



BECOME A DOCTOR

**THE COMPLETE STRATEGIC GUIDE
TO MED SCHOOL ENTRY IN AU & NZ**

A CRIMSON EDUCATION PUBLICATION

Proudly brought to you by



Contents



01

Introduction

02

Becoming a Doctor in Australia and New Zealand

Starting early

ATAR, NCEA, IB, and CIE pathways

Undergraduate vs. postgraduate

Choosing between Australia and NZ for med school

03

The Entrance Exams

UMAT

GAMSAT

04

Interviews

Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)

The semi-structured interview

The “hybrid” interview

The Multiple Skills Assessment

05

The Best of the Best

NZ Universities

AU Universities

06

The Cost of Studying Medicine

Finance options

07

Life After Medical School

08

International Options

US
UK
Ireland

09

Final Thoughts

10

Supplement: Admissions Summaries of all AU/NZ Universities

01

Introduction



Since 2001, Australia has added 100% more undergraduate medicine places around the country. Over in New Zealand, where there are currently two universities that offer medicine degrees, Waikato University is pushing to become the third supplier of medical education in the country.

What does this mean? More competition for the top spots at the best schools.

As both countries ramp up their efforts to produce more doctors, you need to be more vigilant about your future.

Is rushing into the first course available to you the right option for your career? For example, can the Charles Darwin University graduates compete against The University of Sydney graduates for spots at Sydney's best hospitals?

Have you strategically thought about your pathway into the best school available to you? Is it wiser for you to study postgraduate medicine because you might be better at the GAMSAT instead of the UMAT? What about the interviews?

This eBook will teach you how you can maximise your abilities and give yourself a shot at the best courses in both Australia and New Zealand.

It's the first thing you should read and the last thing you'll ever need.

P.S. We've also included a handy table with all the admissions information you need for every university offering medicine across Australia and New Zealand.

02

Becoming a Doctor in Australia and New Zealand



Starting Early

In order to get into your dream medical program, you need to **start preparing early**.

The subjects you choose to study in high school and how well you do in them are one of the many factors that determine whether you get into the best medical schools or not.

Below are the high school requirements for year 12 (year 13 in NZ) and what other subjects you should take in order to have the best shot of getting into your desired program.

The University of Auckland: Biomedicine Program:

- + Need: Biology and Chemistry
- + Should have: Maths, Physics and any English heavy subject

The University of Auckland: Health Science Program:

- + Need: Biology, Chemistry and any English heavy subject
- + Should have: Maths, preferably Statistics

University of Otago: Health Sciences First Year Program

- + Need: Physics, Chemistry
- + Should have: Maths, Biology and any English heavy subject

Australian undergraduate medical programs

- + Need: Year 12 Chemistry and some type of Maths (not general)
- + Should have: Physics, Biology and English

Depending on where you are applying from, there are many different score requirements based on what high school exams you take.

Australian and NZ high school curriculum pathways

As you're about to find out, **med school admissions are based on a lot more than your academic performance**, but the importance of good grades should not be discounted.

While some universities look at your application holistically, others will look at your school or university results before they consider the other parts of your application.

And remember that it's not just about the score; **many universities have prerequisites** you need to comply with, so choose your subjects wisely!

All curriculum pathways offer equal chances for being accepted into undergraduate medicine in Australia, so there's no one qualification better than another.

Australia: HSC, VCE, and other state-based leaving certificates

Australian universities require an ATAR for admission, which you get for sitting the HSC.

Some universities have strict cut-off scores and others are more lenient, meaning they may give you some room to move academically if you **excel in other areas of your application**, such as the UMAT or GAMSAT.

It all depends on how that university weights the entry requirements (more on this later).

However, just because you hit a required minimum score doesn't mean that you're guaranteed admission. The academic requirements aren't always an accurate representation of what it takes to get accepted.

For example, the cut-off ATAR for medicine at University of New South Wales is 96, but the median ATAR among students accepted is always more than 99.6. When more than **3,500 students** are applying for a course that accepts **280 students, simply meeting the entry requirements isn't enough. You need to exceed them.**

With one of the most competitive courses around, to even be considered for The University of Sydney's Double Degree Medicine Program, you must have a perfect ATAR of 99.95 – and even then you can't expect to get in!

The University of Newcastle has a much less threatening cut-off ATAR of 94.30 for its medicine degree, but with more than **3,000 applicants for its 170 places each year**, students with higher ATARs are naturally given preference.

As long as you scrape into the 90s, you're eligible to apply to some med schools. 90 is the minimum ATAR required for Monash University, University of Adelaide, and Charles Darwin University.

If you're from the country, you'll get some leeway. The federal government requires at least **25% of students in medical programs to come from rural areas within Australia**, and most universities will have lower cut-off scores for remote applicants to ensure these places are filled.

For example, students from rural high schools are eligible to apply to Newcastle uni with an ATAR of 91.40 – almost two points lower than the cut-off for city kids!

New Zealand: NCEA

In New Zealand, your high school results aren't as important, because they're not needed to apply to med school. You use them instead to apply to a Science or Health Science degree, of which you're required to complete one year before transferring to medical school, if accepted. Your **first-year GPA will be the deciding factor** in whether you get through to the next stage.

Your **NCEA results will only be necessary if you want to study medicine in Australia**, because most universities admit students straight out of school.

If you choose to go down this path, the NZQA will convert your NCEA results into an ATAR score and inform the Australian tertiary system.

It's not possible to give you a definitive score as it will depend on the subjects you take and whether you sit external exams (which are more heavily weighted), but to get a **99.95 ATAR you're looking at 89-90 level 3 excellence credits**, and for a **99.90 ATAR you're looking at 85-86 level 3 excellence credits**.

The good news is that Kiwi students have a slight advantage in that NCEA results have a relatively favourable ATAR conversion. Your **top 90 credits** from your last two years of **NCEA level 3 are used to create an ATAR**, meaning students who took level 3 subjects early in Year 12 can use these for their application. This makes it slightly easier to achieve a 99.95 ATAR, so add The University of Sydney to your list!

Anything under a 97 ATAR is going to be stretching it for a top Australian med school.

It's definitely a good idea to apply to all the Australian universities offering medicine to keep your options open, as the ATAR expectations vary widely.

However, if you achieve a very high UMAT, this can balance out your ATAR at some institutions.

Bear in mind, though, that **you'll have to take the UMAT in year 13 and results are only valid for one year**. This means that if you don't get into an Australian med school, you will have to do it again in first year at either The University of Auckland or University of Otago.

International high school curriculum pathways

International Baccalaureate (IB)

All Australian med schools recognise an IB Diploma qualification, and most have score expectations for specific IB standard level (SL) and higher level (HL) subjects.

