



WOODHOUSE  
COLLEGE

# Higher Education

MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

2020 -2021

## 2019-2020

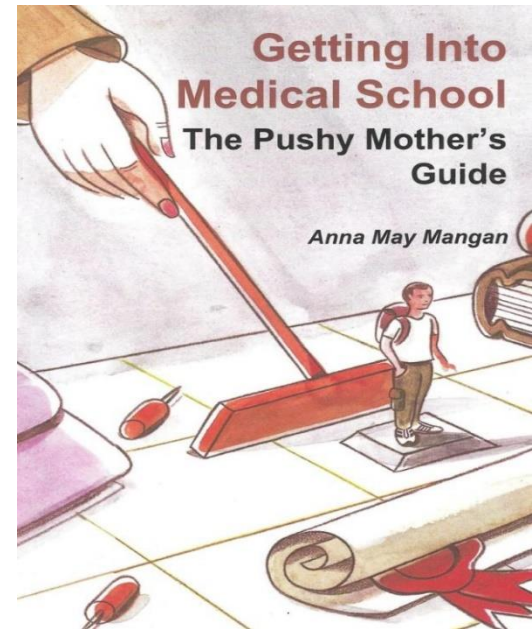
- ▶ 44 students received offers to study medicine at different universities so far (10 more to be confirmed)
- ▶ Most students received more than 1 offer
- ▶ Most students who applied were called for interviews

# What do students think medicine is?



- ▶ What they see on “Casualty” and “ER”
- ▶ Glamorous
- ▶ Well paid
- ▶ Prestigious
- ▶ Being highly respected
- ▶ Totally fascinating and exciting with never a dull moment

- ▶ “If they [your children] can’t write and speak fluently about their reasons for wanting to study medicine, or look you in the eye and describe them, then they are not ready to apply .....



# Realistically.....



- ▶ Hard work
- ▶ Very hard work !!!
- ▶ Lots of exams – with limited chances to resit
- ▶ Periods of tedium and boredom
- ▶ Stroppy, irritable, sometimes violent patients
- ▶ Highly competitive
- ▶ More exams, exams, exams!

# The framework for applying to medicine



- ▶ Grades – GCSE/A level predicted
- ▶ Work Experience – what type
- ▶ Course – proving an interest in the course through the personal statement, references and understanding how medicine is studied
- ▶ Admission tests – UCAT/BMAT or (no test for veterinary medicine)
- ▶ Interview – how to prepare /what type

# What it takes to be a medic



## Grades

- ▶ GCSE: different for different universities
- ▶ at least 5A\* for some or 6A\*-A for others, **Birmingham minimum 8A\* & Cardiff 9A\***
- ▶ Predicted grades for A2 **must be AAA or A\*AA, Oxbridge A\*A\*A**
- ▶ A Level, a minimum of 3 A Levels (AAA or A\*AA)
  - ▶ CHEMISTRY and preferably Biology to A2 level

# Work Experience



- ▶ Medical schools expect students to have a realistic appreciation of what a career as a health professional involves. Work experience provides good evidence
- ▶ Clinical work experience is very difficult to find as there are:
  - ▶ Too many students trying to find placements
  - ▶ Confidentiality restrictions
  - ▶ Age restrictions

However.....



# There are lots of things students can do.....



- ▶ Talk to people- local GP, healthcare professionals
- ▶ Do some voluntary work , e.g. Local hospice, care home, hospital, shopmobility, disabled children **over a long period of time.**
- ▶ Fund raising
- ▶ Ask people in the profession to shadow them for a few days
- ▶ Enrol on a St John's Ambulance first aid course.  
Pharmacy work experience
- ▶ A customer facing job, tutoring children, etc.

# There are lots of things students can do.....



- ▶ Students must keep a diary and reflect on their experience.
- ▶ They should use their time effectively during their placement by:
  - Gaining insights into the demands placed on staff
  - Problems they encounter
  - Strategies they employ to handle difficult situations
  - Benefits they obtain from caring for people and working in teams

- ▶ However for dentistry and veterinary medicine
- ▶ Work experience placements are **COMPULSORY** at a minimum of 2 weeks

# Admission tests: UCAT



- ▶ Required by the greatest majority of medical schools in the UK
- ▶ Tests are taken on a computer; results given immediately after the test
- ▶ Multiple venues across the UK
- ▶ There is a wide testing window from July to October
- ▶ If they leave registering to the last minute, students may find it difficult to find a space in a testing centre near to their homes

- ▶ The UCAT is designed to test aptitude rather than academic achievement. It assesses a wide range of mental abilities and behavioural attributes which are considered important for doctors and dentists to possess.
- ▶ **The tests are not curriculum based, they test cognitive skills**

