What last year's students said about Dental Futures...

“It's given me the confidence to pursue studying dentistry at university as I am more aware of the courses available, the course content and the whole application process.”

“The fact that the sessions are done by current uni students makes me more excited for starting my dentistry course in the future. The sessions are nicely laid out with information and learning in the first half with question time in the second half.”

“I like how friendly the presenters are and how they give off nice vibes like they genuinely want to help and give us information.”

“It is an amazingly put together programme and I am enjoying it all. It is great that we are able to ask all the questions we want and that there is someone to help us get into dentistry”.

“The dental application isn't as scary as you think it might be. Dental Futures has broken the process down for me into manageable chunks so that I don't feel too overwhelmed. I've learnt about the basic knowledge of dentistry as well as the application process.”

“I've enjoyed how everything has been broken down so that we don't have to worry about too much at such an early stage. I love how all guests made sure that their audience took part. I loved how they gave their own stories of their experiences and how they always put a smile on your face.”
Contents

Welcome to Dental Futures ............................................. 04
What I want from university ........................................ 05
My questions about dental school ................................ 06
Dental schools in the UK .............................................. 07
Dental school research .................................................. 08
Student finance and managing money .............................. 10
Admissions tests preparation .......................................... 13
The dental team - who's who? ......................................... 15
Working with patients ................................................... 16
Dental anatomy .......................................................... 17
Dental charting ........................................................... 18
Visit to campus - notes and reflection .............................. 20
Skills skills skills! ......................................................... 21
Work experience guidance ............................................ 23
Professional skills ....................................................... 24
Care and communication scenarios ............................... 25
Time management and planning .................................... 26
My personal statement ............................................... 30
Admissions tests - UCAT ............................................. 32
My summer action plan .............................................. 34
Admissions tests - BMAT ............................................ 35
Preparing for interviews .............................................. 40
Welcome to Dental Futures

Welcome from the Programme Team

Hello and a very warm welcome to Dental Futures. We are delighted that you have decided to join us to explore your future options in dentistry. Over the next 12 months, you will be participating alongside other students from up and down the country in sessions that we hope will inform, advise and inspire you to make the right choices about your future. By the end of the programme, you should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prepare you for studying a dental course at university.

How to use this workbook

The workbook is intended to be used alongside the fortnightly sessions. Following each session, we will suggest a small task or reflection exercise for you to do before the next session. This is all to help you plan and prepare for your future university applications, personal development and preparation for studying at university.

When we talk about ‘Dentistry’, throughout this workbook and the Futures programme, we are referring mostly to degree courses leading to the dental professions of Dental Surgery (i.e. becoming a Dentist) or Dental Hygiene and Therapy. Some of the content, such as admissions tests and applications processes will relate specifically to Dental Surgery but much of it is relevant to all the dental professions and to university study.
What I want from university

The first step is to decide what matters to you when choosing a university. Below are some ideas you can start with; how important are the following to you?

01 Location
Do you want to move away from home? Stay local? Or stay living at home?

02 City or campus?
Would you like to be in the middle of a big, busy city? Or have everything in one place on a campus?

03 The course itself
How is the course taught? What will you learn? What about clinical placements?

04 Student experience
What do students think about studying at this particular university? What extra curricular opportunities are there?

05 For fun
What sort of social, sports and leisure facilities are there in the city and campus?

06 Support services
What support is in place for students? What help is available for you if you need it? Any contextual admissions or access schemes?

Write some notes on the above points and consider what is important to you. It might help you to rank the points in order of importance. Or you may prefer to make a mind map about what you want to consider when choosing a university.
My questions about dental school

Throughout the programme, you will have the opportunity to ask our current students and staff any questions you may have about studying dentistry and university life.

Use the space below to write any questions you’d like to ask.
Where you end up studying is a big decision! You're going to be there for at least 3-5 years of your life, so it needs to be the right choice for you. There are 14 potential dental schools in the UK that you could study at, all of which offer a Dental Surgery 5 year degree, and most also offer Dental Therapy and Dental Hygiene, either as separate or a combined 3 year degree. You can see from the map where they are located throughout the country, so it's up to you where you want to go!

Visit the Dental Schools Council website for more information: www.dentschoolscouncil.ac.uk.

1. University of Birmingham
2. University of Bristol
3. Cardiff University
4. University of Dundee
5. University of Glasgow
6. King's College London
7. University of Leeds
8. University of Liverpool
9. University of Manchester
10. Newcastle University
11. University of Plymouth
12. Queen Mary, University of London
13. Queen's University Belfast
14. University of Sheffield
Time to get researching!! Thinking about the first activity on page 4, and visiting the universities’ websites to find out details, make a list of 4-5 potential universities that you might see yourself studying at, along with some of the features of each. Remember that you can only apply for up to four Dentistry courses and your fifth choice has to be something else.

Example:
University of Leeds - close to city, 1 hour from home by train. Early clinical experience, highly rated Student Union, joint Masters and Bachelors degree, Access to Leeds (contextual admissions), social football teams, great live music scene ...
Throughout the programme, we'll be giving you the opportunity to think about and reflect on your journey so far.

These notes will help you when it comes to writing your applications and personal statement.

How are you feeling right now about going to university and about studying dentistry? Use the space below to write down some of your thoughts.
Have you thought about your finances once you are at university? Do you know how much money you will have coming in and what you will be spending?

