

Admissions tests: preparing for the BMAT



Dr Nicola Phillips
Director of Admissions



Lancaster University
Medical School

Structure of today's workshop

- Why and how Medical Schools use admissions tests
- Differences between UCAT and BMAT
- Structure of BMAT
- Test scores
- How to prepare
 - Resources available
 - When should they start to prepare and what should they do

Why do Medical Schools need to use admissions?

- Majority of applicants have similar GCSE and A Level profiles
- Limited number of interview slots
- Restricted numbers to gain entry to medicine
- Large number of applications per places available
- Predictive capacity of tests help to identify candidates with potential to succeed on course
- Test provide a rigorous method to support our selection processes



How are admissions tests used?

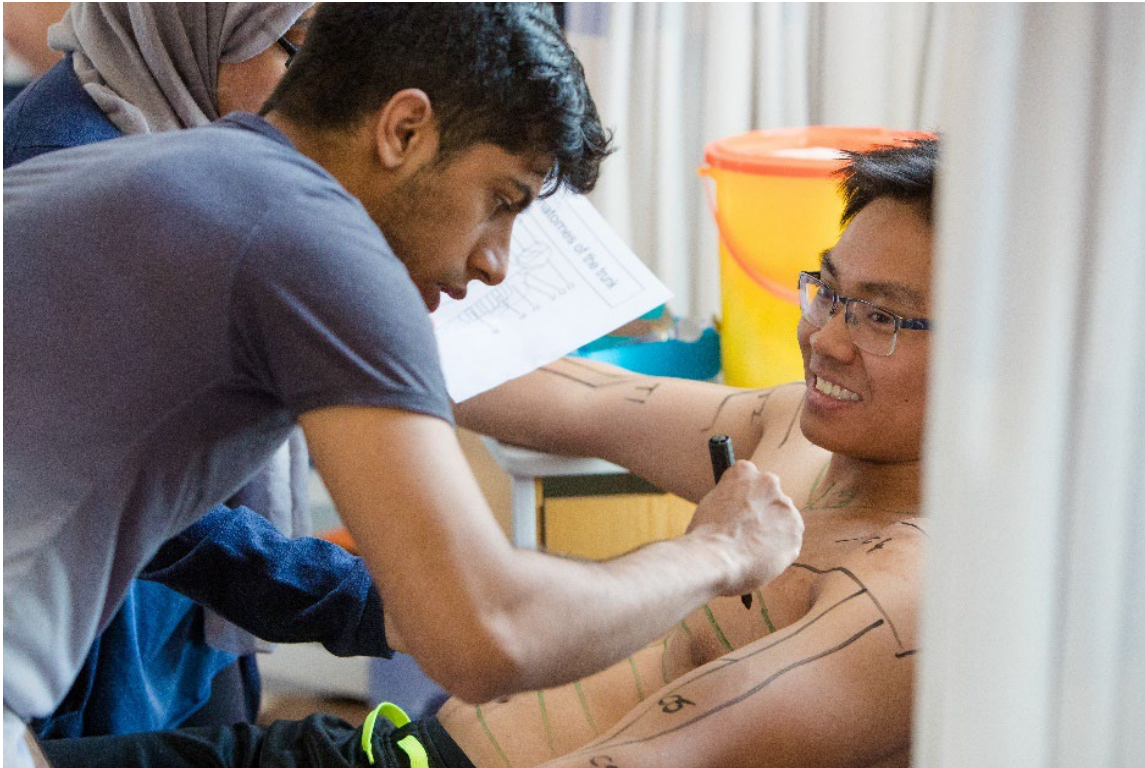
- “Cut –off” score
- Weighting of sections
- Allocated marks towards application score
- Ranked for interview selection
- Differentiate borderline cases

Find information on Admissions pages
MSC collates information from Medical Schools

UCAT:

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

- University Clinical Aptitude Test
- Most UK medical schools
- Not BMAT group



BMAT:

<http://www.admissionstestingservice.org/>

- Biomedical Admission Test
- Cambridge, Oxford, UCL, Imperial
- Brighton-Sussex, Lancaster & Keele (overseas applicants)

Differences between admissions tests

	UCAT	BMAT
Duration	2 hours	
Sections	5	3
How	Computer based	Pen and paper
Registration date	May to mid-September	September
Test date	July to late-September	October 18 th 2023
Where	Test centre	Test centre or school
Fee	£70	£78 + test centre fee

Things to note:

Access arrangements

For candidates entitled to support for other exams

- disability
- special requirement

Arrangements include:

- extra working time
- supervised rest breaks
- enlarged papers

Evidence required

Bursary

Low income households

- 16-19 bursary
- Free school meals
- Income support
- Universal credit

Apply for test fee voucher/reimbursement

- deadline

Evidence required

BMAT - structure



Section 1 – Thinking Skills (9 marks)

-problem solving, critical thinking.

-Biggest section (1hr), 32 questions. Multiple choice

BMAT

Section 1

problem solving

- 3 A password to open the safe in a hotel room uses an array of five names in a particular order selected from the names of the members of the owner's family. They are:

Rick, Betty, Oscar, Gavin, Yasmin, Graham and Bertha.

