



Develop

TOGETHER

Medicine at the University of Central Lancashire

A Guide for Applicants

LET'S DEVELOP IN
MORE THAN MEDICINE.

LET'S DEVELOP IN LIFE
CHANGING RESEARCH.



University of
Central Lancashire
UCLan

Contents

Applying to Medicine	3
Personal Statement	8
Reference	10
Interviews	11

Applying to Medicine at our University (MBBS Bachelor of Medicine & Bachelor of Surgery)

Before you apply

Think clearly about why you want to do medicine and write a list of your reasons - it would be good to get these across in your application.

Where do you want to study? Whichever university you apply to, make sure you visit it, talk to the students and have a good look around the campus and city - five years is a long time!

Try to get some experience in a care environment. This might be work shadowing in a hospital, hospice or GP surgery but could also be time assisting in a care home or other care organisation - it's good to see what being a healthcare professional is really about. If you've tried applying for work experience and just cannot get any, then don't worry; think about doing some voluntary work or some community related work.

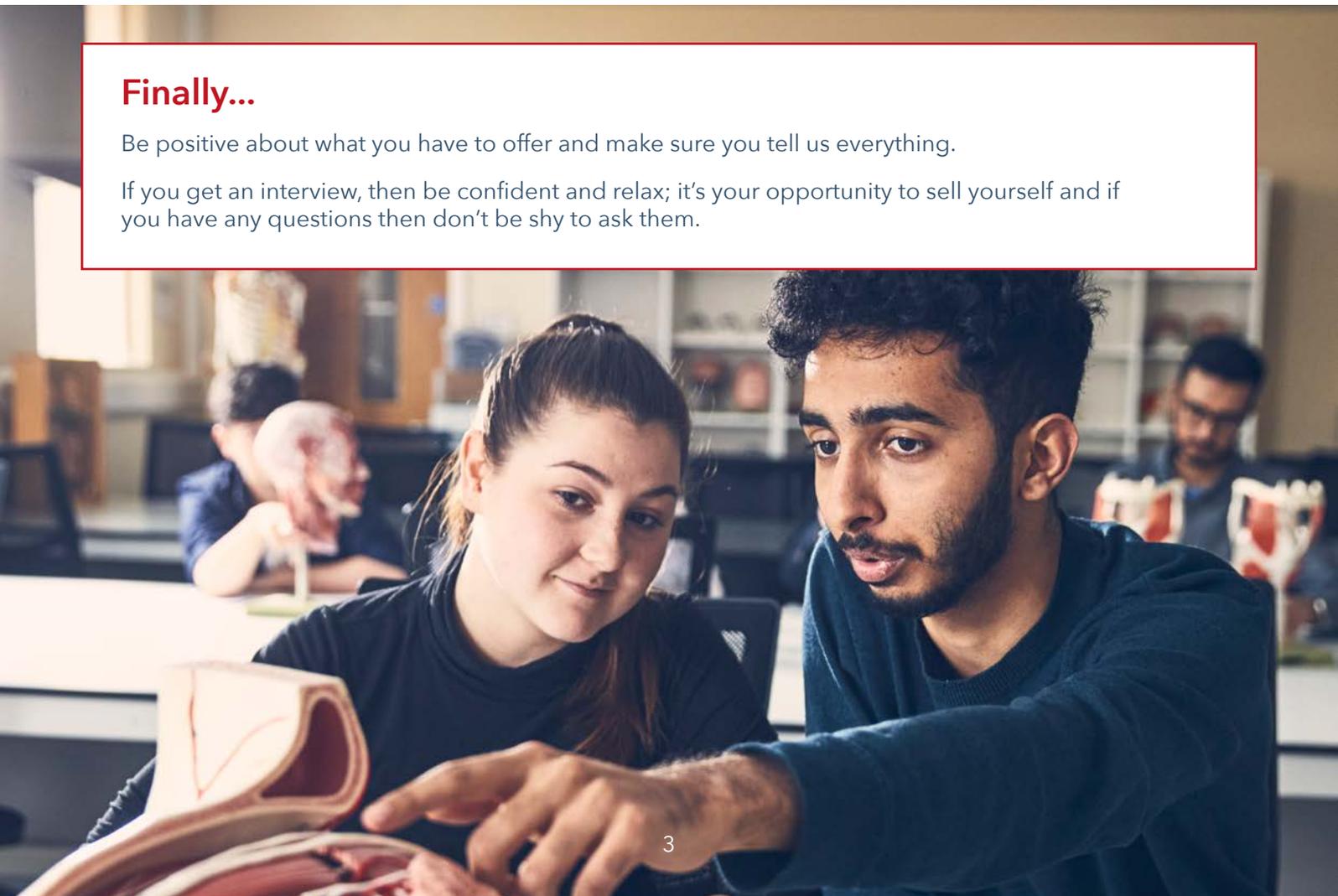
Things to think about:

