



# **UK Clinical Aptitude Test**

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Information Guide for  
Applicants to Medical and  
Dental Schools in 2006

This document provides guidance on a new admissions test that will be used in the selection process for candidates wishing to study dentistry and medicine in participating Medical and Dental Schools in the United Kingdom.

Candidates should read this information guide carefully and will need to refer to university websites, prospectuses and the UCAS handbook for the specific entry requirements of each university and course.

## What is the UKCAT?

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) will be used in the selection process by a consortium of UK university Medical and Dental Schools, with effect from the summer of 2006 for entry in 2007, including deferred entry for 2008.

The test will help universities to make more informed choices from amongst the many highly-qualified applicants who apply for their medical and dental degree programmes. The test will not contain any curriculum nor any science content; nor can be revised for. It will focus on exploring the cognitive powers of candidates and other attributes considered to be valuable for health care professionals.

It will ensure that the candidates selected have the most appropriate mental abilities, attitudes and professional behaviours required for new Doctors and Dentists to be successful in their clinical careers.

The test is being developed in partnership with Pearson VUE, a global leader in computer-based testing and part of Pearson plc. It will be delivered on computer on a worldwide basis through Pearson VUE's high street test centres.

## Who must take the UKCAT?

The UKCAT must be taken by all applicants applying to study medicine or dentistry, on the listed courses, at the following university Medical and Dental Schools:

<b>University</b>	<b>Course Code</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Course Code</b>
Aberdeen University	A100	University of Leeds	A100
University of Birmingham	A100	University of Leicester	A100, A101
Brighton and Sussex Medical School	A100	University of Manchester	A104, A106, A204, A206
Cardiff University	A100, A104, A200, A204	University of Newcastle	A101, A106, A206
Dundee University	A100, A104, A200, A204	University of Nottingham	A100
University of Durham	A106	University of Oxford Graduate Entry Medical Degree	A101
University of East Anglia	A100	Peninsula Medical School	A100
University of Edinburgh	A100, A104	Queen Mary, University of London	A100, A200, A201
University of Glasgow	A100, A200	University of Sheffield	A104, A106, A200
Hull York Medical School	A100	University of Southampton	A100, A102
Keele University	A100	University of St Andrews	A100
King's College London	A100, A103, A203, A205	St George's, University of London	A100

Candidates will need to refer to university websites, prospectuses and the UCAS handbook for the specific entry requirements of each university and course.

## The structure and content of the UKCAT

The UKCAT is designed to be a test of aptitude rather than strictly academic achievement, as evidenced by GCSEs, A Levels, Scottish Highers or undergraduate degrees. The test will assess a wide range of mental abilities and behavioural attributes identified by university Medical and Dental schools as important.

For candidates sitting the examination in summer 2006 the UKCAT will consist of four subtests:

**Verbal reasoning** – assesses candidates' ability to think logically about written information and arrive at a reasoned conclusion.

**Quantitative reasoning** – assesses candidates' ability to solve numerical problems.

**Abstract reasoning** – assesses candidates' ability to infer relationships from information by convergent and divergent thinking.

**Problem solving** – assesses candidates' ability to deal with various forms of information, to infer relationships, to make informed judgements, and to decide on an appropriate response.

Including 'warm-up' time (which is the time allocated to reading the instructions) the test will be delivered in less than two hours. Each of the subtests will be in a multiple choice format and will be separately timed.

There will be no curriculum content as the test will seek to probe innate skills. There will be a more extensive non-cognitive element from 2007 onwards.



## Validity and reliability

The UKCAT has been developed to assist in creating a level playing field for applicants from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. All test questions are written by assessment experts and must pass detailed trials and analysis to ensure that they are valid and reliable. All questions, test duration, sequencing and style and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and matched against candidate performance to ensure that the test is culturally fair and bias is minimised.

Test questions are subject to a rigorous trialling regime. This involves a large sample of undergraduates taking the questions via computer under timed conditions. The demographic details of these question takers are recorded such as age, gender, educational qualifications and ethnicity in order to perform the statistical analyses that ensure test questions are fair.

## Computer based testing

The UKCAT will be delivered via computer. There are many advantages in delivering tests via a computer. Tests can be delivered on demand at a time convenient to the candidate. The ability to create a bank of questions which can be developed into different tests cuts out the need to test all candidates on the same day, at the same time and it eliminates the complex logistics of distributing, storing and tracking test papers and answer scripts. All the questions can be marked automatically so it improves accuracy and reduces the time consuming process of scoring results.

While the thought of a computer based test may intimidate those who are unfamiliar with a computer, electronic tests require only minimal computer knowledge and will offer a familiarity tutorial allowing the test taker to get acquainted with how to move the mouse, answer questions and move through the test.



