

Transcript

00:00:09 Speaker 1

Hello and welcome to education matters with your host Sajda and Elliot in our shore, we aim to open education to everyone. We do this through conversations with inspire.

00:00:21 Speaker 1

And guests and experts who share their educational journeys we aspire to raise awareness of a variety of educational opportunities that will enhance your skill set and support you to pursue lifelong ambitions and career goals.

00:00:35 Speaker 1

If you want to.

00:00:36 Speaker 2

Be in a position where you can influence society. Think about empowering yourself through education.

00:00:42 Speaker 2

Education is important to every stage of life as it supports communities and leads to positive changes in the words of the great legend, Nelson Mandela's education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change.

00:00:53 Speaker 1

World stay tuned as we demystify education jargon so that learners from all backgrounds can continue to thrive and achieve personal success.

00:01:03 Speaker 1

Education is a lifelong journey where all students, each episode we are both sharing our knowledge and learning from our guests, so TuneIn to education matters because education.

00:01:14 Speaker 1

Really does matter.

00:01:16 Speaker 2

Also, if you want to be involved or share your thoughts on the topics discussed.

00:01:20 Speaker 2

Leave a comment we'd love.

00:01:21

To hear from you.

00:01:26 Speaker 2

With by Doctor Phillips, who's going to speak to us a little bit about medicine and applying to medicine. And so thank you so much for joining us, Doctor Philip.

00:01:35 Speaker 3

Oh, thanks for inviting me.

00:01:38 Speaker 2

And so could you tell us a bit about your role at Lancaster University, please?

00:01:42 Speaker 3

Certainly my name's Doctor Nicola Phillips. I am the director of admissions for Lancaster Medical School. That means I consider the applicants who want to come and study with us and make decisions about who we will make offers to, to come and.

00:02:00 Speaker 3

Study medicine and I'm also the.

00:02:04 Speaker 3

Director of studies.

00:02:05 Speaker 3

For the Gateway year course, so this is an access route into medicine, which is a widening participation programme. And then I also teach. So I'm an academic. So I teach at Lancaster Medical School mainly to.

00:02:20 Speaker 3

First year, second years and of course on.

00:02:23 Speaker 3

The gateway year.

00:02:25 Speaker 3

My training itself, I'm not a clinician, I'm a biochemist, so my background is in molecular biology and biochemistry.

00:02:34 Speaker 1

Wonderful. And so you have a a range of expertise. So very fortunate to have you on our show. Doctor Phillips, what is medicine?

00:02:43 Speaker 1

The medicine course actually like at Lancaster University and could you say a bit more about how students are taught on on that particular degree?

00:02:52 Speaker 3

Yeah, absolutely. And that's a really good question for people considering different medical schools.

00:02:58 Speaker 3

Because every school teaches in a slightly different way, and at the end of the medicine degree you will all qualify with the same qualification, which allows you to practise medicine in the NHS and and so it's really important that you consider how the medical school delivers its teaching and.

00:03:18 Speaker 3

How you'll fit in there and whether that suits your particular style of learning at Lancaster, we teach using a method called problem based learning, and this is something that will be unfamiliar to most students studying in secondary education in the UK.

00:03:35 Speaker 3

It's a really good.

00:03:36 Speaker 3

Way of teaching medicine because it allows the student to think about the different topics that they're learning, that they apply them directly to a patient based scenario.

00:03:48 Speaker 3

So, similar to how they'll apply their knowledge when they're working in the clinic with patients. So in problem based learning.

00:03:56 Speaker 3

We work in small groups where, if so at Lancaster, it's groups of about eight students with an academic tutor, such as someone like myself.

00:04:06 Speaker 3

And together in the student group, they look at the scenario they consider what's happening in the scenario to the patient and they learn about the patients background, the things that affect their lives and different situations which affect a doctor's judgement or other healthcare professionals. And then.

00:04:26 Speaker 3

They discuss that scenario together and they think about everything they already know about the scenario and then they are able to think about what they're going to go and learn that week.

00:04:38 Speaker 3

So in problem based learning, it's a lot of independent learning. You go off and you study on your own, which means you can select the learning resources which are useful to you.

00:04:48 Speaker 3

So we give the students textbooks and passages from research papers for them to read, but also lots of students have particular.

00:04:58 Speaker 3

Kind of video channels or?

00:05:00 Speaker 3

Blogs that they prefer to learn from or to introduce them to a topic. Of course, there's also lectures, and there are taught classes in anatomy and clinical skills.

00:05:12 Speaker 3

So how you learn and the practical procedures for being a doctor and all of those, complement the PBL. The problem based learning scenario.

00:05:20 Speaker 3

That they're looking at for that fortnight.

00:05:23 Speaker 3

Also at Lancaster, we're an early clinical we we start clinical placements early on in the curriculum. So our students start to meet patients in year 2 and that's something to think about when you're looking at different medical schools is do you want to get your theoretical learning complete?

00:05:43 Speaker 3

Before you go into the clinic and start applying that, or do you want to start talking to patients and building those clinical skills earlier on in your studies? So at Lancaster for our course, our students start going into clinical placement from year.

00:05:58

OK.

00:05:58

OK.

00:05:58 Speaker 3

To and this is where they start to develop all of those different skills that you need to be an effective doctor.

00:06:05 Speaker 3

So an effective practitioner of medicine, and that's really, really important. So in year 2, the real focus is learning how to talk to patients, how to gain information from them, take their history, their medical history.

00:06:19 Speaker 3

And also how to start giving information back to them from year 3 onwards. Most of the teaching is done on placement, so on specialist rotations in different hospitals around the area and also in community placements so.

00:06:35 Speaker 3

Such as general practise, GP's or other types of community clinics.

00:06:42 Speaker 3

And so hopefully that answers your question.

00:06:46 Speaker 1

Absolutely does. Thank you, Doctor Phillips.

00:06:50 Speaker 2

Thank you. And so that, I mean, that's quite an interesting way of being taught, particularly problem based learning and then also getting that experience with patients.

00:06:59 Speaker 2

So early on, if any of our listeners are thinking, yes, that's exactly the sort of medical course I'm interested in doing. How would they go about applying to medicine at Lancaster?

00:07:09 Speaker 3

Yeah. So for Lancaster, we have a full stage selection process and and so all of this information's on our website to try and make it easier for our applicants to kind of work their way through it.

00:07:21 Speaker 3

In the first stage, we look at applicants UCAS applications, so we only accept applications through UCAS. If you want to apply to medicine, the deadline for medicine.

00:07:32 Speaker 3

Courses is earlier than standard courses, so it's always the 15th of October every.

00:07:38 Speaker 3

So if you want to to apply to medicine, you must make sure that you apply early. You can also only apply to four medicine programmes at the moment, so four different medical schools.

00:07:50 Speaker 3

So when you apply.

00:07:51 Speaker 3

Through UCAS, you'll tell us you're achieved grades. And so if you're studying in the UK, this might be GCSE's. If you've studied elsewhere, that's OK. So just include any qualifications that you've already received.

00:08:04 Speaker 3

If you if you haven't achieved qualifications because they weren't standardised tests, and where you're from again, don't worry. What will happen is someone in the admissions team will contact you to just talk to you about what you've studied prior to your studies in the UK and then you detail what A levels you're taking. So be aware that there are subjects.

00:08:24 Speaker 3

Specific requirements at a level for every medical school, and you must make sure you're taking the correct subjects before you act.

00:08:32 Speaker 3

Right. And so then we would look at your predicted grade. So what we do is we look at the top eight GCSE's that a student has achieved and that that includes 5 core subjects. So you need to have achieved for GCSE's six or a B in maths.

00:08:52 Speaker 3

English language, biology, chemistry and physics. So that's really important.

00:08:57 Speaker 3

And then we run a points based system on the other GCSE's. So in total we're looking for 13 points made-up of your eight GCSE's. So a bit of maths here. So every grade that you get, which is grade 7 to 9 is worth 2 points.

00:09:17 Speaker 3

And then every six is worth one point. And so to make up 13 points, you're looking for 6th grade. No, five grades. Sorry. At 7 to 9 and three grades at Grade 6.

00:09:28 Speaker 3

Or a B.

00:09:30 Speaker 3

So a bit complicated and different medical schools look at GCSE's in different ways, so if you don't meet one medical school's GCSE requirements, that might not mean that you don't meet another medical school GCSE requirements.

00:09:43 Speaker 3

So you really should do your research when applying, but also be aware that it is very competitive to apply to medicine.

00:09:50 Speaker 3

And so if you apply to a medical school where you do not meet the entry requirements, or you're taking the wrong subjects, it's very unlikely that they would consider you further. And so you waste one of those four choices for medicine.

00:10:03 Speaker 3

So that's stage one. So we look at your achieved and your predicted academic qualifications so far and there's all sorts of qualifications that we accept.

00:10:13 Speaker 3

So take a look at each medical school's website and they'll list them. If your qualification doesn't appear on their lists, just e-mail their admissions team and they will be able to give you better.

00:10:25 Speaker 3

So then the next stage of our selection process, so everyone who meets our academic requirements.

00:10:32 Speaker 3

And so for a levels that's we need 2 subjects in biology. So two of biology, chemistry or psychology and we are looking for a predicted predicted grades of a AA or AB to apply and so then our next stage once we have checked your initial grades and your GCSE.

00:10:52 Speaker 3

The predicted grades in your.

00:10:53 Speaker 3

Levels. We then wait to receive the result from the.

00:10:59 Speaker 3

Admissions test the medicine admissions test that.

00:11:01 Speaker 3

We use and.

00:11:02 Speaker 3

We use the biomedical admissions test, the B mat, which happens at around so this year. It's mid-october, but it's sort of around it's it's always been.