- Don't worry about applying to other universities and being judged for any of your other choices - selectors no longer see which other universities you've applied to.
- It doesn't matter if you also apply for a non-medical degree, as long as you can show a strong case for applying to medicine.
- If you want to take a gap year then do so. Universities encourage students with different interests who have a range of experiences they can bring to their course.
- University selectors are not influenced by whether your parents are doctors, or what type of school you come from. It is you they are interested in.

Finally...

Be positive about what you have to offer and make sure you tell us everything.

If you get an interview, then be confident and relax; it's your opportunity to sell yourself and if you have any questions then don't be shy to ask them.



Application Process

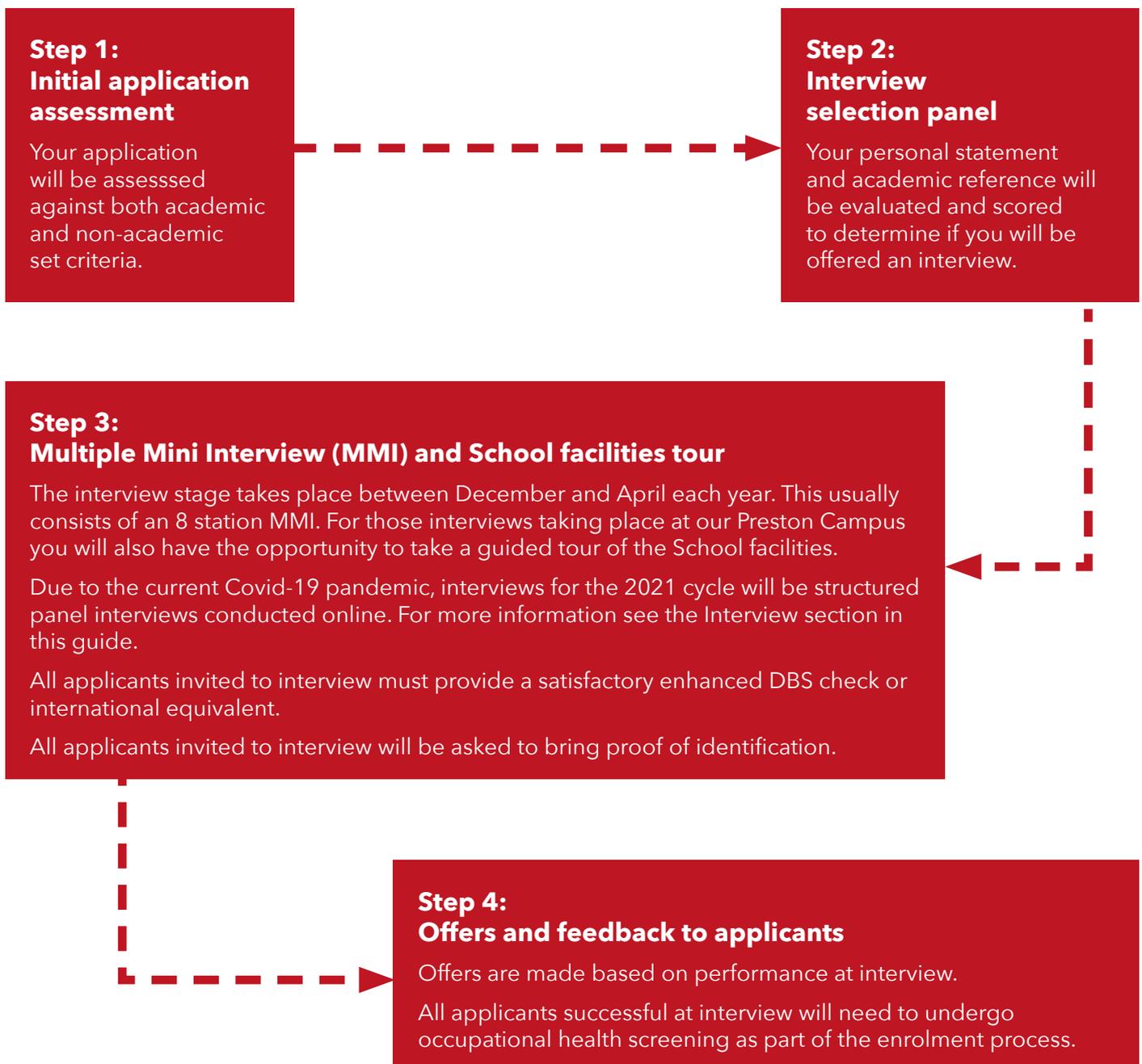
UK applications for the MBBS programme are made via UCAS.