Write down some of the things that you think you will need to budget for when you are at university.

Jargon buster

**Student loan**
Money you borrow to pay for higher education courses. There are two types – a Tuition Fee Loan for course costs and a Maintenance Loan to cover living expenses while studying.

**Tuition fees**
Fees that the university will charge each student to study at their institution. This is currently charged at £9,250 per year - this is paid directly to the university from the loans company.

**Bursary**
Financial support given to students that you do not need to repay. This is linked to personal circumstances, and household income. Bursaries can come in different forms, such as tuition fee discount or accommodation discount.

**Scholarship**
Financial support given to students that you do not need to repay. This is linked to academic results or abilities for sports or music. These can be subject specific and can have limited availability.

**Interest**
Banks charge a 'fee' for borrowing money and the same applies to student loans. This is usually set at a certain percentage of what you borrow and added on at the end of each year.

**Means-tested**
A test of how much income someone has. Student Finance will use your household / parental income to decide how much loan you will be entitled to.

**Hardship fund**
Extra money that students can access from their university, if experiencing financial hardship. You do not have to pay this back on most occasions.

**Overdraft**
This is when your bank account has a negative balance because you have spent more than you have.
Student finance case studies

Look at the student case studies below and have a go at budgeting for one (or both) of the students. On the next page you will find a budget planning sheet.

Go online and research average student living costs, or estimate the various outgoings using your own experience. You could also have a look what sort of jobs might be available to students, for example by Googling ‘LUU jobs’.

Use [gov.uk/student-finance-calculator](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator) or scan the QR code to see how much maintenance loan the students will be entitled to, taking into account parental household income.

Tuition fees are £9250 - this is paid by the loans company directly to the university, so you do not have to include this in your budget.

**Student 1: Maya**

Rent £125 / week (10 months, includes bills)
Parental household income: £55,000
Parental contribution: £150 per month

I am in my first year at university, living in student accommodation in Leeds and have a shortfall in my student finance, so I have a part time job. I live comfortably and manage to do all of the things that I want to, however I have booked a holiday for next year and need to make a monthly saving of around £80 to pay for it. Due to my working hours I sometimes cannot be bothered to cook when I get in from work and so often get a takeaway.

How can I save without going into debt?

- Draw up a monthly budget for Maya
- Can you make any extra savings?
- What tips would you give her?

**Student 2: Jack**

Rent: £170 / week (12 months, includes bills)
Parental household income: £24,000

I am currently in my second year of university and have trouble with my finances. I live in London in a shared house and always end up in my overdraft and I don’t know what to do. I buy new clothes every month and often get dragged out to eat with my friends and so a lot of the food I buy goes into the bin. I enjoy going to live music gigs and usually get an Uber when I go out. I joined a few student societies last year but I never find the time to take part in activities and pay a monthly subscription.

How can I manage my money better?

- Draw up a monthly budget for Jack
- Can you make any extra savings?
- What tips would you give him?
## Student finance budget planner

### Budget Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student maintenance loan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bursary / scholarship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money from parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major outgoings</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent and bills*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Electric, gas, water and broadband are included in rent in university accommodation, can vary for privately rented accommodations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everyday spending</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books / Printing / Stationery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports / Hobbies / Gym</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toiletries / Health / Personal care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning and household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music / Gaming / Netflix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment - nightlife / gigs / eating out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occasional costs</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birthdays / Christmas / Celebrations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing / Shoes / Accessories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University balls / Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you have a car</th>
<th>Per month</th>
<th>Per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOT / Servicing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TOTAL EXPENDITURE

- Total income
- Total outgoings
- Balance (income minus outgoings)
- Surplus / deficit
Which admissions test(s) do you expect be taking?

- BMAT and UCAT
- UCAT only

You should visit the BMAT and UCAT websites to check the test and registration dates. You will take the BMAT in November and we recommend that you take the UCAT in August.

admissiontesting.org/for-test-takers/bmat ucat.ac.uk/about-ucat/key-dates

It’s never too early to start planning!
Write down some of the key dates and ‘need to know’ info for 2022 testing. The dates are roughly the same each year, to the timelines below (dates not available at time of printing).

**UCAT timeline**
- Early June - Registration opens
- Late July - Testing begins
- Late September - Last test date / registration closes
- Early November - Results sent to universities

**BMAT timeline**
- 1st September - Registration opens
- Early October - Registration closes
- Early November - Test date
- Late November - Results released

Do you need to apply for test fee bursaries or access arrangements? Write down the dates / details here:
How are you feeling now about going to university and about studying dentistry? Do you have anything you would like to ask us? Use the space below to write down your thoughts and questions. You might also want to start to familiarise yourself with the content and structure of the admissions tests and think about when you will start preparing for them, and what resources might help. Use the space to write a simple preparation plan for the next few months and any useful websites you come across.
The dental team is not just dentists! Various members make up the team, each with their own distinct role and responsibilities. Make some notes alongside each role about what they do.
Every patient you will work with as a dental professional is an individual, with their own unique characteristics, needs and experiences. It’s vitally important that you understand this as a dentist, so you can treat each person accordingly.

Create a mindmap with some of your ideas to consider when working with patients.
Dental anatomy

Understanding the anatomy of the human body, and particularly the skull, face and teeth sets the foundation for your further learning and practice. This will be one of the first things you will study on most dental degree courses. