

Careers and Employability Service

Medical School Interviews

Introduction

This document has been produced to give some background information and sample questions to help applicants applying to Medical Schools to prepare for the selection process. We would strongly encourage any candidate going forward to selection to prepare for the interview as you would for any graduate level opportunity. Do your research, be self-reflective, re-read your UCAS statement and use our resources e.g [Interviews webpage](#).

Interview Formats

Each Medical School will have a slightly different way of assessing and interviewing candidates by using different interview styles and question formats. For example, some Schools may conduct one formal interview in a 1-2-1 setting while others may opt for a formal panel interview involving three or more interviewers. Some Schools may conduct one interview while others may conduct multiple mini interviews and some have even conducted group interviews where several candidates are interviewed together.

The setting for your interview may also vary, for example some Schools will interview you within a formal boardroom or office, others have used a large hall where several interviews are conducted at the same time and some have taken a more casual approach and used lounge areas / recreation rooms within the Medical School.

Whatever format, style and location of your interview, remember you are being assessed.

What's being assessed at Interview?

Interviewers and selectors are constantly coming up with new ways to assess a candidate's abilities, knowledge and motivations and frequently Medical School interviews are now often accompanied by assessment centre activities as part of the selection process. Whatever the interview/assessment format and style you will likely be assessed on the following:

- Experiences that made you want to pursue medicine (UCAS Personal Statement)
- Understanding of Medicine and a Doctor's responsibilities
- Commitment to Medicine
- Professionalism and Clinical Aptitude
- Empathy and Ethics
- Communication and Articulation
- Team Working and Clinical Data Handling
- Problem Solving and Logical Thinking
- Resilience

Sample Questions collated from various Medical Schools

Below are some sample questions collated from various Medical Schools that have been used in the past few years as part of the selection process.

Generic Background Questions:

- Tell us about yourself.
- Talk us through your personal profile.

- Why do you want to be a doctor?
- Why do you want to study medicine?
- What do you think medicine entails?
- What do you think makes a good doctor?
- Why would you make a good doctor?

Motivational Questions:

- Why did you not do a medical course when you first left school/college?
- Why did you choose your first degree programme?
- What attracted you to this programme?
- Why do you want to study here?
- What appeals to you about this city?
- Why medicine, why not nursing or other health professional course?
- Are there any areas in which you want to specialise?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years time?

Competencies and Reflective Learning:

- How will you handle the stresses of work?
- How will you balance work and extracurricular activities?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What difficulties do you think you will face and how will you tackle these?
- What's the biggest mistake you have ever made?
- Tell us about a team activity you organised? What went badly? What did you learn?
- Let's think ahead to when you are a Doctor. Who do you think will be the most important person in your team?
- Are you a leader or a follower?
- Do teams need leaders?
- What role does humour play in a team? Can you give an example?

Funding and Further Study Questions:

- How will you fund this course?
- What would you say to the man on the street who says his taxes have funded your first degree; why should he fund your medical programme?
- Justify to me why the Government pay for your programme of study?
- How would you cope with further study?
- Do you think being a graduate will be an advantage in studying medicine and if so what particular strengths would you bring?
- If you were not accepted on to a programme of study here what would you do instead?

Depth of Interest:

- Do you read any publications?
- Can you tell me about a significant recent advance in Medicine?
- What 3 medical and non-medical advances have had the biggest impact on health over the last 100 years?
- Tell me something about the history of medicine that interests you.
- Around half of what we teach you on this programme will be out of date by the time you graduate. How do you feel about that?
- If a wealthy benefactor gave you a huge amount of money to set up a Medical Research Institute and appointed you as director what area would you chose to explore and why?

Knowledge of teaching methods and Continued Professional Development (CPD):

- So you want to be a GP. How do you become a GP? What is the training route?
- What interests you about our curriculum?
- What is problem based learning (PBL)? What are its advantages/disadvantages?
- Why would this PBL programme suit your learning style(s)?

- This programme will require a significant amount of independent learning, how have you managed this approach to learning in the past?
- How does this School differ from others in regards to our teaching methods?
- What previous experience have you had of learning within a small group?
- What are your preferred learning styles? How does this programme fit with those?

Debates around an ethical or current affairs question:

- Do you think health care should be free or should people pay?
- Should the NHS be involved in non-essential surgery?
- How has the rise of IT influenced the practice of medicine?
- Has self-diagnosis websites helped or hindered medical professionals?
- Other than a lack of funds, what are the current issues within the NHS?
- What relevance has the Hippocrates oath to modern medicine?
- Where do you see the NHS in 10 years time?
- What is your opinion on euthanasia?
- What are the differences between length of life and quality of life?
- What are the differences between the NHS and private sector?
- Should someone that has smoked for the last 20 years be entitled to free health care?
- The global population now exceeds 7 billion and could be described by many as overpopulated. Should the NHS fund IVF?
- Why can research be unethical?
- What are your opinions about testing new drugs on animals?
- Do you think Doctors should ever strike?
- What is "holistic medicine"? Does it have a place within the NHS?
- What are the consequences of obesity to the NHS?

Clinical Scenarios:

- A 15 year old girl approaches you requesting an abortion; you suspect there may be abuse. What do you do? Do you contact the parents?
- A patient is about to undergo an MMR procedure. What advice would you give to them?
- Would you prescribe an oral contraceptive pill to a 14 year old girl who is sleeping with her boyfriend?
- You have one liver available for transplant, but two patients with equal medical need. One is an ex-alcoholic mother with two young children, the other a 13 year old with an inborn liver abnormality. How would you decide to whom it should be given?

Creative, Innovative and Imaginative Questions (Testing Questions):

- Tell me a good clean joke.
- How would you dissuade someone from going into Medicine?
- If you could invite 3 people, alive or dead, to dinner who would they be and why?
- Do you think putting a man on Mars is money well spent? (If yes, why? If no, how would you rather see the money spent)
- How do you feel and respond when you see a beggar on the street?
- Describe as many uses as you can for a mobile phone charger.
- Imagine you have 6 months with nothing to do and enough money to do whatever you wanted to do. Tell me what you would do and how you'd spend your time.
- If you were me and I were you, what question would you ask next?
- If you were in charge here, how would you improve this selection process?

Further Research

In addition to this research there are countless web resources filled with examples of further questions and discussions around Medical School application process. A quick *Google* search will bring up various websites including *The Student Room* amongst others. Treat all information in web forums and blogs with caution as although many sources will be accurate some may be less so. You can also make use of our [e-Books](#) providing you with 24 hours access to our resource materials.