

## So you want to study medicine in the UK? Guidance for overseas students

If you've decided to take the plunge and study a degree in medicine in the UK, but you are unsure what to do next, or how to apply for a place, this 'how to' guide is for you. The friendly Admissions team at the Hull York Medical School ([www.hyms.ac.uk](http://www.hyms.ac.uk)) have packed this sheet full of top tips on how to apply to medical schools in the UK and how to sell yourself in your application.

### Three common myths

**False:** You must apply directly to each UK medical school for a place

**False:** Top academic grades are the only thing UK medical schools look for in applicants

**False:** All UK medical schools have the same entry criteria

1. **Applications to Medicine must be made through UCAS** ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)) by 15<sup>th</sup> October in the year before entry. UCAS is the central organisation which deals with all applications to Medicine, and other university subjects, within the UK. You can apply to 4 medical programmes and 1 other subject on your UCAS form
2. **You will need more than top grades.** Your UCAS form provides you a space to list your actual grades, predicted grades and for a **personal statement** and **reference** from your school—these are both crucially important if you want to stand out from the crowd and persuade the Admissions staff to consider you. Some schools, like HYMS, rank everybody according to the quality of their personal statement and reference, as well as their grades and UKCAT score, so don't forget to think about these really carefully and draft and redraft until they are the best they can be. Most schools will interview strong candidates.
3. **Entry requirements can vary widely between medical schools.** You must check the websites of your favourite medical schools and speak to someone in the Admissions Department if you can. That way you can find out about the school's specific academic entry requirements.

### What should I put in my personal statement?

At HYMS we look for quite specific information in your personal statement – mainly the evidence that you are passionate about medicine, have the relevant personal qualities (good communicator, team player) and knowledge (of the medical profession, of Science, Maths and English) to make good trainee doctors. Make sure you back up your claims with lots of evidence to illustrate how you have been a good team player, communicator etc.

One of the most important aspects of your personal statement is your account of your **medical work experience** because this shows you really care about becoming a doctor and caring for others. It also gives you a realistic understanding of what being a doctor is like. You should aim for a mixture of work experience, including shadowing a doctor or health professional and working in a caring role at a hospice, care home or similar. Don't forget to write how often and long you did each volunteering role (e.g. one week, once a week for 6 months etc.) – and to reflect on what your experiences have taught you.

Have you played sport regularly to a competitive level, can you play a musical instrument to a high grade, or have you had a part time job? All these are relevant experiences that can illustrate a variety of skills; from being a team-player to being highly organised and motivated, so make sure you mention them! Read the websites of the medical schools to which you want to apply for more tips on what to include.

## **What should I avoid putting in my personal statement?**

- Lots of information about what you are studying and the grades you have achieved—two sentences should be enough.
- Personal information such as your name, age, date of birth, place of study and country you live in should also be left out as we have all of this information elsewhere on the form.
- The reason why you want to study in the UK is not necessary; if you are invited to interview you will be able to see and hear at first hand all about studying and living in the UK.

## **Your reference**

Ideally this should be written by a teacher or personal tutor at your current place of study who knows you really well and can comment on you as a person, and not just on your academic performance.

Your reference should include

- Your predicted grades
- Information on your personal qualities and achievements in and outside school
- Your suitability to study medicine

Try not to include

- Information already in your personal statement – it will only count once!
- Lots of information about your school or your subjects

## **What else should I include on my form?**

- Your academic achievements to date: at HYMS we look for 8 GCSEs at grade C and above, including Maths and English language at grade A, or their equivalences from your country's Middle Years Programme. Don't forget to include details of any formal academic exams you have taken.
- The academic achievements you are working towards, such as A-level, IB, or equivalent, or your current degree, so make sure you include qualifications you are currently taking as well as those you have completed.

Full details of the academic requirements at HYMS can be found at

[www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/entry-requirements.aspx](http://www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/entry-requirements.aspx). If you are unsure whether or not you meet the academic requirements, contact the medical school you are interested in. For HYMS enquiries, please email [internationaladmissions@hyms.ac.uk](mailto:internationaladmissions@hyms.ac.uk)

## **Admissions Tests**

In addition to school grades most medical schools ask students to sit an additional admissions test, either:-

- UK Clinical Aptitude Test UKCAT ([www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk)),
- BMAT ([www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/bmat](http://www.admissionstests.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/adt/bmat)), or
- GAMSAT ([www.gamsatuk.org/](http://www.gamsatuk.org/)).

Check the UCAS website for more information ([www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk))

Remember, entry requirements and selection procedures vary widely between medical schools in the UK. You must check with each school directly.

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HYMS is a small and friendly medical school with an innovative problem-based learning curriculum, designed specifically to meet the fast-changing challenges of 21st-century healthcare. To find out more about what makes HYMS special see [www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/Introduction.aspx](http://www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/Introduction.aspx)

You can find out more about admissions for international students on our website

[www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/international-students.aspx](http://www.hyms.ac.uk/undergraduate/international-students.aspx)