

# Lancaster Medical School

## Admissions Policy

### Introduction: About our medical degree programme

The medical degree programme at Lancaster University aims to equip graduates with the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to deliver excellent patient care throughout their future careers. The core curriculum is delivered through problem-based learning (PBL), a form of small group teaching that prepares graduates for life-long learning by developing their problem-solving and independent study skills. Early clinical experience helps students to understand the context for and purpose of their learning. From the beginning they learn not only the biomedical science that underpins medicine but also the importance of the social context of patient care, the public health perspective and the ethical and professional challenges inherent in modern clinical practice.

Alongside the acquisition of knowledge, students develop the necessary skills for a successful career, with communication and clinical skills training from the very outset of the degree programme. The development of professional skills and attitudes on clinical placement is encouraged through frequent, timely feedback and the annual appraisal scheme. Lancaster Medical School's educational facilities include: the Clinical Anatomy Learning Centre; a Clinical Skills suite; modern tutorial rooms and lecture theatres; fully-equipped library.

Successful applicants to Lancaster Medical School come from a wide range of backgrounds but all have the motivation and academic ability to thrive at medical school and demonstrate empathy and respect for patients.

The typical entry requirements for the medical degree programme can be found in the Lancaster University prospectus and detailed information about entry requirements and our selection procedure can be found on our webpages: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/divisions/med/study-with-us/mbchb/our-requirements-and-policies/>

### Admissions Policy:

Lancaster Medical School aims to ensure that our admissions policy is fair, consistent and transparent. Applicants are selected on both their academic suitability and the demonstration of the non-academic skills and attributes that make a good doctor. Entry into medicine is highly competitive and successful applicants are those who most ably demonstrate that they meet both the academic and non-academic entry requirements.

### UCAS Application form:

**The UCAS Application form:** Applicants should endeavour to complete their UCAS application form fully, honestly and without omissions; applications that have not been completed properly will not be considered. Moreover, we do not consider any additional unsolicited information sent to the department and it is, therefore, in your best interests to include all relevant information in your application form. If, however, a school or sixth form college has failed to complete the UCAS form

correctly, we may consider additional correspondence relating to their error or omission, as long as it is received before 1<sup>st</sup> December, in the year of application.

All applications to Lancaster Medical School should be made through UCAS before the deadline of October 15<sup>th</sup>. Applications received after this date will not be considered. When your application arrives from UCAS, Lancaster University will send you an acknowledgement letter to confirm receipt.

Please note, we do not enter into clearing and applications are not accepted through the UCAS Extra scheme.

**UCAS Academic Reference:** The information within the academic reference is assessed as part of the selection process. The reference should aim to be as informative about the applicant as possible, emphasising their personal strengths and any exceptional qualities the applicant may have that demonstrates their suitability for a medical career. Where academic performance has been poorer than expected, the reference should outline any relevant mitigating circumstances.

**Plagiarism:** Lancaster Medical School is notified by UCAS if they find evidence of plagiarism in the personal statement of any of the applicants to our medical degree programme. This might occur if an applicant copies sections of another's personal statement or if they re-apply without significantly revising their own personal statement. Lancaster Medical School reserves the right to automatically reject such applications. Applicants may re-apply in a subsequent admissions cycle, if they submit a new and original application, which is not deemed to be plagiarised.

## **Academic Entry Requirements:**

**GCEs:** Most applicants are expected to have GCEs in nine separate subjects and to demonstrate excellent attainment across all subjects: a minimum of 15 points, where A/A\* = 2 points and B = 1 point.

All applicants must have at least five GCEs at grade B or above (or the equivalent) and these must include: English language, Maths and Science (either two GCEs; Core and Additional Science GCEs or three GCEs; Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

**A-levels:** A-levels in three subjects plus a fourth subject at AS-level are usually required. The A-levels offered must include both Biology and Chemistry. Critical Thinking and General Studies are only considered as the fourth AS subject. Only one of Maths or Further Maths will be considered; if Maths is offered as the third A-level, Further Maths cannot be used as the 4<sup>th</sup> AS subject. Neither AS grades nor unit grade information is considered in our selection process.