Medical school UK applications are expected to be made by 15 October the year before entry (so if you're applying for September 2022, you will need to submit your application by 15 October 2021).

International applications can be made via UCAS or direct via our online application form.

We accept direct applications throughout the year but advise that you apply early so that we can process your application in good time.

The diagram below offers a step-by-step overview:



Places for UK students on the MBBS programme

Our MBBS programme has a small number of places available for UK students:

Places for students from the North West of England - Students taking up one of these places will be required to pay tuition fees in line with standard undergraduate courses. Only UK applicants who are resident in the following regions of the North West of England are eligible to apply to our MBBS programme: Lancashire, Cumbria, Cheshire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester.

Four places for MBBS scholarships - These places are reserved for students who have received the Mackenzie, Dr Kate Granger or Livesey Scholarships. Visit the [MBBS webpage](#) to find out more.

There are several stages to the admissions process:

1. Submission of application

- Assessment of initial application against both academic and non-academic set criteria: please make sure your application form is as comprehensive as possible.
- A personal reflective statement is required as part of your application. The personal statement is a key element of the admissions process and guidance from the Admissions Team on how to write this in line with our set criteria is detailed in the Personal Statement and References section.
- You should also ensure that you include all supporting information for your application including copies of your IELTS qualification (or equivalent) if required and academic qualifications (where available), a minimum of one reference which must include an academic reference and a letter confirming any work experience, job shadowing or volunteering you have undertaken. If applying via UCAS, you will need to send these to: ia@uclan.ac.uk clearly stating your UCAS ID number in the email.
- Additionally, you will be required to complete a transferable skills statement.



2. Selection Panel

- All applications are first read by our Admissions Team to ensure that you meet the minimum academic requirements. If you meet the academic requirements, your application will be given an academic score and passed to our Selection Panel. If you do not meet these your application will be rejected at this initial stage.
- The Selection Panel will pay particular attention to your personal statement and to the reference from your school/college. Please do not send in extra information or portfolios of work unless we contact you directly to request it. In the interests of fairness to all candidates, we will only assess what is included in your direct or UCAS application form.
- If you produce a strong personal statement, using the guidance in this document, you are more likely to be invited to interview.
- If you have a very low evaluation for any aspect of your application, you are unlikely to be called for interview.
- You should ensure that the person who will complete your reference is given a copy of the criteria by which it will be scored (see page 10). Both you and your referee should address each aspect outlined in the guidance. Referees should be aware that we expect to see more than a record of academic achievement. References indicating your strengths in the areas listed in the guidance are much more valuable than simple "school report" style references.

