Lancaster Medical School

Admissions Policy

Introduction: About our medical degree programme

The MBChB Medicine and Surgery course 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.

Detailed information about entry requirements and our selection procedure can be found on our webpages: https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lms/medicine/

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 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 20th November in the year of application.
All applications to Lancaster Medical School should be made through UCAS before the deadline of October 15th. Applications received after this date will not be considered. When your application arrives from UCAS, Lancaster University will send you an acknowledgement email to confirm receipt.

Please note, applications are not accepted through UCAS Extra or through Clearing, unless otherwise advertised.

**UCAS Academic Reference:** 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 exceptional circumstances.

**Plagiarism:** Lancaster Medical School will be 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 reject such applications automatically. 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:**

**GSCEs:** Most applicants are expected to have GSCEs in nine separate subjects and to demonstrate excellent attainment across all subjects: a minimum score of 15 points from nine subjects (A or A* or 7-9 = 2 points; B or 6 = 1 point). The nine subjects must include Core and Additional Science (or Biology, Chemistry and Physics), Maths and English Language, all at grade B/6 or above.

**A-levels:** Applicants must offer three A-level subjects, studied simultaneously, including any two of Biology, Chemistry and Psychology. Offers will be in the range A*A-AAB: A*A for those resitting their A-levels; AAA for those offering three A-levels alone; AAB for those offering a 4th subject at AS or A-level, or an EPQ.

Critical Thinking, General Studies and native languages completed as a foreign language A Level cannot be accepted as one of the three subjects studied at A2-level but could be considered as a 4th subject (see above). 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 4th subject at AS or A-level.

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 any two of Biology, Chemistry or Psychology). Graduates in other subjects must have achieved at least AAB at A-level (including any two of Biology, Chemistry or Psychology at A).

**Previous undergraduate degree:** All applicants who offer an UK 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. Where the undergraduate degree is in progress, we will ask to see an interim degree transcript and will use performance in the penultimate year of study as a predictor of overall performance; those with an average transcript mark of 65% or above will be considered. Please note,
the requirements for applicants offering a degree from outside the UK are equivalent but may not equate to the same raw average scores.

Please note: we are unable to consider applications from those who have started a medical degree elsewhere and had their studies terminated, for either failing to make adequate academic progress or on a fitness to practice basis.

**Access qualifications:** We accept Access to Medicine qualifications from a number of local FE colleges (Wirral Metropolitan, Southport). Also considered are: Access to Higher Education (Medicine) qualifications from Manchester College and Sussex Downs College and the Staffordshire Access to HE course (Medicine and Health Professionals).

Lancaster Medical School will not consider applications from applicants enrolled on any of these Access-type courses if they have already re-taken A2 examinations and failed to meet the academic entry requirements at the second attempt. Only one Access-type qualification will be accepted and applicants cannot make multiple attempts at completing access-type courses. If an Access-type qualification is completed instead of resitting A-levels (or other equivalent), then the applicant must achieve grades in the Access-type qualification that fully meet the entry requirements.

**English Language Requirements:** You must study English, as part of your secondary education, and achieve the equivalent of GCSE English, grade B/6 or above. For those offering IGCSE, please note only English as a First language is acceptable.

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

- **IELTS Academic** (a minimum score of 7.0 with no component less than 7.0) or
- **Pearson PTE Academic** qualification (at least 70 overall and at least 70 in each communicative skill sub-test).

This is in addition to the academic entry requirements outlined above. We do not accept other English Language proficiency qualifications. Applicants must demonstrate their English language proficiency before application. 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, GSCE 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 or misleading 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 provide 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: [https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lms/medicine/mbchb-medicine-and-surgery/entry-requirements/](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lms/medicine/mbchb-medicine-and-surgery/entry-requirements/)

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

**Stage 2: Biomedical Admissions Test (BMAT)**

All applicants must take the Biomedical Admissions test (BMAT) to be eligible to be considered at Lancaster Medical School.

More information about BMAT, how to register and how to prepare for the test can be found on the BMAT website: [www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/](http://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/)

You must register to be able to take BMAT. Registration is separate from the UCAS application process and the deadline is before the UCAS application deadline (see below), although late registration is accepted up until 15th October.