In addition to their degree (see below), graduates in biomedical, biological or health science subjects must also have achieved at least three B grades at A-level (to include Biology and Chemistry) plus a 4<sup>th</sup> AS subject, grade B or above. Graduates in other subjects must have achieved at least AAB at A-level (As in Biology and Chemistry) plus a 4<sup>th</sup> AS subject, grade B or above.

**Previous undergraduate degree:** All applicants who offer an undergraduate degree are expected to achieve (or have already achieved) at least a good 2:1 Honours degree (with an average transcript mark of 65% or above). Applicants who have achieved a 2:2 degree (or lower) will not be considered.

**Access qualifications:** APL/APEL is not accepted for admission to the medical degree programme but we do accept Access to Medicine qualifications from a number of local FE colleges (Liverpool Community, Wirral Metropolitan, Southport). Also considered are: Access to Higher Education (Medicine) qualifications from Manchester College and West Anglia College of Medicine; the Staffordshire Access to HE course (Medicine and Health Professionals); the B991 Foundation Year in Clinical Sciences at the University of Bradford and the A900 Pre-medical Studies course at Lancaster University (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/shm/bls/teaching/ug/premedA900.htm>). Please note: Applicants who have re-taken A2 examinations are advised that they are not eligible to apply to A900. Similarly, applicants who have already achieved a 2:2 degree (or lower) are not eligible to apply to A900.

**English Language Requirements:** You must study English, as part of their secondary education, and achieve the equivalent of GCSE English, grade B or above. For those offering IGCSE, please note only English as a First language is acceptable.

If you are applying from outside of the UK or if English is not your first language, in addition, you must demonstrate proficiency in English through one of the following recognised English language qualifications:

In **IELTS** you must achieve a minimum score of 7.0 (with no component less than 7.0).

In the **Pearson PTE Academic** qualification, you must achieve at least 70 overall and at least 70 in each communicative skill sub-test.

You need to sit your English proficiency test before application and include details of the achieved grades on your UCAS application form. Applicants who do not include details of their English language proficiency qualification on their UCAS application will not be considered. English language qualifications must be less than 2 years old at the time of application.

**Additional Supporting Evidence:** Lancaster Medical School may request proof of prior academic achievement (for example, GCSE or A-level certificates) or an additional reference to support your application. If invited for interview, you will be asked to provide contact details for individuals who can substantiate any claims you have made in your personal statement about work or voluntary experience. Applications from those who are found to have made fraudulent claims in their personal statement will not be considered any further. Graduate applicants will be asked for a degree transcript, including details of individual marks by year of study and the overall mark that determined the degree classification.

**Failure to provide additional information:** Lancaster Medical School reserves the right to reject applicants who have consistently failed to respond to requests for additional information to support their application. For example: failure to return fees status questionnaire, additional references or exam certificates.

## **The Selection Process:**

Lancaster Medical School considers applications to its medical degree programme in a four stage process:

**Stage 1: Academic aptitude:** applications are assessed against our minimum entry requirements, considering prior academic achievement and predicted grades. For details of the minimum entry requirements, please see our webpage:

<http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/shm/divisions/med/study-with-us/mbchb/our-requirements-and-policies/entry-requirements/>

Only those who meet our academic entry requirements (at GCSE and A-level) or have achieved the requisite grades at GCSE and are predicted at least AABb at A-level (or equivalent in other qualifications) will progress to Stage 2.

The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) score is not considered in our selection process. Please note, from 2016 entry onwards, all applicants will be expected to take the Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT).

**Stage 2: Non-academic criteria:** The personal statement is read and scored for suitable evidence of the following:

- Relevant work experience and
- Insight into a medical career and their own suitability, drawn from their work (and voluntary) experience and
- A commitment to society; working for the benefit of others, including voluntary work or significant caring roles and
- Effective written communication skills; a coherent, well-structured and insightful personal statement

The information within the academic reference is also assessed.

Where academic performance has been poorer than expected, applicants should include an explanation of the relevant circumstances, including appropriate reflection on the impact, in their personal statement. During the selection process, admissions team may, where appropriate, take additional factors into account, such as relevant skills, contextual data or personal mitigating circumstances. Applicants are then ranked according to their personal statement score and those with the highest scores are invited for interview.