## Registering for the UKCAT

Registering to take the UKCAT does not constitute an application for admission to any of the participating universities. In addition to registering to take the UKCAT candidates will need to submit an application to UCAS in the normal manner.

### Registration and test dates

Candidates will be able to register to take the UKCAT in June 2006. Registration for the UKCAT will only be available online, via the website [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk). Pearson VUE will publish a step-by-step registration guide which will be available to view when the website launches in April 2006.

There will be no fixed date for sitting the exam, but candidates wishing to apply for entry to the participating universities in 2007 or intending to apply in 2006, for deferred entry in 2008, will be required to take the UKCAT before the 28 September 2006 deadline.

It is recommended that candidates schedule to sit the UKCAT in July and register in June 2006, to ensure that places are available at their chosen test centre.

Candidates will be able to choose a date to sit the exam at a choice of over 150 Pearson Professional Centres near their home, school or college. Testing arrangements for overseas candidates are being finalised and a list of overseas Pearson test centres offering UKCAT will be published in April 2006, when the UKCAT website [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk) is launched. No UK applicant should be more than 40 miles from a test centre and 80 per cent will be within 20 miles.

### Registration Fees

The cost to sit the UKCAT is £60 for candidates taking the test in the European Union (EU) and £95 for other candidates. EU candidates who register in June and complete the test by the end of July will receive a £5 discount. The registration fee is payable online at the time of booking by major credit card (Visa, Mastercard or UK Visa Delta debit card).

The fee is always charged in GBP (pounds sterling).

### Bursaries

It is intended to provide bursaries under which the UKCAT test fee is waived for cases of real hardship. Candidates will need to apply online for a bursary before registering for the UKCAT. Further information will be available on the UKCAT website.

### Refund policy

Candidates may cancel or reschedule their test without charge up to 12 noon (UK time) on the second working day before their scheduled test date. (Working days are Monday to Friday excluding English Bank Holidays.)

If candidates have to reschedule later than this, it will count as a no-show and payment will not be refunded. Payments will not be refunded in the event that candidates decide not to sit the test at all.

## Preparing to take the UKCAT

The university Medical and Dental Schools participating in UKCAT do not endorse any commercially available preparation course for the UKCAT. Preparation is neither necessary nor desirable.

The test is designed to be a test of aptitude rather than academic achievement, therefore the test does not draw on any particular body of knowledge nor curriculum, which a candidate can learn in advance.

However, candidates should practise answering the types of questions that will be presented in the UKCAT, to familiarise themselves with the question styles, multiple choice format and varying requirements of each subtest.

Candidates are advised that a range of practice questions will be available on the UKCAT website [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk) on launch in April 2006.



Example screen shot of practice question

## Sitting the UKCAT

UK candidates will be able to choose a location to sit the exam from a choice of over 150 test centres near their home, school or college. During the registration process candidates will be able to find their nearest test centre and book a test sitting at a date and time of their choice.

All UK test centres are similar in layout, using the same design specifications which ensures a consistent testing experience for all candidates.

On arrival at the test centre candidates will be greeted by a receptionist and will be required to check-in. As part of the check-in process candidates must produce one piece of photographic identification to prove their identity.



The following identity documents are acceptable:

- A current signed passport
- A current signed photocard driving licence (full or provisional)
- A current government-issued identity card that carries a photograph and signature

In exceptional cases other identification documents will be accepted and these will be listed on the UKCAT website.

Candidates will not be allowed to take anything into the test room: for instance, no bags, no papers, no books, no pens, no sweets, no water. Pearson VUE provides candidates with lockers in which to leave any personal items.

When a candidate's test time is imminent, s/he will be asked to go through to the test room, where there will be a numbered desk with a computer terminal (plus a portable whiteboard and pen for note-making).

There is an invigilation desk in the testing room, from which the invigilator has a clear line of sight to every desk and every computer.

Further information on identification requirements and sitting the UKCAT will be available on the UKCAT website [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk) when the site is launched in April 2006.

## UKCAT Results

The UKCAT will provide scaled scores, which will enable universities to rank applicants in a meaningful, valid and reliable way.

University, medical and dental admissions tutors will use the UKCAT results to complement and augment existing sources of information such as academic results, including A Level predictions, personal statements, biographies and performance at interview to decide which applicants to offer places for their programmes of study.

UKCAT results will be sent to candidates between one and two months after they have sat the test.

## Further Information

Further information about the UKCAT will be available on the UKCAT website [www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk) when the site is launched in April 2006. Candidates will need to refer to university websites, prospectuses and the UCAS handbook for the specific entry requirements of each university and course.



### Disclaimer

The UKCAT Consortium has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. However, UKCAT and the participating universities reserve the right to alter or amend test details and selection procedures outlined in this Information Guide if it becomes necessary.