There are two possible dates on which you can take the BMAT; the specific dates vary each year. The registration and test-taking procedure differs between the two dates (see BMAT website for further information: [www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/](http://www.admissionstesting.org/for-test-takers/)).

The total BMAT score is calculated by combining the individual scores for Sections 1, 2 and 3; we do not include the quality of English score (A-E). Applicants will be ranked according to their total BMAT score and the top-ranking applicants will progress to Stage 3.

**Stage 3: the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)**

No applicant will be offered a place without being interviewed in person. The MMIs will usually be held in January 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; six weeks’ notice for overseas applicants. If an applicant decides not to attend for interview, we will offer their interview place to another applicant, if possible, even if it is at short notice.

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, local GPs, patients and public representative, and current medical students. 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 four aspects of Fitness to Practice for medical applicants:

1. **Probity:** Doctors are expected to “be honest and open and act with integrity” at all times (add link to Duties of a Doctor: [http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/good_medical_practice/duties_of_a_doctor.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/good_medical_practice/duties_of_a_doctor.asp)). Therefore, probity is taken extremely seriously during the admissions process for our medical degree programme. Applicants are advised to ensure that their UCAS application form has been completed fully, honestly and without omissions. Lancaster Medical School reserves the right to reject any applicant who is found to have been dishonest at any stage of their application.

2. **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 enable the applicant to study medicine successfully.

3. **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.

4. **Disclosure and Barring Service:** Applicants should note that all medical students are subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance. Any criminal convictions, reprimands, warnings, cautions or fixed penalty notices should be declared, 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)
Lancaster University Widening Participation Scheme: Lancaster University runs a number of residential Summer School events for potential students who meet our Widening Participation criteria. More information can be found here: [http://www.lancs.ac.uk/schools/summer-schools/](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 Summer School will receive advice on applying to study medicine and some students will be guaranteed an interview if they apply to our medical degree programme and meet our academic requirements. Guaranteed interviews will be allocated to those summer school students who show the most promise and aptitude for our problem-based learning curriculum.

Contextual Offer Scheme: As part of our commitment to widening access to medicine, we take a holistic approach to reviewing applications and aim to understand as much as possible about our applicants and their potential. We are committed to recruiting medical students who reflect the diversity of our society but recognise that applicants from some backgrounds experience more barriers to studying Medicine than other.

If you meet two or more of our widening participation criteria, meet the academic entry requirements and are successful at interview, you may be considered for a contextually lowered offer of ABB. Please see the website for details of the widening participation criteria that are taken into account: [https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lms/medicine/mbchb-medicine-and-surgery/entry-requirements/#](https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lms/medicine/mbchb-medicine-and-surgery/entry-requirements/#)

Foundation Year for Medicine & Surgery (Certificate of Higher Education): This programme represents another approach to attract a more diverse range of students into the medical profession. Only applicants who fulfil two or more widening participation criteria are eligible to be considered for the Foundation Year but, in contrast to the contextual offer scheme, it is designed for students who are not predicted the A-level grades to apply directly to the MBChB Medicine and Surgery degree programme.

The entry requirements for the Foundation year programme are more flexible to take into account additional barriers that certain applicants may have faced in preparing and applying to study Medicine but must demonstrate the potential to succeed at medical school. Otherwise, the selection process for this programme is the same as for the MBChB programme.

Timescales: All applications to Lancaster Medical School should be made through UCAS before the deadline of October 15th. 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: applications are not accepted through UCAS Extra or through Clearing, unless otherwise advertised.

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 3 above) may be notified of the outcome at any time between January and the end of March. Applicants who are invited for interview (Stage 4 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.
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<td>15th: Deadline for applications</td>
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<td>Applicants who do not meet academic entry criteria are informed</td>
<td>Applicants who have been interviewed are informed</td>
<td>Applicants who meet academic entry requirements but are not called for interview are informed</td>
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**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 31st March and 30th June.

**Offers:** Each applicant will be considered on their own merits and offers will be made taking into consideration whether or not applicants have had the opportunity to take a 4th A Level or AS subject or an EPQ; whether applicants are resitting their A-levels (or equivalent). The offers will be in the range A*AA to AAB, including two of Biology, Chemistry and Psychology.