# UKCAT dates



▶ To be CONFIRMED But Provisionally

▶ Registration opens 01 May 2020

▶ Testing begins 01 July 2020

▶ Registration Closes 18 September 2020

▶ Last testing date 02 October 2020

▶ UCAS application deadline 15 October 2020

**Costs:** UK/EU up to 31<sup>st</sup> August : **£65**

▶ UK/EU, 1<sup>st</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October : **£87**

▶ Bursary scheme opens: 1 May 2020

Deadline for applications: 18 September 2020

- ▶ BMAT Statement
- ▶ “BMAT admission test does not require a lot of extra study as they are a test of skills and knowledge that students are expected to have already. We do recommend, however, that they become familiar with the test format by practising with past papers”.

# BMAT



- ▶ Oxford
- ▶ Cambridge
- ▶ Imperial College
- ▶ University College London
- ▶ Brighton and Sussex
- ▶ Leeds
- ▶ Lancaster
- ❖ **Students should NOT apply to four BMAT universities – if the exam goes wrong they instantly lose the opportunity to secure a place**



# BMAT Dates



- ▶ Please confirm from website in due course
- ▶ It is a pen and paper test, testing scientific knowledge and writing skills
- ▶ **October Session**
- ▶ Entries extranet opens : 01 September 2020
- ▶ Closing date: 1 October 2020
- ▶ BMAT takes place: 4 November 2020
- ▶ BMAT results released: 27 November 2020
- ▶ **September Session**, students will need to register themselves for the test. Registration opens on **22 June 2020 and closes on 9 August 2020. Test: 4 September**
- ▶ Cost **£85** (November) **£85** (September)

# Personal Statement



- ▶ Assessed on
  - Commitment to medicine (work experience and research)
  - Core qualities of doctors, demonstration of excellent communication skills, problem solving, services to the community, integrity and empathy and caring nature
  - Teamwork and leadership skills demonstrated by activities in the College, extracurricular activities (DOE, scouts, sports, music, etc.)

# Qualities Medical Schools look for.....



- ▶ Genuinely helpful and caring
- ▶ Confident and composed
- ▶ Trustworthy and truthful, with integrity
- ▶ Good communicator (listening and explaining)
- ▶ Organised & meets deadlines
- ▶ Emotionally strong
- ▶ Approachable
- ▶ Hard working with stamina
- ▶ Excellent at problem solving

# Interview



Selection criteria for interviews could include the following:

- ▶ GCSEs
- ▶ Predicted A level grades
- ▶ Personal statement
- ▶ Reference
- ▶ BMAT
- ▶ UKCAT
- ▶ **Types of interviews:**
  1. Panel Interview
  2. Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

# Foundation courses



- ▶ 6 years offered at several universities e.g. Kings College, Bristol, Southampton, Nottingham, East Anglia, Manchester, etc.
- ▶ A proper medicine course but with an extra year for
- ▶ Students with lower grades who fulfil these criteria:
  - ▶ (1) From underprivileged backgrounds (income based)
  - ▶ (2) Students whose parents have not had a university education

# What if the application is rejected?



- ▶ Concentrate on A Level subjects
- ▶ Secure AAA/A\*AA
- ▶ Take a gap year
- ▶ Reapply next year
- ▶ Study Medicine abroad

# Present & future support at Woodhouse



- ▶ Links with medical institutions: ***Kings College Outreach for Medicine programme, Med View and Dent View, UCL Target Medicine, Imperial College e-mentoring***
- ▶ Link with Barnet Hospital/Royal Free hospital & Chase Farm, they offer our students volunteering opportunities
- ▶ Medicine Study Groups at Woodhouse
- ▶ BMAT/UCAT practice
- ▶ Tutorials on the NHS
- ▶ Trips to the Royal Society of Medicine
- ▶ Trips to the National Institute of Medical Research
- ▶ Workshops on surgical skills at the Hunterian Museum, & at Woodhouse (Operating Theatre Live)
- ▶ Our students volunteer as cases for medical schools examinations held at the RSM
- ▶ External speakers
- ▶ Woodle Medicine folder
- ▶ UCAS, personal statement help & mock interviews
- ▶ Notifications from career adviser

# Understanding how medicine is studied



1. Traditional
2. Integrated
3. Problem-based learning



# Sources of Information



- ▶ Medical and science articles in newspapers, journals and on the Internet
- ▶ Books
- ❖ A comprehensive list of websites, books and libraries is available

# The Internet



Twitter can be used as a really effective way to keep up to date with medical news from a variety of organisations.