For example, Monash University's expectations for IB students are as follows:

- + **English:** 5 at SL, 4 at HL; English B: 6 at SL, 5 at HL
- + **Chemistry:** 5 at SL, 4 at HL

University of Adelaide's IB score expectations aren't quite as high. To be eligible, you must have taken **one** of the following courses:

- + **Biology:** 4 at SL, 3 at HL
- + **Chemistry:** 4 at SL, 3 at HL
- + **Mathematics:** 4 at SL, 3 at HL

The only way to achieve a **perfect ATAR of 99.95** is to achieve a perfect **score of 45** in the IB, and there's no room for interpretation there since, as a globally recognised curriculum, it doesn't need converting.

Considering the rigour of the IB Diploma Program, this is no mean feat!

Scoring in the 40s will give you a good shot at admission into the more competitive courses. For example, University of Western Australia's IB cut-off score is 41, and University of Queensland's is 42.

Bond University's medical program requires a minimum IB score of 39, but once you get down to the mid thirties you're going to have more trouble. With a 36 you can apply to University of Tasmania's Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery, while a 37 makes you eligible to apply to Curtin University's Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery.

Remember, as with all med school admissions, these are all indicative scores, so the higher your score, the better your chance of getting admitted.

Cambridge International Examinations (CIE)

Similar to the IB, the CIE is recognised Australia-wide, however there's not as much information readily available since the curriculum isn't widely offered in Australia.

To get the elusive 99.95 ATAR, you'll need three A*s at A level.

University of Adelaide and University of Tasmania both require a minimum CIE grade of AAA, which translates to a 90 ATAR. University of Western Sydney's CIE score expectations are A*A*AA, which equates to an ATAR of 95, while Griffith University looks at your best three A levels.

As with other curriculums, English is compulsory, and while each university has its own policy, usually a C grade in AS English or higher is required.

Undergraduate Medicine vs. Postgraduate Medicine

If your high school grades aren't top-notch, don't worry!

There's an **alternative pathway to become a doctor**, and that's **through postgraduate study**.

Completing a Bachelor's degree and then applying to postgraduate medicine somewhat erases your high school academic record and places more emphasis on your university GPA and the graduate entrance exam.

Not to mention, you can get an undergraduate degree in pretty much any subject you're interested in, even if it has nothing to do with medicine! Interested in English? Get a degree in it! Business? That works too!

Keep in mind that if you choose this path you will have to sit the GAMSAT to go into postgrad med, so if your Bachelor's degree has nothing to do with science, you'll need to study harder than someone who studied chemistry or biology.

That being said, many of the universities appreciate well-rounded students who have strong humanities and social skills so you're certainly not at a disadvantage if your undergrad degree has nothing to do with medicine.

In New Zealand you actually can't study medicine directly after high school and are required to complete one year of a science degree to be eligible for the undergraduate program.

There are also some universities in Australia, such as The University of Sydney, that don't offer undergraduate medical degrees at all but do offer 'double degree' programs that allow you to get a relevant Bachelor's degree and then start your assured postgraduate degree immediately after.

Whatever route you take, just know that even if your high school scores aren't great, you can still accomplish your dreams of becoming a doctor.

Transferring to Australia/New Zealand for med school

New Zealand to Australia

Australia is a very attractive option for Kiwi students who want to study medicine.

Only two universities offer medicine in New Zealand, but 19 do in Australia, which means more chances of getting into med school! Plus, you can go into medicine as a school leaver, so that's one less year of study you have to do.

To apply, you'll need an ATAR (in place of your university GPA), which is Australia's university admission score, but as we explained earlier, that's easily adapted from your NCEA results.

And don't forget that the ATAR conversion is favourable for NZ students, so you'd be gaining some ground in the marks department.

However, this option isn't as popular as it used to be since the Australian government withdrew subsidies for NZ students, meaning you now have to pay full tuition fees.

Kiwis used to pay about \$11,000 per year of study, but now this figure is more like \$60,000, meaning med school is going to set you back a minimum of \$400,000; a pretty considerable investment by anyone's standards.

So unless you (or your family) are able to front up the course fees and all your living expenses for five plus years, the Aussie dream will be out of reach.

However, it's not totally a lost cause. Australia still offers Kiwis access to student loans, so you can buy now and pay later... with interest. Some Aussie unis also offer scholarships, so that can be another avenue to pursue. We've got a whole section on financial aid and scholarships later on (Chapter 6).

If all this money talk hasn't totally put you off going to med school in Australia – and it shouldn't because it's home to some world class medical schools – then make sure you're prepared across the other aspects of the admissions process, such as the entrance exams.

If applying as an undergraduate, you'll need to take the UMAT as you would in New Zealand, but remember you'll have to take it earlier – in year 13 as opposed to in your first year of university.

This means you'll be doing it the Aussie way – balancing UMAT preparation with your NCEA – so those extra ATAR points might be a much needed boost!

Australia to New Zealand

What about the other way around?

The two New Zealand universities that offer medicine, The University of Auckland and University of Otago, are pretty up there in the [ANZ medical school rankings](#), coming in at sixth and seventh respectively.

Remember, though, that **in New Zealand you can't apply to medicine straight out of school**; you have to do a year of uni first. This makes it a less attractive option for Aussie students – you're already going to be spending a good chunk of your life studying to be a doctor, so adding another year isn't ideal!

Not to mention there's a risk involved, because if you don't get the marks to transfer to medicine in that first year, you've essentially wasted your time.

However, assuming you do get the marks, graduating with a six year undergraduate degree is quicker than going the postgraduate route which adds unnecessary years of study.

But there are advantages, too!

Because you're not applying to medicine straight away, the admissions requirements aren't as strict.

At University of Otago, for example, you are guaranteed spot in first-year Health Science as long as your ATAR is over 80. So if your ATAR is threatening to ruin your med school dream, NZ can give you a second chance! It means you don't have to worry about the UMAT till after school, either.

Just make sure you work your butt off in first year to get that rock solid GPA!

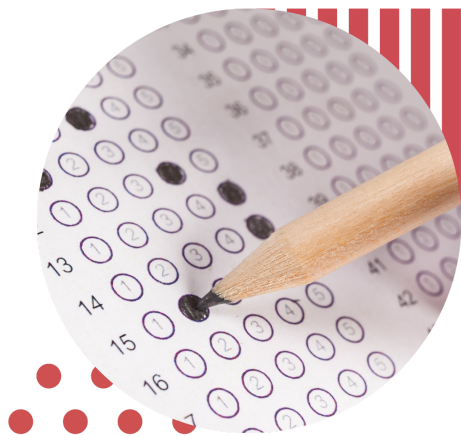
Not only this, but **medicine in NZ is currently less competitive**, predominantly attended by domestic students, and graduates are better rewarded than in Australia in terms of pay.