**Exceptional circumstances:** This refers to adverse circumstances that an applicant believes may have affected their examination performance. There are two points at which exceptional circumstances may apply: (1) when these exceptional circumstances occur after submission of the application, or (2) when these exceptional circumstances have affected your past performance, for instance, when an applicant has taken or will take three years to complete their A-levels and falls under our ‘Resit Policy’ (see below).

**If you are completing A-levels or another equivalent school-leaving qualification:**

If you think your performance during examinations has been affected by exceptional, extenuating circumstances, such as illness or challenging personal circumstances, you should liaise with the exams officer at your school or college to apply for special consideration from the relevant exam board(s).

Special consideration is a post-examination process where the exam boards can adjust a student’s marks to compensate for any proven disadvantage that the student has suffered over the examination period. This mark adjustment is performed according to guidelines that have been agreed by all the awarding bodies. As such, this is the only fair way for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account by Lancaster Medical School.

You may still inform Lancaster Medical School of the exceptional circumstances that you believe have affected your exam performance but, as these circumstances have already been taken into account by the exam board in deciding your final grades, we cannot make any additional dispensation.
Lancaster Medical School is unable to consider any information about exceptional, extenuating circumstances that have not been communicated to the relevant exam board. We are also not able to consider any information that is only divulged on the day of, or after, the publication of results.

If you are completing an undergraduate degree:

If you think your performance during examinations has been affected by exceptional, extenuating circumstances, such as illness or challenging personal circumstances, you should liaise with the departmental exams officer at your current university. They will be able to advise you about the most appropriate course of action and how your current university takes exceptional circumstances into account when determining the final degree classification.

Lancaster Medical School is unable to consider any information about exceptional, extenuating circumstances that have not been communicated to your university through the appropriate channels. We are also not able to consider any information that is only divulged on the day of, or after, the publication of results.

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. This includes those who have retaken Year 12, are resitting or have resat their A-levels or taken additional subjects at A-level after year 13. In absence of exceptional circumstances, they must have achieved AAB or ABB in their A-Levels at the first attempt. Otherwise, all AS and A2-levels must be at least grade C, at the first sitting, regardless of the exceptional circumstances. All resit applicants must achieve the required grades after three years of study at A2-level. They are expected to acknowledge their need to repeat year 12 or resit their A-levels and reflect on the circumstances in their personal statement.

Applicants who achieved less than ABB in their A-levels at the first attempt will be asked for details of any exceptional circumstances that they believe affected their studies or their exam performance. A statement of exceptional circumstances should be accompanied by supporting evidence and be submitted before the end of November. The statement should explain, as fully as possible, the impact of the exceptional circumstances on the applicant’s studies or exam performance. This information will be reviewed by our exceptional circumstances panel. We cannot consider resit applicants, who achieved less than ABB at the first attempt, unless the exceptional circumstances panel decide that there is sufficient proof that the exceptional circumstances would have had a negative impact on the achieved grades.

Applicants are afforded two opportunities to meet the entry requirements for the medical degree programme. Applicants who have already re-taken A2 examinations are advised that they are not eligible for entry to the medical degree programme through the Access route or by completing another alternative qualification.

Where applicants achieve a grade 5 at first attempt in GCSE English Language, we will consider those who resit and achieve at least grade 6 at second attempt. Other GCSE resits will not be considered without evidence of significant exceptional circumstances.

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 and are unable to accept applications from those currently enrolled on other degree programmes.

In extremely rare instances, we may be able to consider transfer from another medical school. In order to consider such a request, several conditions must be met:

1. The applicant would have met our academic entry requirements, if they had applied to Lancaster Medical School
2. The applicant has serious and significant mitigating circumstances, and can justify the need to transfer from their current medical school to Lancaster Medical School, in particular
3. The applicant can demonstrate exemplary academic performance at their current medical school and
4. We have capacity to accommodate them. Medical student numbers are tightly regulated and we cannot exceed our allocated numbers. Moreover, the availability of clinical placements restricts the number of students we can accommodate in any one year.
5. A suitable transfer point can be identified. Medical degree programmes at different universities differ considerably, which usually makes a direct transfer impossible.

Please note: we are unable to consider applications from those who have started a medical degree elsewhere and had their studies terminated, for either failing to make adequate academic progress or on a fitness to practice basis.

**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.