00:11:13 Speaker 3

Around mid-october to late October. So it's after the UCAS deadline currently.

00:11:20 Speaker 3

So we look at the different sections of the the bimanual total score and then we rank people according to the score that they achieved in that test.

00:11:29 Speaker 3

And then quite simply, we invite people to interview based on that ranking. So I have so many places that I'll for interview.

00:11:40 Speaker 3

And I just fill those places by going down my list and offering those out to to applicants.

00:11:48 Speaker 3

So then we move on to the next stage. The third stage of our admissions process and that's the multiple Mini interview, so.

00:11:56 Speaker 3

Multiple mini interviews are a method of interviewing which is seen to be.

00:12:03 Speaker 3

A good way of understanding an applicant's potential by them going through different stages and so different.

00:12:15 Speaker 3

Interview stations. Each station tests a particular skill which we think is important for media.

00:12:22 Speaker 3

And so and so an applicant could will go through these different stations, be interviewed by it, could be an academic, it might be a clinician, it might be a patient representative or it could be a student and they will get asked questions or perhaps they'll be asked to do.

00:12:40 Speaker 3

A task or analyse.

00:12:41 Speaker 3

Some data and and then discuss their answers with that intern.

00:12:46 Speaker 3

The good thing about these types of interviews, because they've got lots of different stations testing different skills. If you're not so good at one thing, but you're OK at the others or good at the other things, it doesn't matter that perhaps you're not so good at one of those stations. You still might be made and offered.

00:13:03 Speaker 3

To study medicine.

00:13:05 Speaker 3

So we interview lots of candidates and at the end we add up the scores that they've achieved in all those different stations.

00:13:13 Speaker 3

And we again rank those candidates by their score, and then we will start making offers to come and study for us.

00:13:20 Speaker 3

So those are kind of the three main selection processes, the final process that you have for all medicine courses is we do something which is called cheque, your fitness to practise.

00:13:32 Speaker 3

So this is to make sure that once you've qualified, you've got your medicine degree, you're actually able to go and work for the NHS.

00:13:39 Speaker 3

And and so we cheque. Something called your probity, which is your honesty. So I'd say don't lie when you're replying.

00:13:47 Speaker 3

Don't exaggerate the truth on your application form and then that should be fine. The next one is to just you have occupational health screening and that's to just cheque your vaccination record to make sure you can go and work with patients in the clinic.

00:14:00 Speaker 3

And also see if you have any health conditions which need to be adjusted for and then finally there'll be a criminal background cheque to make sure you're able to work with vulnerable members of the public.

00:14:12 Speaker 3

So those are kind of the four stages of applications. Each medical school does things slightly differently. Most of them will look at your academic grades though, and will use an admissions test and there will be some type of interview before they make their offers.

00:14:30 Speaker 1

Thank you, Nicola. So that's great. So that's that's a very detailed.

00:14:36 Speaker 1

Uh, uh. Detailed information about the application process. UM, so clearly it's not just down to academic ability. There are other attributes that medical schools will be looking at. So with that in mind, what type of work experience should someone be thinking of?

00:14:57 Speaker 1

Applying to UM, if they're thinking about getting to a medicine degree.

00:15:02 Speaker 3

Yeah, that's really important. And often applicants worry about work experience and I think during the pandemic, it's become even harder to get experience in a medical setting.

00:15:15 Speaker 3

So first I'd like to say why we look for work experience. So the first thing is that working in.

00:15:22 Speaker 3

Medicine is incredibly rewarding, but is also very demanding physically and emotionally, and so we want to make sure that applicants are aware of the profession and that they've done some research into the profession that they want to work with him.

00:15:38 Speaker 3

The other thing is.

00:15:41 Speaker 3

Work experience allows you as an applicant to develop skills which are important and and be able to demonstrate the skills that are important for being a doctor.

00:15:50 Speaker 3

Because as you say, it's not just academics that are important in medicine, and there's lots of other skills that are really important for being a good doctor as well as your academic ability.

00:16:02 Speaker 3

To research, it's hard to get experience in a medical setting, especially if you're starting to think about medicine from a young age and there'll be age restrictions as well.

00:16:14 Speaker 3

So one thing you can do is look to your local NHS Trust and see if there's any volunteering opportunities so you don't need to shadow doctors to be able to.

00:16:22 Speaker 3

Look at the NHS, or kind of a healthcare environment could be simple things, as working in volunteering in the shop, in the hospital or handing out teas.

00:16:32 Speaker 3

But if you can't get into an actual medical setting, similar settings where you're working or talking to people who are vulnerable and and you're you're caring for them, such as in a Hospice, in a a, a care home, working in a like volunteering in a soup kitchen or a children's nursery.

00:16:53 Speaker 3

For a summer school, anything like that where you're working with the young and the elderly, the vulnerable will be helpful.

00:17:00 Speaker 3

We'll give you an understanding of the types of skills that are important in working with these types of people.

00:17:08 Speaker 3

But to gain?

