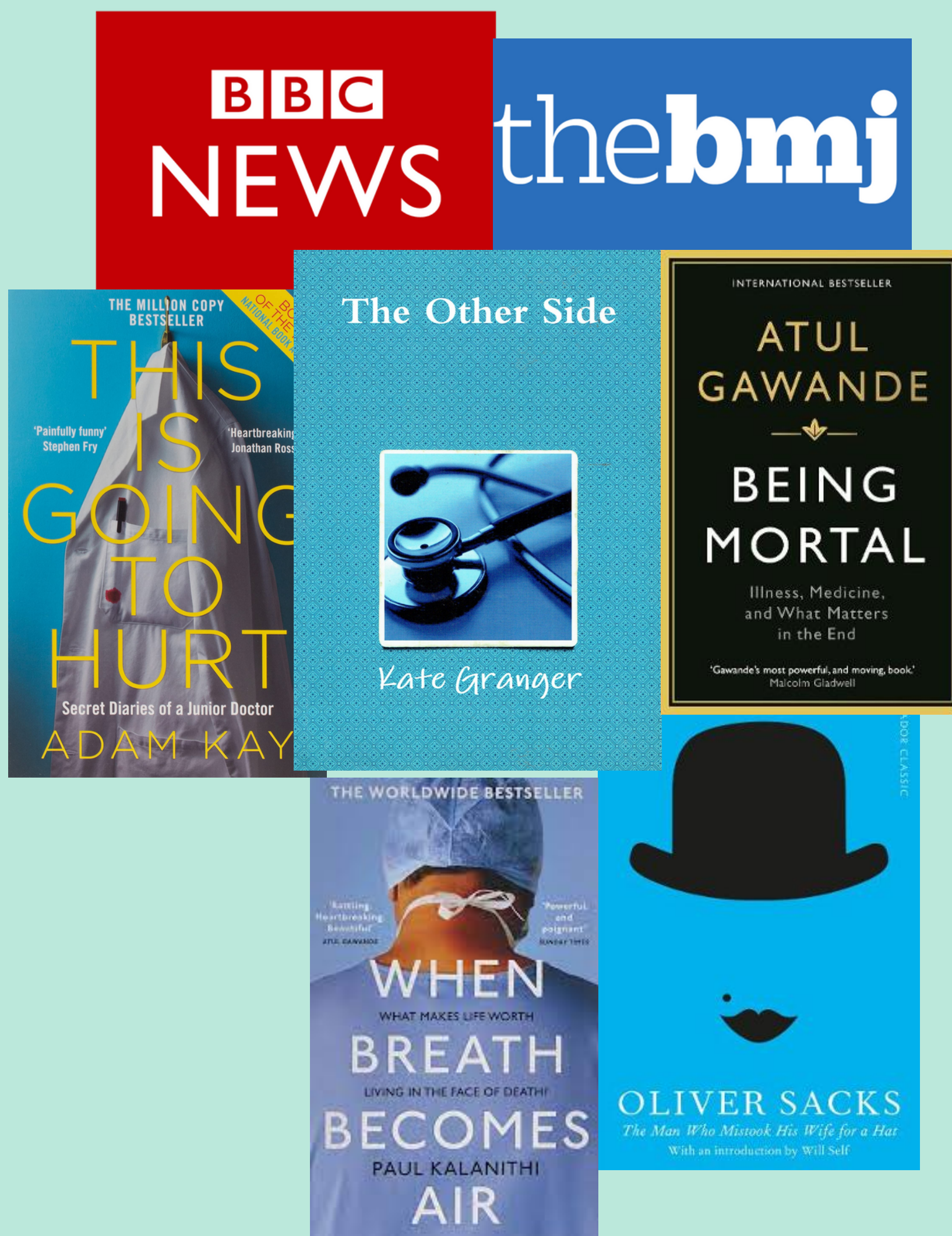
The most important thing is to document and reflect on your experience. What did you learn about the job of medical professionals? How did it make you feel? In what ways does this experience make you want/not want to become a doctor?

Going on work experience does give you "CV points" for medical school but the most important reason to obtain some is to see if medical school is for YOU. It isn't for everyone, shifts can be long and emotionally demanding. Medical school is not just a 5/6 year degree to commit to, but rather lifelong learning. Medicine isn't just a job, it is a lifestyle. Medical schools want to admit students who understand this and are wanting to make this commitment.



# READING

To show your passion in the medical world, it is also advised to do some reading! Reading can involve news, books, journals... anything that can show your interest in the medical world. Below I have included resources to read to get the best chance to get into medical school (you do not have to read all of them!)



Again, read these books, document and reflect on what you have learnt from them, and what they teach you about life as a medic. How did these books inspire you? It is also important to be aware of current political issues in the healthcare world as you may well be asked about this in your interview.



# ADMISSION EXAMS

One of the barriers to getting into medical school is the admission exams. The dreaded UCAT and BMAT exams. Below I have set a comparison of both admission tests.