In addition, your application is entirely based on what you do in that first year of uni – grades, UMAT and med school interviews – rather than your high school performance, which is very encouraging for those wanting a clean slate opportunity!

If not your priority, **New Zealand is a great backup option for Aussie students.**

03

The Entrance Exams



Chances are you'll have to sit an entrance exam as part of the med school admissions process. At undergraduate level, you take the UMAT, and at postgraduate level, you take the GAMSAT.

If you're going to med school in New Zealand, the UMAT is a must. In Australia, it's not required by every uni, but taking it is a good idea so you can expand your options and apply to multiple universities.

In such a highly competitive field as medicine, it's not a good idea to have all your eggs in one basket. Always hedge your bets!

The UMAT Explained

If you plan on heading into medicine straight out of school in Australia, then the entrance exam you should be concerned with is the Undergraduate Medicine (and Health Sciences) Admission Test, or UMAT.

Set by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), it's a three-hour standardised test which is used to assess your suitability to study medicine, dentistry, and some health science courses, at an undergraduate level.

That's right, "suitability", meaning it's not assessing your intellectual ability per se, but rather whether you're fit for a career in medicine.

The UMAT is used to identify non-academic qualities in candidates such as:

- + Empathy
- + Critical thinking

- + Problem solving
- + People skills
- + Logical reasoning

Basically, as well as being book smart, you need to be personable, have common sense, and be able to think rationally in high pressure situations.

Not all universities require the UMAT, but the vast majority that do are known as UMAT Consortium universities.

A UMAT score is required for undergraduate admission into medicine at the following Australian universities:

- + The University of Adelaide
- + Curtin University
- + Flinders University
- + Monash University
- + The University of Newcastle/University of New England
- + The University of New South Wales
- + The University of Queensland
- + University of Tasmania
- + The University of Western Australia
- + Western Sydney University

Despite the fact that you can't apply to medicine as a school leaver in New Zealand, you still need to sit the UMAT.

Technically, medicine is still an undergraduate course in New Zealand, even though students have to take a year of a Health Science or Biomedical Science degree to be eligible for entry.

This is kind of like the US "pre-med" system (which we'll explain later), but you're not expected to complete a whole four-year degree, so consider yourself lucky!

So instead of taking the UMAT in your final year of high school like the Aussies do, you take it in this compulsory year of university. And instead of submitting your NCEA results as the academic portion of your application, you submit your first-year GPA.

A UMAT score is required for admission into the following courses at New Zealand universities:

- + The University of Auckland
- + University of Otago

Preparing for the UMAT

The UMAT does not test academic knowledge, nor does it require special understanding of any academic discipline.

The UMAT focuses on the general skills and abilities that you have developed over the course of your education and just life in general.

Vague much?!

How can an exam test you on natural ability? More to the point, how do you *prepare* for an exam that tests you on natural ability? *Can* you even prepare for it?

Absolutely!

All it takes is a little... okay, maybe a bit more than a little... practice!

When it comes to effective UMAT prep, starting early is critical. It's not the type of test you can cram for (mainly because there's nothing to cram!); it takes consistent practice to hone the necessary skills and strategies over a period of time.

Basically, the idea is that you develop these skills to the point where they come naturally to you. So, yes, some students will have to work harder than others. It all depends on your starting point.

One thing's for sure, though, and that is that you will have to work. **Your biggest enemy in the UMAT is time**, so if you're not familiar with the different question formats and the most logical pathways to come to an answer, and you haven't optimised your preparation for efficiency and speed, you're going to find yourself in a whole world of trouble come exam day.

Ideally you should allow **three months to prepare**, but the longer you can give yourself to study, the better.

In Australia, you take the test in year 12, when you're already under serious pressure for your final exams, be it the HSC, VCE, or other state-based leaving certificate.

Because of this, the best strategy is to treat the UMAT as another subject and factor it into your timetable, which would mean spending about **10% of your time on UMAT prep**. This way, it won't get pushed to the sidelines when the assessments pile up.

Think about it: you spend your whole life building up to an ATAR, but when it comes to getting into medical school, in most cases the UMAT counts for just as much. Why shouldn't it get just as much love and attention as one of your school subjects?

In New Zealand, you take your UMAT long after you finish your high school exams – yay! But that doesn't mean you can take it easy. You still have to get a good enough GPA in your first year of uni to qualify for med school, so like the Aussies, you'll be doing some juggling of sorts.

Unless, that is, you're planning on going to med school in Australia, in which case you'd take the UMAT in year 13 and apply with your NCEA results. But even if you're not, **doing a test run of the UMAT in high school is highly recommended** as it establishes a benchmark and shows where your skill gaps are, enabling you to optimise your preparation for round two. It can also indicate whether you're more suited towards Auckland or Otago.

In fact, evidence shows that [70% of those who sit the UMAT twice improve their grade on the second attempt.](#)

UMAT Structure

In order to know how to prepare, we need to take a more detailed look at the exam.

There are **three sections in the UMAT**, and each tests different skills. Therefore, each section requires a different preparation technique.

The three sections are:

1. Logical Reasoning and Problem Solving
2. Understanding People
3. Non-verbal Reasoning

Let's take an in-depth look at each of these.

Section 1: **Logical Reasoning and Problem Solving**

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 70 minutes
- + **Number of questions:** 48 (one minute, 45 seconds per question)
- + **Skills you need:** Critical thinking, problem solving, efficient reading

This section aims to test your problem solving and critical thinking ability, both of which are necessary skills for making rational decisions in a medical context, though questions relate to information that is non-medical and non-technical.

This is the hardest part of the exam time-wise, because these questions take the longest, and there are more here than in any other section.

You are required to read and analyse a lot of information in all kinds of formats – words, diagrams, graphs and tables – all of which contain vital details that you can't afford to misread or misinterpret.

As such, your biggest asset in this section is being able to absorb a huge amount of detail the first time you read it. This **efficient reading ability is what separates successful candidates from unsuccessful candidates.**

It's the difference between completing 48 questions in 70 minutes and 38 questions in 70 minutes. The more you re-read the stimulus, the less time you have for other questions.

The best way to prepare is by practising careful yet efficient reading. Train yourself to skim read, but also to focus and retain information.

Aside from that, this section really comes down to consistent practice, as this will increase your confidence and speed in answering this styles of questions.

