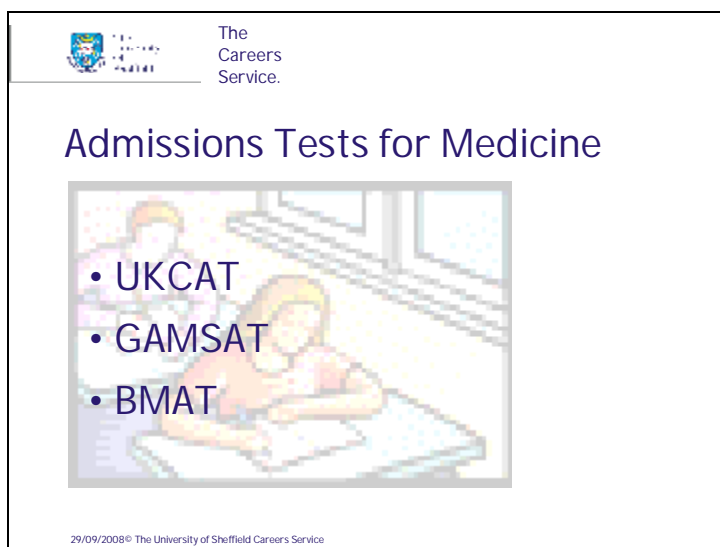


## Slide 1



The slide features the University of Sheffield logo and 'The Careers Service.' text in the top left. The title 'Admissions Tests for Medicine' is centered. Below the title is an illustration of two students at a desk, with a list of tests overlaid on the image. The list includes UKCAT, GAMSAT, and BMAT. A copyright notice '29/09/2008© The University of Sheffield Careers Service' is at the bottom.

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### Admissions Tests for Medicine

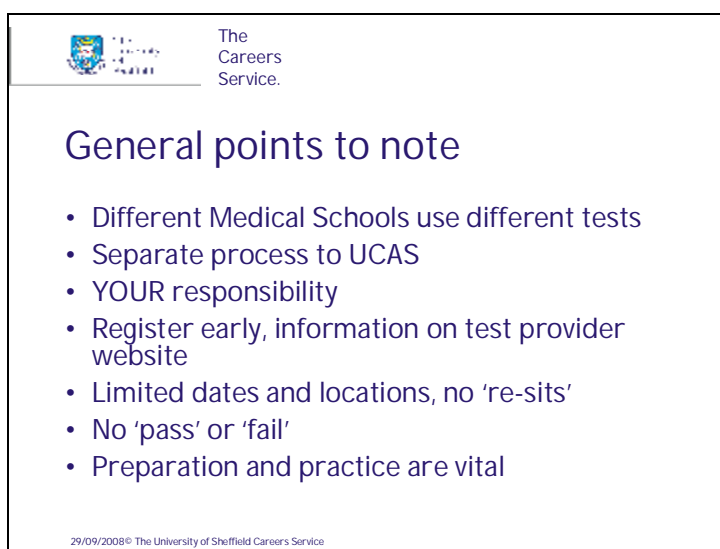
- UKCAT
- GAMSAT
- BMAT

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Welcome to 'Admissions tests for Medicine'. This short talk will provide you with an overview of the three admissions tests used by many Medical Schools in the UK - namely the UKCAT, GAMSAT and BMAT - what they involve and how to prepare for them. As we cannot cover everything in 12 minutes, sources of further information and advice will be provided at the end of the presentation.

If you would like a more general overview of how to apply for Medicine (including the UCAS form and interview technique) before you view this presentation on admissions tests, you should view the Careers Talk Online entitled 'Getting into Medicine as a graduate'.

## Slide 2



The slide features the University of Sheffield logo and 'The Careers Service.' text in the top left. The title 'General points to note' is centered. Below the title is a list of seven bullet points. A copyright notice '29/09/2008© The University of Sheffield Careers Service' is at the bottom.