00:17:09 Speaker 3

Information about what it's actually like to work for a doctor, there's.

00:17:12 Speaker 3

A number of.

00:17:12 Speaker 3

Online resources that were developed during the pandemic.

00:17:15 Speaker 3

So the Royal College of GPs has a great set of resources that students can work through or applicants can work through, and also Brighton and Sussex Medical School have an excellent online.

00:17:28 Speaker 3

Programme of online work experience that you can sign up for, so I'd encourage you to go to the Medical Schools Council website where there's lots of information about work experience and also information about how to get relevant online work experience which will help you. The really important thing about work experience is.

00:17:48 Speaker 3

How you think about what happened? So how you reflect on the situations that you saw during your work experience, how you learnt about the different skills that are useful or important for being a doctor?

00:18:03 Speaker 3

And that reflection will be useful when you write your personal statement on your UCAS application.

00:18:09 Speaker 3

But also it.

00:18:10 Speaker 3

Will be really helpful when you come to interview, because you'll be able to talk about those experiences with some insight into actually what you learned from them rather than just tell us what happened. You'll be able to sort.

00:18:23 Speaker 3

Of tell us.

00:18:24 Speaker 3

What was important about them and what you found useful when you were considering your future studies and career?

00:18:34 Speaker 1

Absolutely. And I think sometimes students can shy away from being completely transparent about their experience because they're afraid that that might, you know, count against them in some way and their application so.

00:18:52 Speaker 1

From what you say, it's about reflections and about learning from what has happened and there's no expectation that everything you do in life is going to be perfect.

00:19:04 Speaker 1

And and nothing will go wrong, because that's very unrealistic and it's not true. And the best of us are those who make mistakes and then get up and and are better for that because we we we've made those mistakes we've reflected, we know what to do it.

00:19:18 Speaker 1

Again, and so when it comes to those reflections.

00:19:25 Speaker 1

You know, would you agree that it's also about those situations where things might not have gone the way you'd expected and you know, maybe it, you know, you're.

00:19:35 Speaker 1

Leader or your manager and you took your side and said actually that's not how we do it and but it's about being transparent about that and understanding what you learned from that situation.

00:19:48 Speaker 3

Absolutely. I think I think that's really important and one of the one of the skills are kind of the attributes that we look for in, in good candidates is is their resilience, how they deal with situations that haven't gone their way, how they've thought about them and reflected on them to then improve for the future.

00:20:07 Speaker 3

And of course, that's really important in medicine.

00:20:11 Speaker 3

As a subject to study because.

00:20:13 Speaker 3

It's a very broad.

00:20:14 Speaker 3

Subject. You're not just learning about science, you're learning about psychology, sociology, there's aspects of maths in epidemiology, there's ethical situations and and you need to learn a bit of more as well. So chances are you won't be familiar.

00:20:33 Speaker 3

And maybe even good at one or two aspects of the course in its entirety. But because you're used to doing quite well, that can sometimes be a bit of a shock.

00:20:42 Speaker 3

But instead of kind of just dismissing that subject area, we need you to.

00:20:47 Speaker 3

To think about it.

00:20:48 Speaker 3

Reflect on it and then and then go on.

00:20:49 Speaker 3

To improve and of course.

00:20:51 Speaker 3

Working in the NHS and patient situations won't always go the way you hope them to. Patients will die on your watch and that can be incredibly distressing, and so it's important that medical practitioners are able to look at the situation that's happened and reflect on that.

00:21:09 Speaker 3

For their own.

00:21:11 Speaker 3

Kind of health in a way, but also for their future practise to make sure if there were any mistakes that they can be improved and patient outcomes can improve.

00:21:26 Speaker 2

That's great. Thank you. Nick, you mentioned before as well about interviews, which can be quite daunting and quite difficult to sort of know how to prepare for.

00:21:36 Speaker 2

Do you have any advice about preparing for interviews or or sort of the multiple mini interviews as well? Sort of the different stations?

00:21:45 Speaker 3

Yeah, absolutely. So different universities run their interviews in different ways. So first of all, if you get called for interview, congratulations, that's amazing.

00:21:53 Speaker 3

Go on to that university's website, look up information that they've given you on their website about how they run their interviews.

00:22:01 Speaker 3

Most probably when they invite you to interview, they will give you a lot of explanations, some material for you to look through in order for you to feel more prepared, because the most important thing in in our point of view is we want to see you, the applicant as as themselves as the person you are, because that's the person who's going to come and study.

00:22:22 Speaker 3

We find that sometimes applicants predict what they're going to be asked and then start to rehearse or kind of write down answers that they think we want to hear.

00:22:32 Speaker 3

And actually that type of kind of prescriptive, rehearsed answers or answering of those questions comes across quite badly because.

00:22:41 Speaker 3

The the interviewee the the applicant doesn't really interact with the interviewer as if they're a person. And of course in medicine it's really communication.