Section 2: **Understanding People**

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 55 minutes
- + **Number of questions:** 44 (one minute, 25 seconds per question)
- + **Skills you need:** Empathy, people skills, logical reasoning

This section assesses your **ability to understand and reason with people.**

As a future medical professional, it's important that you are personable and empathetic. Not only will you be interacting with people on a daily basis, but there's every chance you'll be dealing with sensitive issues and put in highly emotional situations – often on very little sleep!

You know how they talk about doctors having a good bedside manner? This is where the UMAT tries to gauge that from you.

Questions are based on a scenario, dialogue, or other text that represents an interpersonal situation, and you need to be able to identify, understand, and infer the thoughts, feelings, behaviour, and intentions of the people represented.

All scenarios are fictional and not confined to health or medical settings, so once again no specialised knowledge is expected of you.

They aim to elicit your true, natural response, which is the reason for the tighter timeframe than Section 1 (20 seconds less per question). There's no time for faking – you need to answer instinctively.

If you're a naturally empathetic person and you easily pick up on emotional cues, preparing for this won't be such a hard task.

If not, you've got some work to do!

The interpersonal skills required for Section 2 can't be picked up instantly, but they can be developed.

The way to do this is by **building up your emotional intelligence**, or emotional quotient (EQ), which is the extent to which you can empathise with others and use emotion to facilitate thinking.

But before you can understand others, you need to understand yourself!

Start paying attention to your own emotions and analysing your reactions to certain situations. Part of this involves expanding your emotional "vocabulary" so you can adequately define and describe what you feel.

Then, once you can identify your feelings and take responsibility for them, you'll better understand the behaviour of others, and the motives behind their actions.

If all this emotional talk is foreign to you, this might sound a bit ridiculous, but try to look past that. Universities are looking for people who are not just academic but also "fit for medicine", and being a "people person" is a big part of that.

Another way to prep for Section 2 is to read. But not in the same way as Section 1, where you're reading for speed. This time, you get to read for fun!

That's because in Section 2, your best asset is a broad vocabulary. It's notorious for throwing some pretty obscure words into the mix – most of which you won't have come across in everyday life.

If you consider yourself a bit of a bookworm, though, this is where you'll shine!

A lot of the excerpts included come from popular fiction novels, so you're likely to recognise a couple if you're well read. Books that have been used in recent exams include *Black Dogs* by Ian McKewan and *Luther: The Calling* by Neil Cross.

Typically there are three to four questions dedicated to the one excerpt, so it pays to know your literature!

Like Section 1, you need to be able to understand and analyse a stimulus under serious time pressure, so if you come across something you've read before, this will save on reading and comprehension time.

Obviously, it's hard to find the time to read when you're at the tail end of high school, but it really is the best way to broaden your vocab – emotional or otherwise – so keep a book in hand.

Reading is also great way to wind down, so think of it as a study break – even though you're still kind of studying! Win-win.

Once you do all of this, you're ready for practice. Get a feel (so to speak) for the types of questions you'll be asked in Section 2 and pour your heart out on past papers!

Section 3: **Non-verbal Reasoning**

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 50 minutes
- + **Number of questions:** 42 (one minute, 15 seconds per question)
- + **Skills you need:** Abstract reasoning, problem solving

This is widely considered the most intimidating section, but don't worry, it's the easiest to learn!

Questions are based on series and sequences involving shapes. You need to identify the pattern and apply different rules, laws, patterns, and aspects to the situation in order to come to a conclusion.

All up, you will be asked three different types of questions in Section 3:

- + **Next in the Series:** For a sequence of diagrams, identify the option that most comes next in the sequence.
- + **Missing Segment:** Based on a pattern provided, identify the option that most simply and logically fits the missing segment.
- + **Middle of the Sequence:** In this variant of Next in the Series, determine the correct order for the five given stages of a sequence, and identify the middle stage.

You'll need to create rules for different elements and check that they apply to the whole sequence. But **don't over complicate things** – rules should be as “simple” as possible. For example, smallest increments in rotation or position; shortest sequence of pattern changes; addition before multiplication.

This is where it can be **really useful to speak to someone who has sat the UMAT before**, as the same patterns come up in each test. Repetition is inevitable when there are only so many possible variations!

Don't worry if you can't find someone who's taken the UMAT, because once you do enough practice questions you'll be able to spot the repeating offenders yourself! And when you do, your focus needs to switch to speed.

With even less time allocated per question than the other two sections, it's even more important that you get the hang of this style and reduce the time it takes you to answer.

Work through example after example until you can do it blindfolded – metaphorically speaking, of course, though not impossible once you've cracked the Section 3 code!

UMAT Results

Released in September, your **UMAT results will consist of five scores**: an overall score, a score for Sections 1, 2, and 3, and a percentile rank.

Your **overall raw score** is the unweighted sum of your three section scores.

Your **three section scores** are not the actual number of questions you got right in each part, but are a scaled percentage of each section's raw scores. For example, if you got 42 questions right out of 44 in Section 2, your section score won't be 42. Instead, it will be scaled out of 50.

Your **raw scores** are... a mystery. You'll never find out your actual marks for each section, and it's not possible to reverse calculate them since ACER doesn't release its process.

Your **percentile rank** shows how you performed against the other students who sat the UMAT. It works the same as the ATAR system, so if you obtain a percentile rank of 80, this means you performed better than 80% of students, and 20% of students performed better than you.

You want to be aiming for at least the upper end of the 80th percentile or an overall score of 180 to have a good chance of getting into medicine, but this will depend on the university to which you are applying. Each has its own selection criteria, and this often varies from year to year.

Generally speaking, the **UMAT counts for one third of your admissions criteria into med school.**

In most admissions processes, your UMAT results and ATAR/GPA are assessed at the same time and are considered proportionally. This means that the higher your UMAT score, the lower your ATAR/GPA can be and vice versa.

We are talking very small numbers here, though. Since you are applying for a medical degree, the margin for error is very slim.

As an example, a student with an ATAR of 99.45 and a UMAT score in the 70th percentile can still gain admission despite a less than perfect UMAT result. Alternatively, a student with a UMAT score in the 95th percentile can receive an offer despite an ATAR ranking dropping from 99 to 95.

Once again, this depends on where you're applying. It's hard to speak in general terms when talking about med school admissions, because there are so many subtle (and not so subtle) differences between the universities.

That's why it's so important as an aspiring med student to understand that **where you plan on going to university vastly changes how you should approach the UMAT and preparation.**

It will help to use some examples, so let's look at how UMAT scores are regarded by specific med schools.

How important is the UMAT in Australia?

In Australia, the general rule for **admissions is an equally weighted system of the UMAT, ATAR and interview** (i.e. 33.33% each), but naturally this doesn't always apply!