Try following some or all of these:

- ▶ @doc2doc @RoySocMed @rcgp @GPonlinenews  
@BMANews @bbchealth @BMAstudents  
@AmerMedicalAssn @CR\_UK @DHgovuk  
@Doctors\_net\_uk @ExploreWellcome @StudentBMJ  
@MedscapeStudent @msnewspaper @NHSChoices  
@TheKingsFund @TheBMA @TheBHF @RCPLondon  
@wellcometrust @WHO @WHOBulletin

# The Internet



- ▶ There are a number of websites that are worth looking at for potential doctors, and some, like BBC Health News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/default.stm>
- ▶ [http://www.gmc.uk.org/guidance/case\\_studies.asp](http://www.gmc.uk.org/guidance/case_studies.asp)
- ▶ The Wellcome Trust provides an excellent website and a really good magazine (called Big Picture) which you can read online. You can also subscribe to it for free. Here is the link:
- ▶ <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Education-resources/Teaching-and-education/Big-Picture/index.htm>

# The Internet



- ▶ Subscription to the student BMJ
- ▶ <http://student.bmj.com/student/student-bmj.html>  
Unfortunately it's not free.
- ▶ Other really useful web pages are:
- ▶ <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/Students/UKMedicalSchools/Pages/UK-Medical-Schools-A-Z.aspx>
- ▶ This lists links to all the UK medschools.
- ▶ <http://www.medschoolsonline.co.uk/>
- ▶ is also an excellent resource, like a medical top trumps page.

# The Internet



- ▶ The BMA publish advice, updated annually, on becoming a doctor.
- ▶ [http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/becoming\\_doctor/becomingadoctor.jsp](http://www.bma.org.uk/careers/becoming_doctor/becomingadoctor.jsp)
- ▶ If you want to find out more about the NHS, then look no further than:
- ▶ <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/thenhs/about/Pages/nhsstructure.aspx>

# The Internet



- ▶ If you want to know more about different career paths, then try this:
- ▶ <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/foundation-doctors/your-career-path>
- ▶ and if you want to know more about different specialties, then you need to look at this:
- ▶ [http://www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/specialty\\_pages.aspx](http://www.medicalcareers.nhs.uk/specialty_pages.aspx)
- ▶ This website has lots of great interactive ethical case studies:

# Books on medicine



- ▶ Max Pemberton (2008): Trust me I'm a Junior Doctor. Hodder
- ▶ Max Pemberton (2009): Where does it Hurt? Hodder
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2003): Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2007): Better: A Surgeon's Notes on Performance
- ▶ Atul Gawande (2009): The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right
- ▶ Michael Sparrow (2002): Tales of a Rural GP (Robinson)
- ▶ Michael Sparrow (2004): Repeat Prescription: Further Tales of a Rural GP (Robinson)

# Books on medicine



- ▶ Nick Edwards (2009): In Stitches: The Highs and Lows of an A & E Doctor
- ▶ Jerome Groopman (2007): How Doctors Think. Houghton Mifflin
- ▶ Cecil Helman (2006): The Suburban Shaman. Hammersmith Press
- ▶ Oliver Sacks (1985): The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat. Picador

This book is an interesting look at the myths behind medicine:

- ▶ Ben Goldacre (2009): Bad Science. Harper Perennial.



# Books on medicine



## The following 4 books are recommended for those preparing an application

1. Succeed in Your Medical School Interview: Stand Out from the Crowd and Get into Your Chosen Medical School (Elite Students Series) by Christopher See (2011) published by Kogan Page
2. Getting Into Medical School 2014 Entry by Simon Horner (2013) published by Trotman
3. [Choosing a Medical School: An Essential Guide to UK Medical Schools 2<sup>nd</sup> Edn](#) by Alexander Young, Alexander Aquilina, William Dougal, Thomas Judd and Matt Green (2011) published by BPP Learning Media
4. Getting into Medical School - The Pushy Mother's Guide by Anna Marie Mangan (2008) published by Spine Publishing

# Books on Medical ethics



- ▶ This book is great on ethics, taught through case studies:
- ▶ <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Cambridge-Medical-Ethics-Workbook-Commentaries/dp/0521788633>
- ▶ This is a nice short introduction to medical ethics:
- ▶ [http://www.amazon.co.uk/Medical-Ethics-Short-Introduction-Introductions/dp/0192802828/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1309938291&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Medical-Ethics-Short-Introduction-Introductions/dp/0192802828/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1309938291&sr=1-1)

# On a positive note



- ▶ For suitable candidates, medicine offers the greatest benefits:
- ▶ A guaranteed job when they graduate
- ▶ A job for life
- ▶ Excellent pay and overtime
- ▶ More diversity of career pathways than virtually any other vocation
- ▶ Opportunities to work abroad