00:22:49 Speaker 3

Skills are very important. How you interact with other people. It's very important and so I would say don't over.

00:22:55 Speaker 3

Rehearse. But do.

00:22:56 Speaker 3

Practise so you can practise so reflecting on your work experience is really important. Thinking about how you would talk about the scenarios that you saw and what you learned from them is really

important and you can do that with your friends, with your family. Think about them different medicine. So there are some TV programmes, there are some blogs.

00:23:17 Speaker 3

There are radio shows and and podcasts that you can listen to to get some kind of general insight into working in the NHS and and and health situation.

00:23:27 Speaker 3

Which might help you to be more familiar with the language. And of course there are different medics, portals and things like that, where applicants or students who have been successful and got into the course do discuss things but just don't. I would suggest that you don't.

00:23:44 Speaker 3

Take up previous candidates.

00:23:48 Speaker 3

Advice. So what I'm trying to say is we change our interviews frequently, like the the the different types of skills.

00:23:55 Speaker 3

The way we assess those skills has changed frequently to make sure it's there, so don't trust that just because an interview included such a question in the past that it will include that.

00:24:06 Speaker 3

In the future.

00:24:07 Speaker 3

So don't. That can't be guaranteed.

00:24:10 Speaker 1

And I guess also so general interview etiquette as well. So not necessarily you know you, yes, you you know we're good to look at the content and to get some idea of the type of questions and you know the type of attributes that the questions might be wanting to and to try and see if you have.

00:24:31 Speaker 1

But also you know in terms of how you walk into that interview, how you engage with your with your panel, are you making eye contact or are you, you know talking at A at a good pace? Are you, I mean it's good to be confident.

00:24:51 Speaker 1

Right, Doctor Phillips, but.

00:24:52 Speaker 1

Overconfidence can also be a negative. So are you taking on board any suggestions or feedback that you have from your panel and.

00:25:02 Speaker 1

And I guess there's.

00:25:03 Speaker 1

There's a lot on the Internet.

00:25:04 Speaker 1

And on YouTube.

00:25:05 Speaker 1

And the generation now will probably look to that to find information is.

00:25:10 Speaker 1

There is. Are there any?

00:25:12 Speaker 1

Sort of red flags or any dangers that you just may want to warn students about as well as I mean, you've mentioned that questions do change so not to rely too much on what what other people in the past have had is.

00:25:24 Speaker 1

There anything else, Doctor Phillips?

00:25:28 Speaker 3

And yeah, I so it's it's mainly this.

00:25:33 Speaker 3

Predicting what we as interviewers are looking for so often, an applicant will have an idea about what what we want and that what what we want to see is almost a doctor in waiting that this applicant already has lots of knowledge about medicine, but we know that our.

00:25:52 Speaker 3

Candidates are mainly in the majority, just finishing their they're in year 13. They're going to be taking their final secondary school assessments in that year.

00:26:02 Speaker 3

You haven't begun your training yet. We're not looking for candidates to be first year students, fifth year students or trainee doctors, because we've not begun that training.

00:26:11 Speaker 3

We're looking for you to be at the stage of life that you're at, so it's don't. Don't overthink it too much. Talk to us about the experiences that you've had to be motivated. Be keen.

00:26:22 Speaker 3

As you say, listen to the interview question and you've got time in multiple. So our stations are 5 minutes long.

00:26:29 Speaker 3

It is short to kind of demonstrate your skills for each station, but you do have a little bit of time when the questions first asked to Paul.

00:26:38 Speaker 3

And reflect and think about what the questions are asking to make sure you're giving your best examples as you go forward.

00:26:45 Speaker 3

Don't be afraid to ask for the question to be repeated and and and and yeah, try try and be confident.

00:26:51 Speaker 3

Try and try and be nice. We're looking for people who we would want to be our doctors, who we would want want to go into a.

00:26:57 Speaker 3

Clinic room and talk to about our health. And so like, remember that that that we're just looking for you to be a person. It's not not this ideal kind of doctor at the end.

00:27:13 Speaker 1

Absolutely. And authenticity is key, isn't it? Like you said, you know, be yourself. Don't try and be a character from a, you know, a soap or uh, you know, you have to be yourself, and otherwise it's very obvious to the people who are interviewing you that you are reading from a script.

00:27:34 Speaker 1

And so you mentioned Doctor Phillips you mentioned about the the exams, so you mentioned bmat.

00:27:42 Speaker 1

And I believe there's there's another one as.

00:27:44 Speaker 1

Well, which is you?

00:27:45 Speaker 1

Cat, can you?

00:27:46 Speaker 1

Explain to our audience what they are and what the difference is between the two.

00:27:50 Speaker 3

Absolutely. So. So these are types of medical admissions tests. They're also used. So the bmat is also used for other subjects as well. They are, they're they're away for medical schools who are oversubscribed. We get a lot of applications.

00:28:10 Speaker 3

And for our places so far, more applications than places that we have available. And so if we look at just GCSE and a level grades and it's very difficult to select candidates based just on that alone because everyone's predicted the same grades, everyone's really achieved.