In any password a name can only be used once and no two names with the same starting letter are allowed.

Jeremy is trying to remember the password he set and tries:

Betty Rick Oscar Gavin Yasmin

The safe doesn't open because whilst the second, fourth and fifth names are correct, the first and third names are wrong.

Which of these could be the correct combination to open the safe?

- | | | | | | |
|----------|--------|------|--------|-------|--------|
| A | Bertha | Rick | Oscar | Gavin | Yasmin |
| B | Bertha | Rick | Graham | Gavin | Yasmin |
| C | Betty | Rick | Bertha | Gavin | Yasmin |
| D | Oscar | Rick | Graham | Gavin | Yasmin |
| E | Oscar | Rick | Bertha | Gavin | Yasmin |

BMAT

Section 1

verbal reasoning

4. Since the late 1990s wolves have been seen in the Haute-France region of the Alps. This places them once again in conflict with the shepherds who farm this region. Due to the protected status of the European wolf, French farmers are awarded a compensation payment for the loss of any of their sheep to a wolf. This payment amounts to considerably more than the livestock value of the animal. In addition to this, it is very difficult to distinguish between evidence of a wolf attack and dog attack. France has a population of 8 million dogs; 8 000 of these are estimated to be wild compared to only 200 wolves.

Which one of the following is a conclusion that can be drawn from the above passage?

- A** The problem of wolves attacking sheep in the French Alps has been exaggerated.
- B** Any claim that a sheep has been attacked by a wolf should be treated with caution.
- C** The protected status of the European wolf is unpopular in the French farming community.
- D** The wolf's reputation for killing sheep is undeserved.

BMAT - structure



Section 1 – Thinking Skills (9 marks)

- problem solving, critical thinking.
- Biggest section (1hr), 32 questions. Multiple choice**

Section 2 - Scientific Knowledge and Applications (9 marks)

- application of scientific knowledge (Key stage 4 Science and Maths)
- **30 minutes, 27 questions. Multiple choice**

BMAT Section 2 – Biology example

The following statements relate to the flow of blood through the heart.

- 1** Oxygenated blood flows through the right side of the heart.
- 2** The vena cava empties deoxygenated blood into the ventricle.
- 3** The heart pumps oxygenated blood through the pulmonary artery.
- 4** There is a valve that prevents backflow of blood from the aorta into the left ventricle.

Which of these statements is/ are correct?

BMAT - structure



Section 1 – Thinking Skills (9 marks)

- problem solving, critical thinking.
- Biggest section (1hr), 32 questions. Multiple choice**

Section 2 - Scientific Knowledge and Applications (9 marks)

- application of scientific knowledge (Key stage 4 Science and Maths)
- **30 minutes, 27 questions. Multiple choice**

Section 3 - Writing Task (5 marks + A-E score for English)

- ability to select, develop and organise ideas, and communicate them in writing in a concise and effective way
- 30 minutes, 1 page (~ 4 paragraphs).**

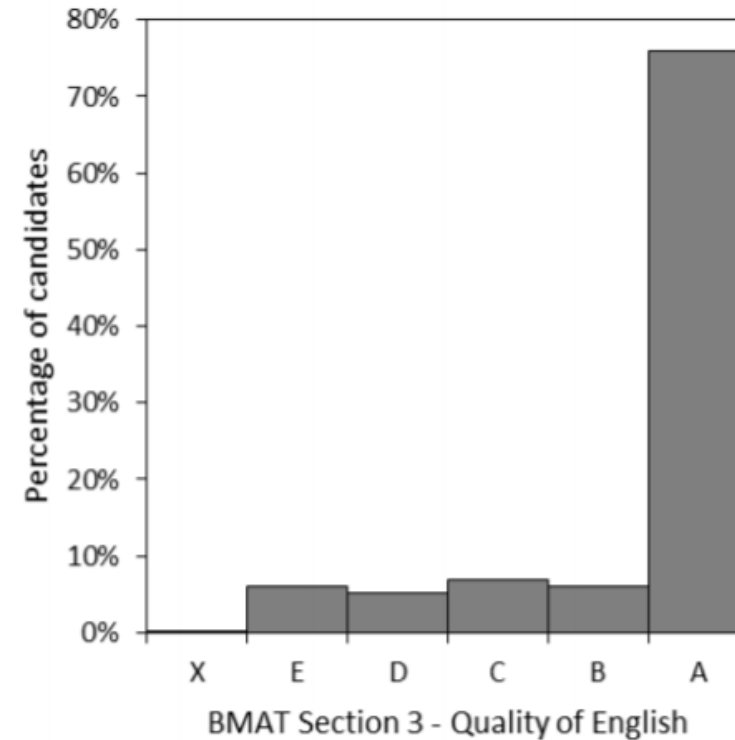
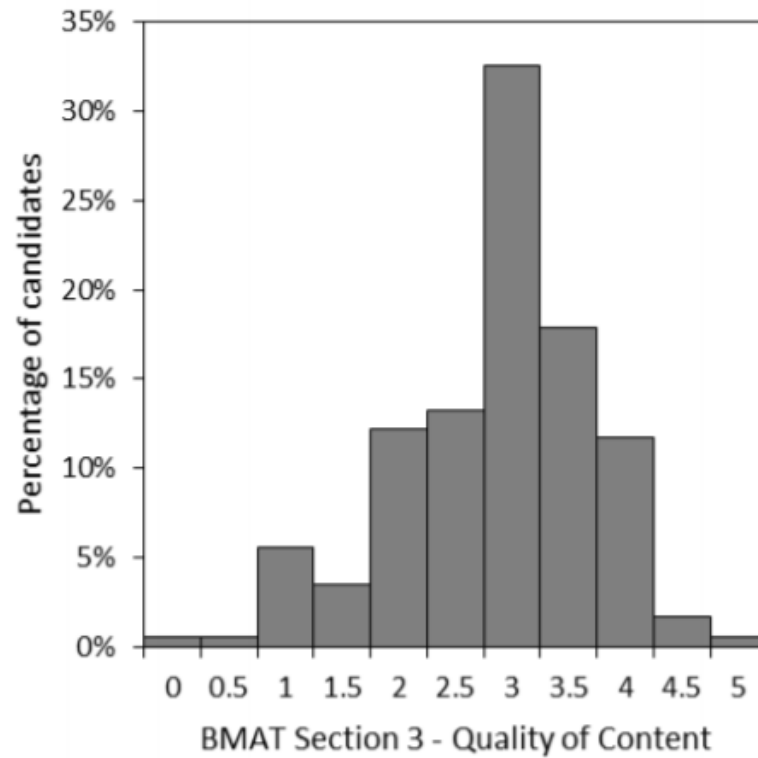
BMAT Section 3 - essay

