

# The UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT)



The UK Clinical Aptitude Test ([www.ukcat.ac.uk](http://www.ukcat.ac.uk)) is used by 26 universities to inform the application and admissions process for their medical and dentistry courses. The test is run by the UKCAT Consortium in partnership with Pearson VUE.

*“The ability to deliver was a key factor in choosing Pearson VUE; undoubtedly the Pearson delivery system was superior and the company had substantial experience in computer-based testing.”*

Prof Ian Johnson,  
Chair of the UKCAT Consortium

## Why introduce a test?

Medical and dentistry courses at UK universities are in huge demand, with around 22,000 applicants for 9,000 places. The test was introduced in 2006 to help universities identify candidates’ likely aptitude for a clinical career. All applicants must take the test before applying to any of the 26 participating universities.

Professor Ian Johnson, Chair of the UKCAT Consortium, explains:

“It has become progressively more and more difficult to identify who to interview, with most applicants predicted to get A\* and A grades at A Level.

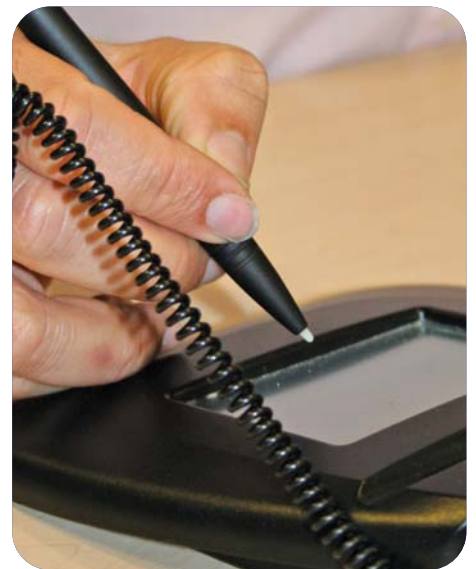
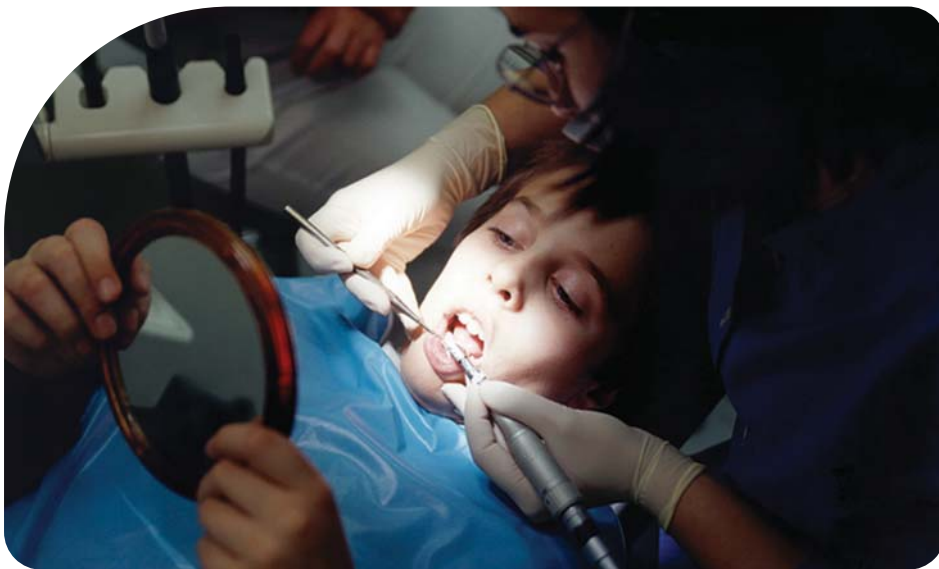
“Academic performance remains important, but the tests give us another tool. There is a long history of such testing in the USA and other countries – here it was an idea whose time had come.”

## How does it work?

UKCAT consists of four sub-tests on verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, abstract reasoning and decision analysis. It is multiple choice and lasts 90 minutes. Pearson VUE manages the whole end to end process, including:

- Marketing, online registration, test booking and payment handling
- Test delivery through a selection of Pearson VUE’s global network of test centres in 168 countries.
- Test security
- Test question provision
- Test delivery and instant assessment
- Detailed management information for all universities





### The benefits

The Consortium wanted tests that were credible - and a partner who could be trusted to deliver.

As well as exceptional delivery, other benefits include:

#### Efficiency

Thanks to Pearson VUE's question bank, candidates do not need to be tested at the same time on the same day. The system also eliminates the distribution, storage and tracking of test papers and answer scripts.

#### Speed and accuracy

For candidates, all answers are marked automatically, improving accuracy and providing instant results.

#### Detailed feedback

Each university obtains detailed information on all its applicants and can use the results in its own way to support admissions.

During 2008 over 20,000 people took the UK Clinical Aptitude Test.

"The first year has been an overwhelming success; it's been very hard work, but I don't think that anybody thought it would be so successful." said Prof Johnson.

### The future

Students will be tracked over time to discover the link between test scores and real performance to help develop the recruitment and selection process. As Prof Johnson puts it:

"In the long term, we're not just interested in producing good medical students, but in producing the best doctors and dentists."

As part of this tracking, a selection of non-cognitive assessments are being trialled in the last 30 minutes of the UK Clinical Aptitude Test.

### About Pearson VUE

Pearson VUE is the world's leading assessment and testing business, with a focus on advanced technology and exceptional service.

### How we can help

If you offer paper-based tests, or need to introduce new forms of testing, we can ensure you maintain standards while making the transition to computer based testing. We offer a flexible range of services, including:

- Test development
- Registration and scheduling
- Test delivery through our global network of over 5,000 test centres in 162 countries, or in your own test centres
- Management information
- Security and data integrity, including physical, password and encryption systems

If you would like further information about Pearson VUE and our assessment solutions please email [pvmeamarketing@pearson.com](mailto:pvmeamarketing@pearson.com) or visit [www.pearsonvue.co.uk](http://www.pearsonvue.co.uk)