Even where it does, sometimes there's some room to move. At UNSW, for example, the higher your ATAR, the lower they allow your UMAT score to be. Mind you, we're talking UMATs in the mid 80s and ATARs in the 99s.

UNSW has one of the highest ranked medicine courses around, so you need to have a pretty exceptional UMAT score to offset a slightly imperfect ATAR, and vice versa.

How's this for important: some unis only look at your UMAT score when considering you for entry. University of Queensland and University of Tasmania base their admissions offers entirely on UMAT results.

At other unis, the UMAT is not quite as high on the priority list.

The University of Adelaide and University of Western Australia's UMAT/ATAR/interview ratio is 20:40:40. This means that if your UMAT is not quite up to par, you still have a chance of getting in if your ATAR is high enough and you ace the interview.

But! That's only if you qualify for an interview.

How do you qualify? With a good UMAT score of course!

Despite the lower weighting, getting a good UMAT score is just as important in these scenarios, because your exam results are screened first before they consider you for an interview.

There's just no escaping this UMAT thing! Do you see now how it's so important?!

Many universities even weight sections of the UMAT differently. The 50/50/50 rule is the standard at many Australian universities offering undergraduate medicine, including UNSW, Monash, Queensland, and Newcastle/New England.

This means that in order for you to be in with a chance at one of these unis, you need to get a raw score of 50 for each section (which is estimated to be about 25 correct answers).

However, others like Bond University and Adelaide University focus on the overall score. As long as your total reaches their threshold, it won't matter if you have a score in the 40s for one section.

As you can see, it's important to think about where you want to study medicine before you start preparing for the UMAT.

That's a pretty good overview of the Aussie unis, but **refer to the admissions summary table in Chapter 10** of this eBook for more in-depth info about which universities look for what.

How important is the UMAT in New Zealand?

At The University of Auckland, the UMAT/GPA/interview ratio is 15:60:25.

Many students see the 15% weighting and think that this means the UMAT isn't that important. However, **applicants are first ranked according to their GPA and UMAT scores before they are invited to the interview stage.**

As such, your **UMAT score is a key determining factor** in whether you make it to the next round.

Before you can qualify for entry at University of Otago, they look at your UMAT and first-year uni GPA at a weighting of 33% and 67% respectively.

Yep, no interviews at Otago, but the UMAT is weighted more than doubly as high as it is at Auckland!

But don't think that the high GPA weighting means amazing uni grades will make up for any shortcomings in your UMAT result.

Before admissions officers even give a thought to your application, you must meet the UMAT threshold. Then, and only then, ranking is based on GPA alone.

Both NZ universities weight the UMAT by section; Section 1 is worth 45%, Section 2 is worth 45%, and Section 3 is worth 10%.

Clearly, they are more interested in how you perform in Sections 1 and 2, and not much consideration is given to Section 3. Regardless of your overall score, if you do really well in Section 3, but perform badly in Sections 1 and 2, you most likely won't be considered for entry.

So, Kiwi students, make sure you dedicate most of your prep time to Sections 1 and 2 to ensure you get good marks where it counts.

The UMAT in a nutshell:

- + **Skills tested:** Logical reasoning, social skills, and non-verbal reasoning
- + **When:** Once a year in July
- + **Cost:** \$150 AUD
- + **Length:** 3 hours
- + **Prep time:** 1 month minimum, 3 months ideal
- + **Help?** Take practice exams and identify key weak areas – getting help from a tutor who's familiar with the exam is recommended.
- + **Target score:** Minimum of 50 in each section

GAMSAT Explained

Don't think you're off the hook if you want to go the postgrad route into medicine. There's an entry test for you, too. And sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but it's even harder!

This one is called the Graduate Medical School Admissions Test, or GAMSAT, which is also set by ACER.

Of the **19 medical schools in Australia** (remember – no postgrad medicine in NZ!), **11 offer a postgraduate medicine program**, all of which are four years.

Note that there are two universities that *only* offer medicine as a postgraduate course: The University of Sydney and The University of Melbourne, so you can only apply to their respective Doctor of Medicine (MD) courses with a GAMSAT score.

USyd does however offer an undergraduate entry pathway to its MD, called the Double Degree Medicine Program, and it's the only way to escape the GAMSAT. You don't have

to take the UMAT either, because admission is determined by your ATAR and interview alone.

Bear in mind that this is one of the most difficult medicine courses to get into! You'll need a perfect ATAR of 99.95 (which equates to approximately 90 NCEA excellence credits for you Kiwis) and a pretty flawless interview performance.

And even if you get the perfect ATAR, you still aren't guaranteed entry. There are only 30 places up for grabs each year, so if you don't make the cut, GAMSAT it is!

GEMSAS universities

While all of these courses require a GAMSAT score, the application process differs depending on whether they are part of the consortium known as the Graduate Entry Medical School Admission System (GEMSAS) or not.

You can apply to GEMSAS schools all in one hit with an online application form, and you are required to list medical schools in order of preference. If you are strapped for cash, the GEMSAS schools are a blessing in disguise – you just pay one application fee and get more bang for your buck!

The nine GEMSAS universities are:

- + Australian National University, Canberra, ACT
- + Griffith University, Gold Coast, QLD
- + Monash University, Melbourne, VIC
- + The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC
- + The University of Notre Dame, Fremantle and Sydney, NSW
- + Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC
- + The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD
- + The University of Western Australia, Perth, WA
- + University of Wollongong, Wollongong, NSW

Non-GEMSAS universities require you to apply to them directly. These unis tend to have harder entry requirements (particularly for the GAMSAT), favour students who studied their undergrad degree at the same university, and have additional application fees.

The two graduate entry universities that are not part of the GEMSAS are:

- + Flinders University, Adelaide, SA
- + The University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW

Preparing for the GAMSAT

The **GAMSAT is a six-hour exam** designed to assess a broad range of knowledge in students who are applying for medical and health professional graduate programs in Australia (as well as Ireland and the UK).

Yep, you read that right: real, tangible knowledge! It's less focused on natural ability, which means studying is more straightforward.

If you're trying to get into medicine the second time around and didn't perform well in the UMAT, you'll be happy to know that you're much more likely to perform better on the GAMSAT.

There are still some critical thinking, problem solving, and logical reasoning exercises involved, but you're usually required to apply these skills to scientific concepts and themes.

Foundation sciences is pretty much a prerequisite. Given the GAMSAT is for entry into graduate programs, it will require a basic knowledge of scientific reasoning that will have been taught in undergraduate studies.

However, this is not to say that you'll do badly if you haven't had much exposure to the science world.