For 2016 entry, personal statements will no longer be scored and used to determine who is invited to interview. Instead all applicants will be ranked according to their BMAT score and the personal statements of the top-scoring applicants will be checked to ensure that they meet our non-academic entry requirements. To be invited for interview, applicants must have a competitive BMAT score and demonstrate that they have met our non-academic entry requirements.

**Stage 3: the Multiple Mini Interview (MMI):** No applicant will be offered a place without being interviewed in person. The MMI will usually be held on six dates between December and February. The exact timing of the MMI days will vary from year to year but we aim to give applicants two weeks' notice of their MMI date.

The MMI consists of 12-15 different "stations", most of which will be 5 minutes long. Some stations will consist of a short interview, where you may be asked questions about your career choice, work

experience or suitability for a medical career. At others, you may be asked to read a short paragraph or watch a short video clip, take some notes and then discuss at a subsequent station. An additional 20 minute station will involve group work and will assess your suitability for our problem-based learning curriculum. Applicants who are selected for interview will be sent detailed information prior to their interview. The applicant's performance at each station is assessed by trained interviewers, against clearly defined criteria. Interviewers include members of University staff, NHS clinicians and local GPs. Interviewers also have the opportunity to highlight any particular concerns about the applicant's performance. In the absence of any concerns, applicants with the highest overall scores will be made offers.

**Stage 4: Fitness to Practice:** The professional body that governs medical practice in the UK, the General Medical Council (GMC), has specific requirements to protect staff and patient safety. In accordance with these requirements, all medical students must have the ability to function as a fully competent doctor and fulfil the rigorous demands of professional fitness to practice. There are three aspects of Fitness to Practice for medical applicants:

***Disability and Medical Conditions:*** Applicants who have a disability or medical condition that might impact on their fitness to practice should provide details on their UCAS application. Disclosed disabilities or medical conditions are not taken into account during the selection process. We will consider requests for reasonable adjustments required to allow applicants to participate in the MMI. If successful after interview, the applicant will be assessed by an Occupational Health professional to determine whether they are fit to practice or if there are reasonable adjustments that Lancaster Medical School should make to allow the applicant to study medicine successfully.

***Occupational Health Check and Immunisation:*** All students are subject to an occupational health check, as part of their registration process, and will be tested for and/or immunised against a range of infectious diseases before any patient contact will be permitted.

***Disclosure and Barring Service:*** Applicants should note that all medical students are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service. Any criminal convictions, reprimands, warnings, cautions or fixed penalty notices should be declared on the UCAS application form and details provided if the applicant attends for interview. If successful at interview, the circumstances of the incident will be considered by the Lancaster Medical School Fitness to Practice panel and a judgement made as to whether it impacts on the applicant's fitness to practice. Only those who are deemed fit to practice will be admitted onto the medical degree programme; applicants may be subject to further requirements to confirm their fitness to practice. In most instances, minor offences do not bar entry to medical training or clinical practice. More details can be found here: [http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/professional\\_behaviour.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/professional_behaviour.asp)

#### **Guaranteed Interviews:**

##### **A900: Pre-medical studies course at Lancaster University.**

A900 students are guaranteed an interview at Lancaster Medical School. Subject to their performance in the MMI and academic achievement in the Pre-medical studies course, up to six A900 students may be admitted onto the medical degree programme in the year following their Pre-medical studies course. Re-applications from previously unsuccessful A900 students are not usually considered.

**Lancaster University Widening Participation Scheme:** Lancaster University runs a number of residential Taster events for potential students who meet our Widening Participation criteria. More information can be found here: <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/schools/summer-schools/>

In addition to the opportunity to experience how medical education is delivered at Lancaster, students who attend the Lancaster Medical School WP Taster event will receive advice on applying to study medicine and some students will be guaranteed an interview if they apply to our medical degree programme. Guaranteed interviews will be allocated to those summer school students who show the most promise and aptitude for our problem-based learning curriculum.