<b>Admission Exam</b>	<b>UCAT</b>	<b>BMAT</b>
<b>What domains do they test?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Verbal Reasoning</b></li><li>✓ <b>Quantitative Reasoning</b></li><li>✓ <b>Abstract Reasoning</b></li><li>✓ <b>Decision Making</b></li><li>✓ <b>Situational Judgement</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Section 1: Verbal Reasoning, Mathematics &amp; Spatial Reasoning</b></li><li>✓ <b>Section 2: Chemistry, Physics, Biology &amp; Maths</b></li><li>✓ <b>Section 3: Essay</b></li></ul>
<b>What medical schools use these exams? (examples)</b>	<b>Bristol, King's, Manchester, Nottingham, Barts</b>	<b>Imperial, UCL, Oxford, Cambridge, Leeds</b>

The most important thing to do well at these medical admission exams is practice, practice, practice! Do question banks and past papers to get yourself familiar with the type of questions they ask. They are fairly similar each year and test the same style of questions, so if you can get confident doing past questions, then there is no doubt the real thing will be a breeze.

Start practising and preparing for these exams early, so that you can get the most practice in and feel as confident as possible when sitting these exams. Use online question banks. Remember there is no pass mark, you just need to do the best you can do, and you will then be placed in deciles.

If you need extra 1-2-1 support, the JC Tuition team are a group of medics who aced the medical admission exams and are always happy to help!

# PERSONAL STATEMENT

4000 characters and 47 lines are a very limited space in which you can fully express yourself and convince the medical schools to offer you an interview. So you need to make every word count!

Panels at medical school may be reading dozens of personal statements in one sitting – so it is important to make yours stand out. Especially make your first sentence stand out to catch the admission tutor's attention. Although be careful and don't make your personal statement too cheesy. You must be able to keep a fine balance between keeping it catchy but professional!

It can be tempting to talk about your academic achievements such as all your 9s at GCSE, but you must refrain from doing so. You must remember that your UCAS profile will give access to your grades whilst admission tutors are reading your personal statement – they know how clever you are! So there is no need to waste your word count on this.

Instead, use the precious few words you have to express your passion for medicine. Talk about all the work experience you have obtained and books you have read and explain how they have inspired you to do medicine.

Medical schools don't want just studying robots! Being a good medic means being compassionate, caring, able to work in a team, a good leader – and many other characteristics that make a good clinician. These are characteristics that medical schools are looking for during the admission process. The best way to show admission tutors that you have these qualities is to talk about your extra-curricular activities. Talk about your part-time job, any sports you play and any other hobbies you may have in your personal statement. Importantly, don't just list these things; explain what skills and qualities you have obtained from these hobbies that give you the qualities to be a good medic and well-rounded person.

Here at JC Tuition, we do offer to read and provide detailed feedback for personal statements. Please get in touch if you would like our support!



# INTERVIEW

You have passed the medical admission exams and have now been called up to an interview... nerve-wracking! There are two types of interviews that medical schools use. Below I have set out a comparison of both.

<b>Interview Type</b>	<b>MMI</b>	<b>Traditional Interview</b>
<b>What domains do they test?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Role Play</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Professional Judgement</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Prioritisation</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Giving instructions</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Calculation and data interpretation</b></li> <li>✓ <b>PBL</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Background, Motivation, Interest, Work Experience</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Knowledge of the medical school</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Creativity and imagination</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Ethics and Empathy</b></li> <li>✓ <b>Personal insight and teamworking</b></li> </ul> <p><b>*NOTE: these vary by medical schools, but it is important to prepare for all of these domains</b></p>
<b>What medical schools use these interviews? (examples)</b>	<b>Aberdeen, Manchester, Imperial, Warwick, St George's</b>	<b>Barts, Bristol, Cambridge, King's, Nottingham, Oxford</b>

Each medical school have different interviews so it can be very difficult to prepare for these interviews. So, instead of trying to memorise answers before, it's best to practice lots of scenarios beforehand for each of these domains. Prior knowledge can be useful, for instance, knowing the pillars of ethics is a popular bit of information.

The main thing is to turn up to your interview with confidence. Confident dressing, speaking and posture can portray enthusiasm and give a positive reflection of you to the interviewers' eyes. The more practice for these interviews you do, the more confident you will be!

It is always popular to know about the medical school and to know about its history – enthusiasm in the medical school and its history portrays eagerness and passion for the medical school. Medical schools want students who show pride in their medical school. Likewise, have a look at their website and the societies they offer. Perhaps pick one or a few that you may be interested in and tell them in the interview, what you can provide for that society.

Medical schools take pride in their societies and want students to engage in them.

But as mentioned, the best way to prepare is to practice.

With JC Tuition you can practice 1-2-1 interviews with tutors who are in medical school and have been through what you have been through before!

# FINAL EXAMS

Now you can't forget about your A-levels or whatever final exam you are taking at the end of college. With all the other commitments with the admission process, it can be easy to fall behind on your classwork, but you must try to keep on top of this. At the end of the day, even if you pass everything mentioned above, if you do not obtain the A-level grades to get into medical school, then it was all for nothing!

Time management and smart studying will be more crucial for you than your friends applying to other courses. To obtain the best grades, you must study using scientific-based study strategies. You can read more about this in our eBook, "Scientific-based study strategies: How to achieve the best possible grades".

A-Level subjects can be tricky. So as always if you need any support please do get in contact with the team at JC Tuition.

# GOOD LUCK TO ALL OF YOU FUTURE DOCTORS!

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