

Monday 24 September, 2018

**New admissions test announced for future healthcare students**

A group of leading universities in Australia and New Zealand, including the Universities of Otago and Auckland, are embarking on an exciting new collaboration with similar universities in the United Kingdom.

From 2019, students interested in studying medicine, dentistry and identified clinical science courses at a member university of the UMAT Consortium will sit the UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test) as part of their admissions process.

The UCAT is a well-established and internationally respected test, used widely in the UK since 2006 (under the name UKCAT) to select students to medicine and dentistry courses at the majority of UK universities.

The new test, which will replace the UMAT (Undergraduate Medical and Health Sciences Admission Test), offers many benefits to students and to the universities adopting the test:

* The UCAT is a 2-hour long computer based test.
* Candidates receive their score immediately after the test without waiting for a lengthy marking period.
* Within a specified test window, candidates can now choose the date and time they sit the test.
* Candidates have access to a wide network of test centres across Australia, New Zealand and internationally.
* The test is similar to the UMAT but with new question formats and the addition of a test of Situational Judgment (SJT) which measure attitudes and behaviours identified as desirable for successful healthcare professionals.
* Research shows that the test is a reliable and valid predictor of performance at Medical School.
* Consortium member universities in Australia and New Zealand also benefit from the flexibility of the testing process and the inclusion of additional constructs relevant to their admissions processes.

“We are excited to be taking this next step which will see us moving to an internationally renowned aptitude test giving our member universities greater flexibility and ensuring we continue to promote best practice in admissions,” says Professor Wayne Hodgson, Chair of the UMAT Consortium and Deputy Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences at Monash University.

“We look forward to working collaboratively with our counterparts at UK universities in the future development and use of the test.”

Professor Sandra Nicholson, Head of the UKCAT Research Group says she is pleased to see the establishment of the UCAT arising out of the collaboration between universities based in Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

“We are confident of providing a high quality testing experience for candidates and further developing our test according to the outcomes of the most robust research,” Professor Nicholson says.

Pearson VUE, an international leader in computer based testing, with a long established and successful track record of delivering and developing high stakes admissions tests will deliver the test.

In partnership with the UKCAT Consortium, Pearson VUE has provided a secure on-line test for more than 12 years, delivering over 280,000 tests to candidates in their approved test centres across 140 different countries.The UMAT Consortium anticipates a successful partnership with Pearson VUE in delivering the UCAT in Australia and New Zealand.

The UMAT Consortium has been established for almost 20 years and includes 11 universities in Australia and New Zealand which all use the UMAT (to be renamed UCAT in 2019) as an entry requirement for students wishing to study medicine or dentistry at their university.  The UMAT test score is considered alongside other entry requirements such as academic grades and interview scores.

A list of UMAT Consortium member universities can be found here:

[www.ucatofficial.com/ucat-anz/universities/](http://www.ucatofficial.com/ucat-anz/universities/)

Notes to Editors

* The UKCAT Consortium has been established since 2006 and includes 28 UK universities who all use the UKCAT (to be renamed UCAT in 2019) as an entry requirement for students wishing to study medicine or dentistry at their university. The UKCAT test score is then considered alongside other entry requirements such as their academic grades, and university application / personal statement. Further information about the UKCAT Consortium can be found here: <https://www.ukcat.ac.uk/about-us/>
  + From 2019 there will be an expansion of test centres to 30 across Australia and New Zealand - 26 in Australia and four in New Zealand, plus some overseas centres for people who happen to be away.
  + In the major centres, candidates will be able to book their test any working day in the month of July. Smaller centres will be open between one and three days in July, giving considerable flexibility to candidates, particularly as school and university breaks occur during July.
* The UCAT website is [www.ucatofficial.com](http://www.ucatofficial.com). The answers to some Frequently Asked Questions can be found at [www.ucatofficial.com/faqs/](http://www.ucatofficial.com/faqs/)
* Bio for Professor Wayne Hodgson: <https://www.monash.edu/medicine/healthed-institute/about/affiliates/wayne-hodgson>
* Bio for Professor Sandra Nicholson: <http://ihse.qmul.ac.uk/staff/centre-for-medical-education/sandranicholson.html>

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