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### General points to note

- Different Medical Schools use different tests
- Separate process to UCAS
- YOUR responsibility
- Register early, information on test provider website
- Limited dates and locations, no 're-sits'
- No 'pass' or 'fail'
- Preparation and practice are vital

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Before we look at each admissions test in detail, there are some general points to note.

It is up to individual Medical Schools to decide which, if any, admissions test it will ask candidates to sit. Admissions tests can apply to both the 4-year fast-track courses as

well as traditional 5-year ones. Check on the Medical School's website to see which admissions test it uses and for which course.

It is your responsibility to register for and take the appropriate test. Information about the procedure you should follow is available on the test provider's website and there is usually a helpline telephone number provided. The process is completely separate to the UCAS application procedure.

If the Medical Schools to which you apply ask for the same test, then you only need to sit the test once and the results will be distributed to all Schools separately, so that your choices are not revealed. If you apply to Medical Schools which ask for different tests, then you would have to register for, and sit, each of the tests requested. You cannot substitute one test for another.


There are a limited number of dates when you can take each test. GAMSAT and BMAT are only offered on one day each year. There are also a limited number of test centres. UKCAT offers more flexibility in terms of dates and location. Although the exact test date varies year on year, it is likely that you'll have to sit your test either before and just after the UCAS application form deadline, registering at least 4-6 weeks in advance, so make sure you plan well ahead. If you wish to repeat the test, you cannot re-sit in the same year. You would have to reapply for Medicine again the following year.

It can be difficult to determine how your performance in the test will affect your application. You are not marked on a pass or fail basis, rather your mark will fall within a percentile range of all candidates. How institutions use the result varies. Some Medical Schools will only interview those who have submitted an impressive UCAS form and whose mark falls within a top percentile range. Others may not use the test results at all unless the candidate has a borderline performance at interview.

In any case, it is important that you obtain the best result you possibly can in the test, to maximise your chances of getting into Medical School. For this, preparation and practice are vital.

Now let's look at each of the tests in more detail.

## Slide 3



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### UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT)

- PC-based, multi-choice tests:
  - Verbal reasoning
  - Numerical reasoning
  - Abstract reasoning
  - Decision analysis
  - Non-cognitive analysis (personality questionnaire)
- Test dates: Mid-June to early October
- 150 UK test centres
- Check UKCAT website for current costs


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UKCAT is used by around three-quarters of Medical Schools, including Sheffield. Unlike the other tests, UKCAT is PC-based and all multi-choice. It tests candidates to determine their general aptitude for a career as a health professional rather than their scientific knowledge.

For verbal reasoning questions, you will be provided with a series of written passages and asked questions relating to how well you have understood what has been written. Numerical reasoning requires a good standard of Maths to interpret data and solve problems. Abstract reasoning presents a series of objects or shapes from which you have to determine patterns or logical flows. Decision-analysis looks at how you come to conclusions by interpreting data presented in a variety of formats. Candidates must also take a personality questionnaire designed to see how you would respond to a given scenario. Your responses will then, in theory, indicate to what extent you have the qualities required to be a good doctor, namely integrity, empathy and robustness. You will find examples of all these test questions on the UKCAT website, the address for which is given at the end of this talk. In total, the tests last for 2 hours.

Unlike the other tests, UKCAT offers a choice of dates when you can take the test, usually between mid June and early October in the year before you wish to commence the course. You will need to register at least 4-6 weeks in advance and, although there are at least 150 test centres in the UK alone, places at each centre will be limited. Check the UKCAT website for details of the current costs.

## Slide 4



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### Graduate Australian Medical Schools Admissions Test (GAMSAT)

- Paper-based test:
  - Reasoning in humanities and social science
  - Reasoning in biological and physical sciences
  - 2 short written tasks
- Test date: September
- Limited number test centres, inc. Sheffield
- Details of current cost on GAMSAT website


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GAMSAT is currently needed for a small number of medicine and dentistry courses, mainly the 4-year graduate fast-track programmes.