00:28:29 Speaker 3

Good grades at GCSE.

00:28:32 Speaker 3

So we use medical admissions tests to separate very highly achieving candidates from each other, the being that and the UCAT are two tests which are used for standard entry courses into medicine.

00:28:45 Speaker 3

There's also a graduate entry exam called the Gamsat and, which is when you've already got a degree and you're applying for the fast track.

00:28:53 Speaker 3

Graduate entry medicine. So just the differences between the ucat and the bean mat. Both the two hour long tests and they happen at different times of the year.

00:29:02 Speaker 3

So for the UK actually register earlier on and you need to cheque the websites each year for when those registrations open, but it's usually at the kind of at the start.

00:29:09 Speaker 3

Of the summer and then year 12 students generally, or whoever's looking to apply would take their test and at some point over the summer you book a test slot and those tests are taken in person view test centres.

00:29:22 Speaker 3

So it's like where you take your driving theory test and and so there's 5 sections to the ucat and you go through each section.

00:29:30 Speaker 3

The time and each section is is testing different skills and the bmat is a 2 hour test as well.

00:29:37 Speaker 3

But it only happens at the moment once a year. Sometimes medical schools have accepted an additional test point in the past, but for this year, and there's only the October sitting.

00:29:50 Speaker 3

So in the for the beam nut, it's a paper and and pen test and it did move to computer in the last.

00:29:58 Speaker 3

Two years, they've.

00:29:58 Speaker 3

Gone back to using paper and pen for the next two years.

00:30:01 Speaker 3

And then I think it should move back to a computer based test. There's only three sections in the bmat. They're quite different to.

00:30:09 Speaker 3

You can't and and I know that being that.

00:30:11 Speaker 3

In more detail.

00:30:12 Speaker 3

Because we we use at Lancaster the first sections and all about your numerical and verbal reasoning.

00:30:18 Speaker 3

So it's it's kind of problem solving questions, both with more mathematical ideas and also looking at paragraphs with arguments and conclusions and kind of trying to find out if you understand the meaning of the text.

00:30:30 Speaker 3

Clearly the second section tests.

00:30:34 Speaker 3

And your application of scientific scientific knowledge and so biology, chemistry, maths and physics at GCSE level and so application of of science and then the final section is actually a written section which is very different from EU CAP where your ability to communicate.

00:30:55 Speaker 3

Idea. So it's often a.

00:30:56 Speaker 3

Controversial issue that you'll be.

00:30:58 Speaker 3

Talking about and and but how you are able to communicate those ideas and how you make an argument and make a decision is tested in that situation.

00:31:08 Speaker 3

It's a very short.

00:31:09 Speaker 3

Essay and you're limited to the number of to to a single side of a four. So it's only about four paragraphs long and and that's about 1/2 an hour.

00:31:19 Speaker 3

Pointed section at the end of the test.

00:31:22 Speaker 3

So for the ucat you get your results immediately after you've taken the test, and so this means when you're looking at ucat or universities which ask for the ucat.

00:31:33 Speaker 3

You already know your score, and you're able to look at the scores that they've used in the past or see what their entry requirements are and make a decision about applying to those for the bmat there is. It's more about and you take the test after the admissions and after the admissions.

00:31:54 Speaker 3

Deadline. And so you will find out your result in late November and the result will be sent directly to universities.

00:32:03 Speaker 3

So students are able to take both of these tests, and often they do, so they'll take the ucat at the beginning of the summer and they'll look at their scores and then if they like full youcat universities, they will apply to those. So they'll have four. They'll feel like they're competitive. They might just look and.

00:32:21 Speaker 3

Consider ucat universities then. But if they like the demo universities, they might have already decided to do both tests, because they want to apply to, say, 2 universities and two being like universities.

00:32:34 Speaker 3

Otherwise, sometimes people take the thing that after they've got their U CAP schools, if they feel that they won't be competitive, so then they try really hard for the beamats and then apply for beamats universities.

00:32:46 Speaker 3

And there are so the types of questions that come up on the test for you can't. I think they're all.

00:32:54 Speaker 3

Like multiple choice style questions and there's there's example papers on their website, so I'd advise you to come and take a look. The Beamats preparation materials are extensive so often.

00:33:06 Speaker 3

Because medicine applications are high stakes, people often are really devoted to the idea of becoming a doctor. They're often willing to pay money to prepare for these types of tests, and and what I would say is you really don't need to for the beamats especially, there's so many resources available online for free.

00:33:26 Speaker 3

And for you to help you prepare, including worked answers, explanations about what?

00:33:31 Speaker 3

Each type of question.

00:33:33 Speaker 3

Is asking you and trying to get you to understand how to write the essays, et cetera. So the first two sections of the beam at are multiple choice questions and and then and then the last section is the essay based question.

