

Getting into Medicine

Tips for future applicants

MYTH

FACT



You have to be a genius to do medicine

You don't need to be a genius, but you do need a good ATAR. You need to talk to your career advisor to Most medical schools also have an interview process that looks at other skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, communication, and your motivation to become a doctor. These are skills you will need to succeed in medical school, and beyond, but do not require you to be a genius. It is much more important to be a well-rounded student.



You have to be rich to get into medicine

The wealth of your parents does not matter in the admission process. There are costs associated with applying to study medicine. Some of these costs include, Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT) examination costs, application fee, travel costs to attend interviews.



A good ATAR is all you need

Most medical schools also use interviews and the UMAT to make decisions on who will get a place in medical school. Check each university's medical school website for details.



You need to know a doctor to become a doctor

This is not true. You may want to find out more about what a medical career is like before you decide to apply to medical school. You can use your family GP, or use social media to seek out friends of friends who might be studying medicine – past applicants know what it's like and are usually happy to help.



You can only apply once to get into medicine

You can do the UMAT more than once, and you can apply several times to specific medical schools. Even if you don't get into medicine on your first or second try, you should talk to the university about study options to assist with your application success.



You can only get into medical school by paying for admissions coaching

There is no evidence that paid coaching leads to admission success. Free advice is available online, from your school and from the universities. There are practice questions for you to help prepare yourself.



Every university application process is the same

Every university's medical school has a different application process. This can be a bit confusing. You will have to find out what the specific requirements are for the university you are thinking about applying to!



There is a magic formula to get into medicine

There is no such thing as a magic formula to get you into medical school. Every medical student has their own story about how they were successful. Keep an eye out for university information sessions and ask your careers adviser to do the same. Search for online forums and groups discussing medicine.

CURRENT STUDENTS AND CAREER ADVISERS SAY...



Be well-informed – Ask your career advisor for help early if you are thinking about doing medicine

“Basically in year 11 in the fourth term I’m saying, ‘Look, these are the sort of things that you should be preparing for next year, and over summer here’s a list of things that you should be thinking about, and if you are applying for Medicine, these are some of the things that you should be doing.’ So, you know, I’m trying to get them to think”ahead of the year 12 year.”



...and discuss your subject selection with them to strengthen your ATAR.

“For example, a student who’s quite creative could quite possibly do much better in the more creative subjects than those subjects that have a lot of science because they don’t really like the content.”



Be organised – look at university websites to see what they require and keep track of the deadlines

“I guess just to be organised, like, I’m incredibly organised in my application process and, you know, all the challenges and all the spread sheets and when to apply to what and what I need to do it.”



Be ready – put effort into your application

“I think the application process needs a lot of thought with all the questions. I had them open on my computer every day and was just thinking more about them and adding stuff to them. As it’s such an awesome opportunity it deserves as much time and effort that you can give to it, but don’t stress out too much about it I think.”



Be flexible – apply widely to increase your chances of getting an offer

“I would definitely say apply everywhere. At least keep your options open. If you get an offer later, you can decline it, if you don’t want to.”



Be diligent – concentrate on getting a good ATAR

“I think the uncertainty was hard, but I guess that’s part of applying ... But now I can look back and if people come up and ask me what score do I need to get in, I just say try your best.”



Be prepared – understand what is required from you

“Just search the internet for every UMAT practice exam you can get and do the questions over and over again and look into the strategies for the logical reasoning, there’s great YouTube videos.”



Be relaxed – stressing is not helpful or healthy

“I know that I was stressed in the interview, that I didn’t do very well then, and if I had relaxed perhaps, I would have done considerably better.”



Be confident – try not to second-guess yourself

“Don’t sit there trying to say what you think the interviewer wants to hear. Just be really honest in your answers and I found that was the best way to sort of be successful rather than constantly sitting back and going what do you the examiners want to hear”



Be persistent – if you don’t succeed at first, consider re-applying or finishing another degree first

“Try to stay calm and suss out the other ways you can get in if you don’t get in the first time...Just knowing that it isn’t a huge rush because a lot of people do start something else and then start medicine. If you’re not straight from high school, you’re definitely not a minority.”