If you've made the decision to go into medicine off the back of an unrelated degree or career, don't let the GAMSAT deter you. It is in no way impossible to get a competitive score! You'll just need to start earlier and work a little bit harder to catch up.

Students from non-science backgrounds can do really well with a solid six months of consistent GAMSAT prep, culminating in two full-length GAMSAT practice tests at least four weeks before taking the real thing.

Success in the GAMSAT requires stamina, and stamina improves with practice.

GAMSAT Structure

The GAMSAT is divided into **three sections**, each designed to assess different areas of intellect, varying from written communication to biological and physical science.

The three sections of the test are:

- 1.** Reasoning in Humanities and Social Sciences
- 2.** Written Communication
- 3.** Reasoning in Biological and Physical Sciences

Let's run through these in a bit more detail and look at how you should prepare.

Section 1: Reasoning in Humanities and Social Sciences

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 100 minutes + 10 minutes reading time
- + **Number of questions:** 75
- + **Question format:** Multiple choice
- + **Skills you need:** Logical reasoning, literary analysis

GAMSAT Section 1 questions are based on vignettes drawn from a variety of materials, such as prose, poetry, figures, and images. You'll come across some obscure texts full of inferred meanings, opinions, literary devices, and poetic ideas.

Doesn't sound very science-y, does it?!

Actually, this is where having a non-science background could be an advantage, because you're probably more affiliated with this line of questioning.

For science grads who are used to reading textbooks and factual writing, Section 1 can be daunting.

If you're someone who prefers the literal to the figurative, the real to the imagined, and fact as opposed to opinion, then your study program needs to be tailored to helping you to make meaning out of Section 1.

Knowing that you struggle in these types of questions and starting your revision early means that you are on the right track!

The first basic skill that you need to develop is an understanding of poetry, so get reading!

Read at least one poem a day but at the same time and try to analyse it. Who is the speaker? What images does the poet use? Is the poem ironic? What is the theme?

Aside from bringing back fond memories of year 10 English, this will get you in the habit of asking these questions so that every time you read a poem, you instantly know what you should be looking for in order to understand its meaning.

You need to be comfortable with the linguistic style that poets often use, and be across literary techniques such as symbolism.

In the months leading up to the GAMSAT, start doing practice questions and timed "mini tests" that mimic Section 1 poetry questions.

You'll be a literary genius in no time! Maybe the doctor thing can wait?!

Section 2: Written Communication

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 60 minutes + 5 minutes reading time
- + **Number of questions:** 2
- + **Question format:** Essay
- + **Skills you need:** Logical arguments, essay writing, spelling and grammar

Section 2 is where the GAMSAT assesses your ability to create logical arguments, as well as write concisely with adequate spelling and grammar.

Most importantly, it's your **chance to convey to the examiner that you possess the soft skills required to be a competent doctor.**

You have to complete not one but two writing tasks in this section, each in response to a statement, quote, or idea relating to a common theme. These are general rather than specific in nature, with the first task relating to socio-cultural issues, and the second to more personal issues.

You should choose one to write as an argumentative essay, and the other to write as a reflective essay.

You have three goals in this section:

1. Incorporate the theme into your essay
2. Display your writing in a logical and effective manner
3. Make an impact!

At 30 minutes a pop, there's not much time for planning, so you've got to be ready to put pen to paper!

The way to ensure you take full advantage of every minute is to prepare well.

Step one is learning how to properly structure an essay, especially as this is one of the points on which you're marked. Ideally this will look like your thesis statement, an introduction, three to four paragraphs of supporting evidence, and a conclusion.

Adhering to this format, **practise writing strong, cohesive arguments** in response to a stimulus. Smash out a draft and get some feedback from someone who knows a thing or two about essay writing.

Then take it a step further and complete past paper questions under timed conditions, because as with all sections of the GAMSAT, a big factor in doing well is managing your time effectively.

The most important thing to try to do in this process is practise generating interesting, powerful points in your writing. The last thing you want is to deliver a generic, ambiguous piece of writing on exam day. In each practice question, try to interpret the stimulus in different ways and come up with new ideas.

Keep the ultimate goal of the test – your future career as a doctor – in mind as you write an essay. Many topics can be related back to this, even if they don't appear so at first, so be creative!

Section 3:

Reasoning in Biological and Physical Sciences

Fast facts:

- + **Time:** 170 minutes + 10 minutes reading time
- + **Number of questions:** 110
- + **Question format:** Multiple choice
- + **Knowledge you need:** Basic principles of biology, chemistry, physics

Now for the big, scary science section!

Section 3 is completely separate from the other two sections and requires you to have a comprehensive understanding of basic scientific principles, and how the various concepts relate to each other.

If you want to do well on GAMSAT, you must do well in this section.

This part of the exam is so long and so important that it's given a **double weighting in the overall GAMSAT score.**

Section 3 is 40% biology, 40% chemistry (half general/half organic), and 20% physics. The assumed knowledge required for these subjects equates to the first year of university studies in biology and chemistry, and year 12 in physics.

However, the stimulus material used during the exam will often be more advanced than this in order to assess your reasoning skills and ability to interpret graphs, tables, and mathematical relationships.

It goes without saying that time is a critical factor. If you can't work out which scientific principles a question is testing, you'll fall behind pretty quickly.

For those of you with a non-science background, don't freak out! You can do well here if you study intensively. The fact that this section is curriculum-based and can be studied for in the "traditional" sense makes prep a lot easier... well, at least more straightforward.

Basically, you need to invest in a biology textbook, a chemistry textbook, and a physics textbook, and study them from cover to cover!

Aside from learning the concepts behind the science, the key to acing this section is practice under exam conditions with GAMSAT style questions.

GAMSAT Results

Come results day, you'll receive **four GAMSAT scores**: three section scores (marked out of 100) and your overall score, which is the weighted average of your section scores.

You'll also be given a chart showing an approximate percentile ranking of your score, which will show you how you performed in relation to all the other students who sat the GAMSAT.

The cut-off scores for most universities vary each year, so how good a score is really depends on what score the university is currently accepting. To give yourself the best chance of admission, you want to try and score in the mid to high 60s.

An average GAMSAT score is usually around 56-58 and a high GAMSAT score is over 65. Technically, the highest possible GAMSAT score is 100, but we're yet to hear any confirmed cases! In fact, it's rare to hear of anyone scoring over 70.

As two of the most competitive postgrad courses, the GAMSAT cut-offs for The University of Sydney and The University of Queensland tend to sit around 68.

To give you an idea of the range, Monash University expects a slightly lower GAMSAT score of 66, and Flinders University a much less threatening 61.