**Timescales:** All applications to Lancaster Medical School should be made through UCAS before the deadline of October 15<sup>th</sup>. Applications received after this date will not be considered. When your application arrives from UCAS, Lancaster University will send you an acknowledgement letter to confirm receipt.

Please note, we do not enter into clearing and applications are not accepted through the UCAS Extra scheme.

Applicants who fail to meet our minimum academic entry requirements (Stage 1 above) are usually notified of the result of their application before the end of January. Applicants who meet the minimum academic criteria but are not called for interview (stage 2 above) may be notified of the outcome at any time between January and the end of March. Applicants who are invited for interview (Stage 3 above) will not be informed of the outcome until all interviews have been conducted (usually before the end of February) and can expect to be informed of the decision during the month of March.

October	November	December	January	February	March
15 <sup>th</sup> : Deadline for applications	Applications are considered		Applicants who do not meet academic entry criteria are informed		Applicants who have been interviewed are informed
			Applicants who meet academic entry requirements but are not called for interview are informed		
		Applicants may be called for interview			

**Provision of Feedback:** Lancaster Medical School provides feedback to unsuccessful applicants via UCAS Track at the same time as notifying applicants of the outcome of their application. We aim to make this feedback as informative as possible and are not usually able to provide any additional feedback on applications that were unsuccessful at stage 1 or 2. Applicants who were unsuccessful after interview, however, can request additional feedback between 31<sup>st</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> June.

**Offers:** Our typical offer is three A2-levels, grades AAA, to include both Biology and Chemistry, plus a fourth subject at AS-level, grade B. Students who have been made this offer but choose to pursue four A2-levels should be aware that achieving AAAC in their A2-levels is unlikely to meet the conditions of their offer unless they previously achieved (and certified) at least grade B in the fourth subject at AS-Level.

**Mitigating circumstances:** Adverse circumstances that are likely to affect the applicant's examination performance, and that occur after submission of the application, should be communicated to the admissions team as soon as possible and will not be considered after the publication of A-level results. In general, any mitigating circumstances should be accompanied by supporting evidence and should be submitted before the end of June (in the year following application). Applicants should also communicate any relevant mitigating circumstances to the appropriate examination board. Mitigating circumstances are dealt with on an individual basis but applicants should note that if, at confirmation, all available places are filled with applicants who fulfilled the conditions of their offer it will not be possible to offer a place to study medicine to those offering valid mitigating circumstances. Moreover, those offering mitigating circumstances will not necessarily be placed at the top of any reserve list for available places.

**Resits & Reapplications:** Lancaster Medical School will consider applications from applicants who have taken longer than 2 years to achieve the required grades at A-level, if the applicant otherwise meets the GCSE criteria and the non-academic entry requirements. They must have achieved at least CCC plus AS, grade B, at the first sitting, regardless of the mitigating circumstances, and they must achieve the required grades after three years of study at A2-level. They are expected to acknowledge their need to resit and reflect on the circumstances in their personal statement.

Applicants who have re-taken A2 examinations are advised that they are not eligible for entry to the medical degree programme through A900, the Pre-medical Studies course at Lancaster University.

In general, we do not consider re-applications from applicants who applied in a previous admissions cycle and were unsuccessful after interview. Applicants who were rejected prior to interview in a previous admissions cycle can re-apply if they can demonstrate additional evidence of their potential. For instance, an applicant who has sought additional relevant work experience in the intervening period and reflected well on these experiences in an updated personal statement.

**Deferred Entry and Transfers:** Lancaster Medical School will consider applications from those who wish to defer entry for one academic year. We do not accept transfers into the medical degree programme from any other undergraduate degree programme. In the absence of significant personal mitigating circumstances, we are unable to consider applications from current medical students or from applicants who have previously attended another medical school. Such applications would only be considered if the applicant could demonstrate satisfactory academic achievement in their current or previous medical school, in addition to the serious and significant mitigating circumstances.

**Data Protection:** Lancaster Medical School is legally bound to only discuss (or communicate in any way) an application with the individual who submitted it. The admissions team cannot discuss applications to study medicine with parents, teachers or referees without the explicit written permission of the applicant.