- Three choices of question - general, medical or scientific interest
- All take same format

There is more to healing than the application of scientific knowledge

- Briefly define 'scientific knowledge'.
- Explain how it might be argued that medical treatment that is not wholly based on scientific knowledge is worthless.
- Discuss whether there can be approaches to healing that are valid but not amenable to scientific experiment.

BMAT Average scores



For October test,

- candidates take the test after application
- results are sent directly to Universities at the end of November

Admission tests top tips!



Free Resources Online

No need to pay for books or courses



Look out for changes

Syllabus, timings and coronavirus updates



Familiarise yourself with question format



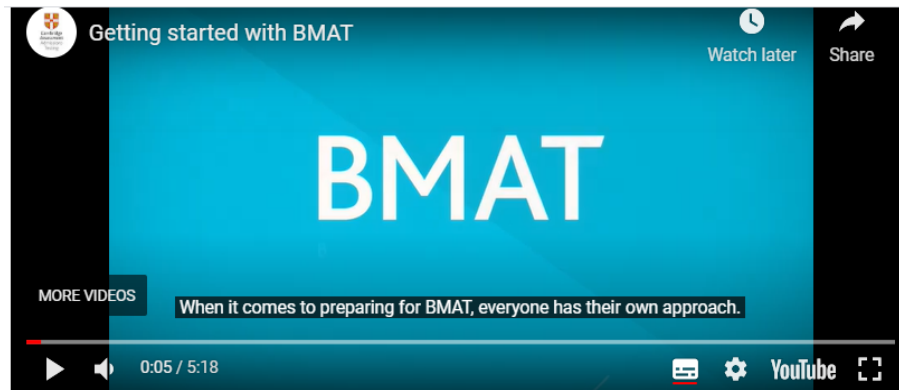
Practice all sections



Practice under timed conditions

Preparing for BMAT

- Use the free resources available on the BMAT website
- <https://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat/preparing-for-bmat/>



There is no need to pay for a preparation course; we provide everything you need for free! Our resources include BMAT practice papers, the test specification and section-specific guides.

Access all of our BMAT resources below:

BMAT test specification

Read the specification for a summary of what each section of BMAT tests and an outline of the scientific and mathematical knowledge that Section 2 questions can draw on.

[Download now](#)

Practice and past papers

Use the BMAT practice and past papers for all three sections of the test to get a good understanding of the test format, different question types and skills BMAT assesses.

[Access the papers](#)

Section 1 question guide

Read the guide for examples of the different question types and tips on how to approach Section 1 of BMAT.

Please note: Section 1 was updated in 2020 and no longer includes questions that test data analysis and inference.

[Download now](#)

Section 2 guide

Use the guide to get an overview of the scientific and mathematical knowledge that BMAT Section 2 questions can draw on.

You will have covered much of this content in your school-based study of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics. The guide will help to plan your revision.

[Access the guide](#)

Section 3 marking criteria

Read the BMAT Section 3 marking criteria to understand what our examiners are looking for in terms of quality of content and quality of English in the Writing Task.

[Download now](#)

YouTube

Watch our BMAT playlist for advice from current medical students, top tips from our examiners about Section 3 and information from universities about why they use the test.

[Watch the BMAT playlist](#)



Lancaster University
Medical School

Thank you for listening, any questions?

- Lancaster Medical School Admissions:
medicine@lancaster.ac.uk
- BMAT teachers alerts:
<https://www.admissionstesting.org/campaigns/teacher-email-alerts/>