00:33:50 Speaker 2

But Nick, you mentioned the financial side and to definitely look into free resources and are the tests themselves free or do you need?

00:33:59 Speaker 2

To pay for them.

00:34:00 Speaker 3

You do need to pay for them, and both ucat and bmat have a bursary scheme for those applicants who come from a low income background. So if you are in receipt of the 16 to 19 bursary.

00:34:13 Speaker 3

If your parents are in receipt of some means tested benefits, then it may be that you are able to get a voucher to pay for your test.

00:34:21 Speaker 3

So there are different restrictions for these, so I'd advise you to take a look at the websites to help you with that.

00:34:30 Speaker 3

Be aware of the deadlines for applying for those bursaries when you register for the test, so it I think you can has a voucher scheme which means you can apply for the voucher prior to booking the test.

00:34:42 Speaker 3

To make sure that you don't have to pay anything out upfront. If you're getting towards the deadline, I think you can pay for the test and then get the voucher and get reimbursed that money.

00:34:52 Speaker 3

And for the being that currently they also are doing a voucher system. So you apply in advance. If you miss that deadline, you know if you register and.

00:34:59 Speaker 3

You've not applied.

00:34:59 Speaker 3

For the bursary, you could still apply for.

00:35:02 Speaker 3

A reimbursement afterwards and currently the voucher would entitle you to go and take the test at a test centre.

00:35:08 Speaker 3

So that is one difference between the two tests. Youcat is carried out at Pearson view. Currently the B Max.

00:35:14 Speaker 3

That is carried out at what they call test centres and schools and colleges can register to be a test centre, which means you would be able to take the test more locally.

00:35:24 Speaker 3

But yeah, there is financial assistance for full those tests from those from from a low income background. But yes, there is a fee for for each of those tests.

00:35:38 Speaker 2

It's great to hear that there is financial support for accessing those tests and sort of more generally at medical school.

00:35:46 Speaker 2

Is there financial support for students whilst they're studying and because I'm imagining it's quite a lot of hours you're spending sort of on placements and and doing problem based learning and and you might not be able to.

00:35:58 Speaker 2

Work get like a second second job. Like other students studying other courses can do and so is there any financial support available?

00:36:08 Speaker 3

So I think not specifically for medicine, although there might be independent private scholarships and things that you can look to apply for, but most universities now offer different types of financial support. So at Lancaster currently there are certain award scholarships awarded for academic achievement.

00:36:28 Speaker 3

A levels and often medical or medicine students qualify for these because the grades to gain entry are.

00:36:36 Speaker 3

Are high, and they've often done very well in their GCSE's, but also at Lancaster. We currently have some other scholarships and bursaries for applicants who are from a widening access backgrounds and and also from a a low income background to try and support those and those those people.

00:36:56 Speaker 3

With barriers to accessing higher education.

00:36:59 Speaker 3

A little bit more.

00:37:00 Speaker 3

I find that students do work a little bit. You're right, uh medicine is has a busy timetable. It's quite full on once you've started your clinical training, you're able to register as a healthcare assistant, and there's like a pool of healthcare assistants at the local hospitals where you.

00:37:20 Speaker 3

You can almost do shift work and it means that you get gain extra experience of working in a hospital, talking to hospital staff and doing basic procedures.

00:37:32 Speaker 3

But also you can get paid so you get paid to do relevant work experience. So a lot of our students join that pool and and you don't work very much.

00:37:40 Speaker 3

You can choose to work the shifts around your studies, so if you're really busy with your studies, you wouldn't sign up for any shifts. Whereas when your studies are a bit quieter, you're finding you on top of your work.

00:37:51 Speaker 3

You could sign up for some more work.

00:37:54 Speaker 3

There's also lots of opportunities actually to work as ambassadors at universities, so there's often student jobs. And of course we have an understanding of students timetables, and we're much more sympathetic employers.

00:38:06 Speaker 3

So we understand the importance of getting your studies done, making sure you've got time for your placements and.

00:38:13 Speaker 3

And and and the pay is quite nice actually for for student ambassadors and it's nice work because you're helping future medics come on, gain access to the course.

00:38:26 Speaker 1

Thank you, Doctor Phillips, there might be students who are listening, who might be thinking in terms of the the, the academic entry requirements.

00:38:37 Speaker 1

It might be unrealistic for them to embark on a degree in medicine, but still have that thirst to to go and into the the the medical field.

00:38:47 Speaker 1

And I think there's one misconception.

00:38:49 Speaker 1

That a degree in medicine is the only degree in this field, but there are many, aren't they? Doctor Phillips would say a bit more about what else they could do and what else might interest them.

00:39:00 Speaker 3

Yeah, absolutely. So it depends on whether you're interested in medicine as a subject. So like the theoretical side of medicine and the problem solving, or whether you want that patient contact and of course.

00:39:14 Speaker 3

So if we think about the theoretical side, the lot of the Medical Sciences aspects are biomedical science and there are lots of courses which will go into that detail of how the body works and and what happens during disease states, how to fix it, what how medicines work, biomedical sciences, biomedical chemistry, those kinds of things.