This paper-based test includes two multi-choice sections. The 'reasoning in humanities and social science' contains questions similar to verbal reasoning whilst 'reasoning in biological and physical sciences' test your knowledge using a mix of data, diagrams and other information. You are also asked to write two short essays, based on a stimulus such as a famous quote or a concept, to check your writing skills. Plenty of example questions are available via the GAMSAT website, the address of which is given at the end of this talk, and also in the Careers Service.

GAMSAT takes a total of 5 ½ hours to complete. There is currently just one test date per year, which is usually in the September of the year before you wish to commence the course. You should register at least 4 - 6 weeks in advance. There are a small number of test centres, all listed on the GAMSAT website. GAMSAT is usually the most expensive admissions test – check the website for current fees.

## Slide 5



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### BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT)

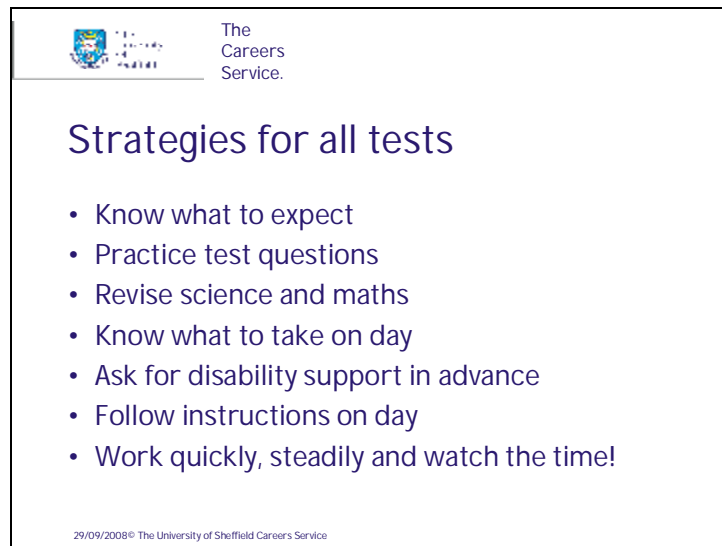
- Paper-based test:
  - Generic skills
  - Science and higher Maths
  - 1-page essay
- Test date: October / November
- Limited number test centres (not currently Sheffield)
- Check BMAT website for details of costs

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BMAT is the less popular admissions test, current used by Cambridge, Oxford and UCL. It is a paper-based test which includes two multi-choice sections. The generic skills section includes questions that require problem-solving, data analysis and inference whilst the other tests your science and higher maths skills. You are also required to write a concise 1-page essay on a scientific or learning theme. Specimen papers are available via the BMAT website, the address for which is at the end of this talk, and also in the Careers Service. In total, the test lasts 2 hours. The one and only test date each year is usually in the October or November of the year before the course begins. You need to register at least 4-6 weeks in advance.

There are several test centres, all listed on the BMAT website. Check the BMAT website for details of how much it will cost. Further information about UKCAT, GAMSAT and BMAT can be downloaded by clicking on the Attachments button in the top right-hand corner of the screen and selecting 'Admissions tests for Medical and Dental Schools'.

## Slide 6



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### Strategies for all tests

- Know what to expect
- Practice test questions
- Revise science and maths
- Know what to take on day
- Ask for disability support in advance
- Follow instructions on day
- Work quickly, steadily and watch the time!


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Preparation and practice are vital. Although the content of each of the admissions tests varies slightly, there are some general strategies that you can employ which will help you prepare for them. Plan well ahead - many of those who have taken the tests recommend that you start preparing at least 3 months before the test date. Find out as much as you can about the test - its format, when and how you need to register, test centre locations and procedures, etc.

Work through some sample questions to get a feel for what to expect and have a go at a practice test if one is available. You can also practice taking an aptitude test under test conditions at the Careers Service, although these tests are not the same ones that are used by Medical Schools. You may also wish to revise Maths and Science (biology, chemistry and physics) up to A-level standard, particularly for GAMSAT and BMAT. Although some companies offer preparatory courses for admission tests, these are not recommended by test providers. Make sure you know what you need to take with you on the day, including official forms, Identification Documents, calculators (if allowed) and writing equipment. If you have a disability that may interfere with your ability to sit the test and which requires support, let the test provider know well in advance so arrangements, including additional time, can be made. Marks cannot be adjusted retrospectively if you later disclose a disability.