3. Interview

- Applicants who are successful in being invited for interview will be asked to participate in Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI). Please note, interviews for the 2021 cycle will be conducted online.
- No applicant will be made an offer without interview which is normally held at our Preston Campus between December and April.
- All applicants invited to interview must provide a satisfactory enhanced DBS check or international equivalent.
- Once all interviews are completed applicants are ranked according to performance.
- Applicants who have passed at least 6 out of 8 MMI stations will be ranked according to score and offers made to the top-ranking applicants until the required number of places has been filled. A small number of applicants who perform exceptionally well at interview may be made an early offer.

4. Health Screening

All applicants successful at interview will need to undergo occupational health screening (including tuberculosis, hepatitis B and C and HIV) as part of the enrolment process. Any student who fails the health screening will not be prevented from studying the MBBS but will limit the manner in which they can study and their ability to practise as a doctor.

Further details are available on the [General Medical Council's website](#).

Further Information

The School of Medicine values the positive impacts of disabilities and diversity on our MBBS programme. We welcome and encourage applications from all students and provide guidance on diversity and disability to which students should refer before completing their application.

If an applicant fails to achieve a place on the MBBS programme they may only make one further consecutive application to the programme.

We reserve the right to reject applications that are incomplete. Any application submitted without a completed reference will be automatically rejected.

Applicants are reminded that they are required to declare all qualifications that have been completed and certificated, including those that were failed, in their application. Candidates with uncertificated A Levels should make sure this is stated in their personal statement or reference. If you are found to have deliberately withheld information on qualifications, we will cancel your application and inform UCAS.

It may be necessary for us to request additional information if there are gaps in your education and/or employment record. You will be given a deadline for responding to such a request. Failure to reply by the deadline will result in the rejection of your application.

Your application will be assessed only on the information provided in the direct or UCAS application. This will be used to select candidates for interview. Offers of places will be made solely on the basis of performance at interview.



Personal Statement

Your personal statement should be approached in the same way as a job application. You should use it to provide evidence that you possess the qualities required by a trainee doctor. **Instead of telling us what you think you're good at; give us examples of things you've done that demonstrate what you're good at.**

Please note that we assess applications on the principle that observation does not constitute experience. You should therefore avoid giving us a great deal of detail about time spent shadowing doctors. We are interested in what you have done and what qualities you have demonstrated. Your personal statement should explain what you have learned from your work experience or how you have reflected upon your work experience rather than the detail of what you saw during your work experience.

Your personal statement should contain specifics that enable us to determine whether it was a relevant or useful experience. As space is limited it is advisable not to include anything in your personal statement that does not address these points unless it is required by another university to which you are applying.

Your personal statement should cover the following:

1. Your reasons for applying to study MBBS

Tell us why you want to study medicine, especially if this is a new direction for you.

2. Understanding of the role of a doctor

A well-defined understanding of the role of a doctor is an important part of your personal statement. In your personal statement you should explain what you comprehend the role of a doctor to be and why you wish to train for a career in medicine.

You must clearly describe what you have done to come to this decision, examples could include shadowing a doctor, talking to doctors or learning from personal or other experiences of being a patient. In your personal statement utilise your experience to explain why you want to be a doctor.

The remainder of your statement should provide evidence that you possess the qualities (characteristics, skills and values) to make you a successful doctor.

3. Your health-related and/or caring work experience (including work shadowing or volunteering)

Practical experience in a caring role is extremely valuable to understanding what a career in medicine entails. Gaining experience in this area, either through work and/or volunteering can occur in many ways, for example, assisting with community-based care projects or becoming involved in a more clinical setting.

Applicants who have taken paid employment may use examples from their interactions with people at work, especially if they have experience in a role involving personal interaction.

Active involvement in helping underprivileged, unwell, disabled or distressed people is supremely valuable in gaining experience for a future career in caring.

Other valuable experiences can include contending with demanding situations or going above and beyond your basic duties to help someone in a work-based situation.

It is essential for you to provide examples from these experiences that demonstrate the characteristics, skills and values required by a doctor. Claiming to possess these attributes without providing evidence will not be sufficient.