As with the UMAT, universities will often consider your performance in each section of the GAMSAT, with most requiring a minimum score of 50 in each. The University of Melbourne, however, weights each section equally (i.e. does not adhere to the Section 3 double weighting).

The GAMSAT in a nutshell:

- + **Skills tested:** Social science reasoning (emphasis on literature), scientific reasoning, and essay writing
- + **Cost:** \$400 AUD
- + **When:** Twice a year in March and September
- + **Length:** 5.5 hours
- + **Prep time:** 2-3 months
- + **Help?** Take practice tests and prepare your essay writing – write 2-5 essays a week and have them reviewed.
- + **Target score:** Lowest 54 (University of Wollongong), highest 68 (The University of Sydney, The University of Queensland)

04

The Medical Interview



Ah, the interview.

The final hurdle in the gruelling medical school admissions process.

Getting to this stage is a huge accomplishment, because it means you've achieved a high enough ATAR or GPA and you've aced the entrance test (be it UMAT or GAMSAT) - both huge accomplishments in themselves!

An interview offer is a definite cause for celebration, but don't let the celebrations go on for too long, because you've still got a big task ahead of you.

On paper, you look great! Now the university admissions officers want to make sure you match this image in person before they accept you.

The way they gauge this is with an interview. Or in most cases, *interviews*.

Unless, of course, the university you're applying to doesn't require an interview for admission into medicine.

The following five universities don't require an interview for admission into medicine:

- + The University of Queensland
- + Griffith University
- + Charles Darwin University
- + University of Tasmania
- + University of Otago (NZ)

However, for the majority that do require interviews, the **Multiple Mini Interviews** system is used.

Participating universities include:

- + The University of Sydney
- + University of Wollongong
- + Australian National University
- + The University of Melbourne
- + Monash University
- + Deakin University
- + Griffith University
- + The University of Notre Dame
- + Bond University
- + The University of Auckland (NZ)

Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)

Multiple Mini Interviews, or MMI, is a style of interviewing that is used at The University of Auckland and most Australian medical schools, and increasingly around the world.

It's pretty self-explanatory, but basically, instead of having one long traditional panel interview, you have lots of little ones with different panels!

Depending on the university, you'll rotate around six to 10 timed "stations".

Think of it as musical chairs for grown ups... but with slightly more on the line than a toy prize.

We know what you're thinking: one interview is bad enough, but 10?!?!?

The idea of having multiple interviews can be intimidating, but there's no need to be scared! The MMI actually has more pros than cons.

One of the MMI system's greatest strengths is its objectivity. By involving more interviewers, you get a broader and more reliable assessment of your non-academic qualities.

The interviewers aren't aware of your performance at any other station. This means if you fall down in one area, you won't ruin your chances. You've got to pick yourself up and try, try, try again!

This also makes it a fairer format, as it removes interviewer bias and ensures a level playing field for all candidates. Everyone has more or less the same experience; your assessment isn't clouded by previous performance, and your questions won't be any easier or harder than those asked of your peers.

How the MMI works

Let's go into the MMI in a bit more detail.

The MMI assesses you on a range of skills and aptitudes with a mix of interview stations and activity-based stations.

At each station, applicants are presented with a specific question, task, or scenario and they are judged on their answers, reactions, and skills.

There's a time limit for each interview station, which ranges from five to 10 minutes, depending on the university.

Usually, two of those minutes are allocated to reading time, where you will be able to read the station's scenario. The remaining six to eight minutes are dedicated to the interview and when time's up, you are required to move on, regardless of whether you're finished or not.

While the **MMI does look holistically at your potential to be a medical professional**, it is important to remember that there are also **key traits that the stations assess you on**.

These include:

- + Communication
- + Quality of argument
- + Critical thinking
- + Creativity
- + Social responsibility
- + Cultural safety
- + Awareness of health issues
- + Moral reasoning
- + Self-awareness
- + Empathy
- + Conflict resolution
- + Career choice

- + Teamwork
- + Self-care

That's a lot of ground to cover! But the beauty of the MMI is that you can do it in stages.

The evaluation is spread across the stations, and every station will have its own set of attributes that the interviewer is looking out for.

For example, interviewers at the station that focuses on your interest in medicine will look for self-awareness, critical thinking, and an insight into your choice of profession.

MMI questions

Being across the core assessment groups will enable you to prepare more effectively.

You can expect to be asked questions from the following subject categories.

Motivation to study medicine

You've probably been asked this time and time again: why do you want to be a doctor? It's definitely not the easiest career path, that's for sure!

So what is it that draws you to this profession? What need does it fulfill? What do you want to achieve in the medical field? Try explaining that in five minutes while sounding genuine, informed, intelligent, and motivated!

You also need to be prepared to back up your statements with follow up questions that are designed to gauge how much you've actually thought about this major life decision.

And no, being obsessed with *Grey's Anatomy* is not a good reason to want to become a doctor!

Examples:

- + Why do you want to do medicine? Why not another profession that involves caring for others or is as intellectually challenging?
- + What impact do you hope to make in the field of medicine?
- + What steps have you taken to try to determine whether you really want to become a doctor?

- + Medicine requires a great deal of self-directed study, how have you managed this style of learning in the past?
- + A friend of yours tells you that her main motivations for becoming a doctor were that there is good money and the promise of a stable job. What do you say back to her?

Behavioural questions

Leadership and teamwork are crucial elements of practice in the medical profession.

As a doctor, you'll play a key leadership role that involves problem solving, decision making, and coordinating the efforts of others.

You must also be **committed to continuous growth and learning** to ensure you're delivering the highest standard of care possible, and that's where self-awareness comes in. You need to be able to reflect on your experiences with maturity and critical thinking to identify your weaknesses in order to improve on them.

The interviewers are interested in your ability to demonstrate your potential to be a leader and your commitment to personal development.

Examples:

- + Thinking of your work experience, can you tell me about a difficult situation you have dealt with and what you learned from it?
- + What attributes are necessary in a good doctor? Which do you have, and which do you need to develop further?
- + Who are the important members of a multi-disciplinary healthcare team? Why?
- + Give me an example of how you managed conflict with a colleague or friend; what strategy did you use and why?
- + Tell us about a group activity you have organised. What went well and what went not so well? Did you learn anything from the experience?

Ethical scenarios

It's inevitable that you'll come across some morally questionable situations as a doctor, and when you do, you'll likely have to make a tough decision and deal with the consequences – good or bad.

A key skill is the ability to form a strong opinion before making a measured decision – and the MMI has a station to test just that!

These stations present you with a scenario and ask what you would do in that situation. The scenario may specify that you are a doctor, a medical student, or just yourself, and the situation can be as simple as a friend in need or a more complex doctor/patient interaction.