00:39:34 Speaker 3

And and lots of those courses prepare you actually to work within the NHS, but to become a clinical scientist, so work to work within the labs looking at patient samples, analysing them and then making recommendations to doctors and other healthcare professionals.

00:39:48 Speaker 3

And then if you want the more kind of patient contact side, of course there are other vocations within medicines or other other career pathways. So nursing associate physicians or is a new role that's coming up and and paramedics, physiotherapists, occupational health.

00:40:08 Speaker 3

And and even social work and things like that have a lot of people contact patient contact where you're helping people.

00:40:15 Speaker 3

And I think yes, and the grade requirements for those courses and actually just the competitiveness, the number of applicants per place is lower for those courses.

00:40:24 Speaker 3

There are also widening access schemes into medicine, so if you come from a background where there are barriers to entering the medical or kind of going into higher education and it may be that you qualify so.

00:40:39 Speaker 3

One of these things is actually to apply to the main medicine course, but you get a contextually lowered offer.

00:40:45 Speaker 3

So our offer for medicine is usually a 3A's, but if you come from a background with disadvantage, we would drop that offer to AB.

00:40:58 Speaker 3

And we also have a gateway programme which, as I said at the start, I'm I'm in charge of and this is a a year study prior to your joining year, one of medicine which is designed to prepare you to study medicine, the entry requirements for that year are lower both in GCSE's and at a levels. So we look for.

00:41:18 Speaker 3

Applicants to get a, B or B and equivalents in three subjects for our gateway course, you must study biology and chemistry at a level to.

00:41:28 Speaker 3

Gain access to that course.

00:41:31 Speaker 3

But lots of universities, lots of medical schools offer these different types of courses, so they're they're might be appropriate.

00:41:38 Speaker 3

In terms of those widening access criteria.

00:41:42 Speaker 3

It differs for each university, so again it's important that you look up the universities, your interest in and in applying to to see if they have any of these and schemes or programmes for Lancaster.

00:41:54 Speaker 3

The things we look at or say your school background, whether your school performance is above average, your income, so whether or not you're in.

00:42:02 Speaker 3

In receipt of the 16 to 19 Bursary free school meals or.

00:42:08 Speaker 3

Your parents are in receipt of any means tested benefits.

00:42:11 Speaker 3

And then.

00:42:13 Speaker 3

Also, if you've been in care, if you're a young carer, if you're a refugee, if you're the 1st in family. So if your parents didn't study in higher education under the age of 21, so those are are our criteria. They're summarised with how we collect that evidence and what we look for.

00:42:33 Speaker 3

On our on our website. So take a look at that.

00:42:41 Speaker 2

Thank you so much.

00:42:42 Speaker 2

Doctor Phillips only really, really great advice then to look at.

00:42:46 Speaker 2

You know, different universities and and cheque all the websites before you go to apply. What's the main piece of advice you would give to someone considering medicine?

00:42:56 Speaker 3

Yeah, good question. And so the Medical Schools Council have written some excellent advice sheets, which have been.

00:43:04 Speaker 3

And kind of verified and validated by all the medical schools in the country. So everyone's agreed that this is the correct advice and they have advice, videos, handouts for every stage of considering your application what to do when you do apply, what happens at interview, what happens.

00:43:23 Speaker 3

In your admissions tests.

00:43:24 Speaker 3

So I would.

00:43:24 Speaker 3

Really recommend that you go to the medical schools.

00:43:27 Speaker 3

Council Web page and then look up the student advice for applicants advice for students.

00:43:33 Speaker 3

And the other thing is to visit medical schools. So open days and will be held throughout the summer. And so we've got a couple coming up this autumn and we often hold them at the beginning of the summer as well.

00:43:44 Speaker 3

Every medical school, every university will have open days and they will have student ambassadors. So current students studying medicine.

00:43:51 Speaker 3

Who will be able to?

00:43:52 Speaker 3

Give you a much better.

00:43:54 Speaker 3

Insight and answer all those questions you have about the applications process and what it's like to study medicine and kind of help you kind of put yourself in their shoes. And I think that's really important so.

00:44:05 Speaker 3

So visit the universities that you're thinking of applying to, and if you've got local universities even better. And hopefully there's a few medical schools nearby that you'll be able to go and visit quite easily.

00:44:21 Speaker 1

Fantastic. Thank you, Doctor Phillips, thank you for coming on our show and being so kind and generous with all the advice that you've provided our listeners and and I'm sure if we have listeners who have question.

00:44:34 Speaker 1

And they can contact us at Pendle Community Radio, and we can pass on the questions and try and answer them ourselves if we can. But thank you very much, Doctor Phillips. Very insightful.

00:44:48 Speaker 3

You're welcome. Thanks for having me.

00:44:48 Speaker 2

Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank.

00:44:51 Speaker 2

You for joining us. Thank you.