In your personal statement it is important that you tell us how long and how regularly you have been involved in the activity described, why you chose to undertake it, what exactly your responsibilities were/are and, crucially, what you have gained from it. For example:

"During the last six months I spent one morning a week in a care home, where I took responsibility for feeding three elderly residents. I learned that it takes a long time: one of the residents would not co-operate without a lot of coaxing and another had difficulty swallowing following a stroke, so I learned to feed very slowly. I can now share experiences with the families and other carers in order to improve the feeding experience of the residents."

In other examples you might be able to demonstrate the benefits of your intervention to the recipient, such as progress made by a child with reading difficulties as a result of work you have done with him/her.

There is no value in writing something such as "Working in an elderly care home for six months showed me the importance of respecting each resident as an individual." You must clearly explain how it taught you this and how you then put this lesson into practice (in this example, how you demonstrated respect for residents as individuals).

You should be aware that we might request confirmation from the host organisation of any work experience detailed in your application.

4. Work/life balance

A career in medicine can be enormously rewarding, however, it can also be challenging, frustrating and distressing at times. During their career a doctor is expected to keep up to date with innovation, cope with uncertainty and respond rapidly to change.

In addition, being able to demonstrate a healthy work-life balance in your personal statement provides evidence of your ability to cope with various and perhaps contradictory time demands.

Therefore, your personal statement should provide evidence of your ability to interact with the wider world and to be able to make your own choices and decisions. This may include examples of leadership, responsibility, enterprise or ingenuity. These examples may come from activities in the community, workplace or an academic environment.

Extracurricular activities within community organisations, churches, sports clubs, bands, etc., are all equally valuable but there should be some demonstration of how you relax and find time to do things you enjoy, rather than a long list of worthy causes and achievements.

We are aware that different kinds of opportunities are open to different individuals and will look at all kinds of activities.

5. Initiative/enterprise

In your personal statement you can gain recognition by demonstrating how using your own initiative made a contribution to something over and above academic achievement.

Examples of contributions in this category are establishing clubs/societies, organising fund-raising, community activities, awards/prizes, evidence of achievement in a previous career, etc. If your endeavour was successful, remember to provide evidence for this as well. For example:

"While in my final year I found a number of other students were interested in photography, so I set up a club that meets twice a term. I organised outside speakers and competitions to be judged by the school governors. There is now a thriving club with about 20 regular attendees."

Recognition can only be given to students who write clearly about their own contribution. We also give recognition to applicants who have been able to demonstrate commitment outside of the academic environment in any area of interest to them. This might relate to charitable work as well as sport, music or hobbies.

Your commitment may be demonstrated by passing exams or tests (eg music grades), completing significant challenges (eg Duke of Edinburgh or an equivalent national award), undertaking significant roles or participating in important events.

Use such examples to tell us how much time and effort has gone into this, otherwise we cannot give extra credit for activities that required an exceptional level of commitment. No credit will be given for simply listing interests.

6. Teamworking and communication

A career in medicine involves teamwork. Therefore, it is essential that your personal statement demonstrates your understanding of the role of a doctor within a healthcare team and how you would contribute to effective teamworking.

Examples of teamworking can be taken from many different experiences both in and out of the academic environment.

In your personal statement you must demonstrate how you have contributed to a team, either as a leader or as a member. It is important that your personal statement provides a credible account of the outcome of your contribution to the team.

For example, applicants will not gain credit for stating that they passed a Duke of Edinburgh award; however, they are likely to gain credit if they can give an example of how they worked as part of a team during a Duke of Edinburgh event.

Effective communication is an essential skill for a career in medicine. It is important that your personal statement explains any experience you have acquired in communicating with different groups. Your personal statement should provide an example of a task where you have been able to exhibit good communication skills.

Examples in this regard are not limited to public speaking but would preferably be from contact with people beyond your usual peer group. Most credit will be given to applicants who can provide an example of effective communication, for example from received feedback or from the conclusion of the communication example described in your personal statement.