Examples:

- + Would you perform abortions as a doctor? Do you think it's right?
- + A man has been diagnosed with HIV. He is currently having unprotected sex with his partner and refuses to tell her he is HIV positive. Do you tell the man's partner of his status?
- + You have one dialysis machine to share between three patients. One is a 20 year old drug addict who has just overdosed, one is a 45 year old diabetic mother of three with end stage kidney failure and the third is a fit and healthy 80 year old man who has a longstanding metabolic disorder. Who gets the machine?
- + A pregnant woman refuses treatment for a potentially life-threatening condition. What are the ethical issues involved?
- + You are a GP. A mother and her teenage son visit your clinic, because the son has been feeling ill. During the visit, you request that the mother leave the room so that her son can answer honestly when you ask if he is sexually active. The mother has found out about this and is very angry. Speak with the mother.

Cultural awareness/health knowledge

It is very important for a doctor to be culturally sensitive. These stations test your understanding of the significance of ethnicity in a health context.

In Australia, questions will focus on Indigenous or rural health, while at The University of Auckland, at least one question will have an ethnicity and/or Maori focus.

Assessors are looking to see that you understand the background, cultural practices and significance of ethnic groups, as well as your **capacity for and level of empathy**.

These stations are also designed to test your understanding of public health issues in Australia or New Zealand.

You're expected to demonstrate insight into the issues and this is impossible without some background knowledge. So get reading and keep up with the news!

Examples:

- + What does the term "inequalities in health" mean to you personally?

- + What are some of the rising healthcare needs for the increasing Australian Asian population?
- + Medicine will bring you into contact with a wide range of people from different cultures; what experiences have you had with different types of people or cultures?
- + What would you do differently when consulting a Maori patient compared to a European patient? (NZ)
- + You are a medical student in the hospital elevator with your supervisor. Your supervisor, who is grading your attachment and is the head of General Medicine in the hospital, makes a racist comment about an Aboriginal patient in the presence of other members of the public in the elevator. However, there are no Aboriginal people in the elevator. What do you do? (Aus)

Practical tasks/acting

Some universities will have a station dedicated to practical exercises.

You're not a doctor yet, so you won't be asked to act out medical diagnoses or treatment of medical problems. Instead, you'll be asked to carry out somewhat trivial practical tasks which are used to assess skills such as verbal communication, manual dexterity, problem solving, and most of all... patience!

Often this will involve giving instructions to the interviewers and having them complete a task, such as origami folding, rope tying, or arranging blocks.

You won't necessarily be judged on the outcome. Rather, they want to see how your mind works and how you reach solutions.

This might sound silly, but if you come across one of these stations unexpectedly it can be seriously intimidating!

Examples:

- + Follow these step by step instructions to make origami.
- + Without using your hands, explain how to tie shoelaces.
- + Open a jar and measure a specific amount of various ingredients into a measuring bowl.
- + You are sitting at a desk in front of the interviewer with a screen in front of you. You have a set of blocks in front of you and you have to set them up in a certain way. The interviewer knows the solution and you can't see them and can only ask them yes or no questions. Correctly assemble the blocks.

- + Instruct a person who is holding a clammer to pick up a number of small blocks and place them onto a particular point of an A4 card. The card has other blocks on it and knocking them over would lose you points. The person you are instructing on is very particular to your instructions and would take the instructions to the extremes. How would you navigate through such a delicate task?

Other possible inclusions:

- + Science knowledge: These are the stations that ask you to explain a scientific word or concept in layman's terms. (The University of Melbourne)
- + Groupwork: Candidates are divided into groups and given a problem to solve (eg. resource allocation, public policy proposal). (Precedes the MMI at ANU)

MMI by university

Just to make life harder for you, each uni goes about the MMI in a slightly different way. If you're applying to multiple universities, you'll need to prepare appropriately for each one.

The University of Sydney

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 5
- + Time per station: 7 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: No
- + Why medicine: No
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: No
- + Practical tasks: No

University of Wollongong

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 10
- + Time per station: 8 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: No
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: No

Australian National University

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 6
- + Time per station: 6 minutes
- + Time between stations: May or may not be a rest station, depending on numbers

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: Yes

NB: ANU has a one hour group task that precedes the MMI.

The University of Melbourne

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 8
- + Time per station: 5 minutes
- + Time between stations: 1 minute

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: No

Monash University

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 8
- + Time per station: 10 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: No
- + Why medicine: No
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: No
- + Practical tasks: No

Deakin University

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 10
- + Time per station: 5 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: No
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: Yes

Griffith University

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 8
- + Time per station: 5 minutes
- + Time between stations: 7 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: Yes

The University of Notre Dame

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 7
- + Time per station: 6 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: N/A
- + Why medicine: N/A
- + Ethical scenarios: N/A
- + Cultural/health knowledge: N/A
- + Practical tasks: Yes

Bond University

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 8
- + Time per station: N/A
- + Time between stations: N/A

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: Yes

The University of Auckland (NZ)

Logistics

- + Number of stations: 8
- + Time per station: 8 minutes
- + Time between stations: 2 minutes

Question types

- + Behavioural: Yes
- + Why medicine: Yes
- + Ethical scenarios: Yes
- + Cultural/health knowledge: Yes
- + Practical tasks: No

Preparing for the MMI

Just like with the UMAT, a common misconception about the MMI is that you don't need to prepare.

Of course, you want to be yourself and sound genuine. But you can still do these things *and* be prepared.

Would you not prepare for a job interview just because you didn't know what you'd be asked? Of course not! You would read up on the company and practise your answers to potential questions, and you would make sure you had evidence and examples to backup all your skills and experience. Maybe you'd even have a few responses memorised and ready to go.

The MMI is no different.

In fact, it's even more important. When all you have is eight minutes, you can't afford to waffle or go off on tangents; **your explanations need to be direct and concise**. If not, you may not have enough time to convey all of your thoughts and respond to follow up questions from the interviewer.

There's an element of surprise in any interview process, but adequate preparation will give you the greatest chance of being comfortable and remaining calm should you encounter anything unexpected.

More importantly, preparing for your interview means you'll be sure to show off your true, genuine, awesome self, rather than the nervous and panicked version who talks and acts completely out of character.

The good news is that there's an **effective and systematic way to prepare for the MMI** using a combination of techniques, tips, worked examples, and practice questions.

The structured nature of the MMI makes it easier to prepare for than an open-ended interview, since it provides a more defined way of assessing a candidate's attributes.

Questions and scenarios are carefully selected in order to assess the attributes that are most important to the health profession, rather than spending time on irrelevant discussions.

Make use of this structure to carefully prepare for each MMI subject category.