Once the test has started, take a moment to read and digest the instructions. There will be a lot to get through, given the time allowed, so you will need to work quickly. Try not to panic and set yourself a steady pace. This is why it is a good idea to do lots of practice beforehand, so you know what to expect and can rehearse your technique. Make sure you keep an eye on the time as it tends to pass extremely quickly.

## Slide 7



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### Strategies for multi-choice questions

- Attempt as many questions as possible
- Don't spend too long on one question
- No deductions for a wrong answer
- No credit if more than one answer
- Be careful of 'nearly right' answers

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The multiple choice tests contain a lot of questions and you should attempt as many as possible. Don't spend too long on one question and take a guess if you need to, as there are no deductions for a wrong answer. No credit will be given if you mark more than one answer to a question, so be extra careful to mark your answer clearly on the paper-based forms and fully erase any markings you make in error. Be aware that some questions will have a 'nearly right' answer so think carefully before choosing your response.

## Slide 8



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### Strategies for writing essays

- Check assessment criteria
- Well structured, logical flow - not necessarily the 'correct' answer
- Spelling, grammar, language
- Clear and concise
- Appropriate title

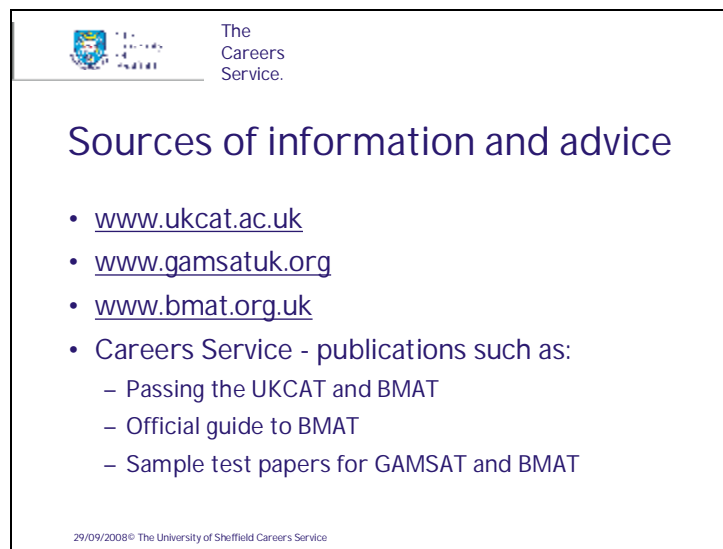
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When writing essays for GAMSAT and BMAT, check the assessment criteria before you start to write. The assessors will be looking for a well-structured, logical flow to your writing rather than you coming up with a 'correct' answer. They will also be looking at your spelling, grammar and the sort of language you use. Make sure you write clearly and concisely rather than trying to impress the assessor by cramming in as many words as you can. Also give your piece a title that is appropriate to the content.

Slide 9

## QUIZ

Slide 10



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### Sources of information and advice

- [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk)
- [www.gamsatuk.org](http://www.gamsatuk.org)
- [www.bmat.org.uk](http://www.bmat.org.uk)
- Careers Service - publications such as:
  - Passing the UKCAT and BMAT
  - Official guide to BMAT
  - Sample test papers for GAMSAT and BMAT

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This talk has outlined the three admissions tests used by Medical Schools in the UK and strategies you can use to prepare and practice for them. More detailed information about individual tests can be found on the test provider websites listed on this slide. In addition, the Careers Service carries several useful publications and practice papers. We also run more in-depth talks on both 'Admissions Tests for Medical & Dental School' and 'Getting into Medicine' (which looks at UCAS applications and interviews) as part of our What's On programme. If you would like to discuss the contents of this talk, don't forget that you can book an appointment with a Careers Adviser at the Careers Service.