7. Quality of written application

Applications will be assessed for the quality of the writing. Careless errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation will affect your overall score, so please consider carefully how you have presented your personal statement. Including unnecessary abbreviations or technical details (eg listing the names of the operations you observed in a hospital shadowing period) is unlikely to help your score.

8. Exceptional circumstances

Please make sure you tell us if you have made any exceptional achievements or had to overcome exceptional difficulties. It is helpful if these statements are backed up by your referee.

Reference

In your reference we want to know what the writer of the reference thinks about you as a whole person, not simply about your academic achievements and potential.

Your reference is likely to be written by your head teacher, college principal, head of year or form tutor.

Applicants who are not currently in school or college should approach an academic supervisor whenever possible: a "character reference" is not sufficient. Please ensure that whoever is writing the reference sees a copy of these guidelines.

The areas in which we require information are:

1. Commitment to medicine

This can be demonstrated in many ways. The length of time that you have been committed to a career in medicine is an aspect of this, however it is important that your reference explains any roles you have taken on that confirm your commitment to medicine (eg work or volunteering experience in a caring role). An understanding of your awareness of the realities, advantages and disadvantages of a medical career would also be useful. Work or volunteering experience in other areas which has convinced you that those areas are not the right careers for you could be documented here.

2. Staying power/perseverance

Your reference should provide an understanding of your interest and enthusiasm for a career in medicine. Applicants whose interest in a career in medicine has begun later should not be discouraged by this. A reference can support those applicants whose interest and commitment to medicine has flourished relatively late in their school career or as a graduate or other later applicant.

3. Communication skills

Effective communication is essential to the practice of medicine. Good communication begins with listening. Therefore, whilst we are interested in contributions to class discussions and extracurricular activities, we would be very pleased to hear in your reference about how you relate to others, in particular the less gifted students or younger students, and how well you accept criticism.

4. Humanity, humility and responsibility

We would like to have information from your referee about your ability to be empathetic and about your suitability to work in a caring profession. Information about how you view yourself in the school and wider community or in the case of later applicants in the workplace or in higher education is also important. We would be pleased to see your referee provide examples of your readiness to take on responsibility and of your ability to deal with responsibility.

5. Intellectual potential

This is not only evidenced by your actual or predicted grades. It is important for your referee to tell us about late academic developers, eg the student who achieved a less than perfect score but is likely to blossom during upcoming examinations. Other evidence of intellectual potential beyond the ability to pass exams is welcomed.

6. Teamwork

Teamworking skills may be exhibited in many different environments. We acknowledge that participating in sport is not the only way in which students can excel in this area. In your reference, social and charity involvement would be relevant here, as would membership of choirs, orchestras etc. The ability to work effectively as a member of a team in field trips, expeditions, treks etc. will also be important. Examples that involve leadership skills are of particular value, although part of successful teamworking is the recognition that everyone can't be the leader.

7. Mitigating circumstances

We strongly recommend that in addition to all the above sections, any mitigating circumstances which may affect not only your academic performance, but any aspect of the information contained within your application should be included in your reference. If you experienced any extenuating circumstances at the time of your examinations, your school or college should report this immediately to the relevant examination boards so that any allowances can be made.

If we consider that extenuating circumstances brought up in the reference should be taken into account formally in the assessment of your application, we shall write to your referee to request further details.

Interviews

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, interviews for the 2021 cycle will be structured panel interviews conducted online. Each interview will last approximately 40 minutes and will have two assessors present.

They will ask all candidates a series of structured questions. You will need access to the internet or reliable WiFi, and a laptop, tablet or smart device to take part in your interview. If you are anticipating any difficulty with this, then please contact our Admissions Team for some advice.

At the online interview, assessors will score the candidate for the following broad criteria:

- Motivation for and understanding of a career in medicine
- Professional attitudes and values (flexibility, integrity, ethics, empathy, honesty and conscientiousness)
- Problem solving and reasoning ability
- Team work, leadership, resilience
- Communication skills (including verbal ability and ability to interpret information)



Further information about studying at the University of Central Lancashire

Visit: uclan.ac.uk/schoolofmedicine

Email: MBBSadmissions@uclan.ac.uk

  UCLanMedicine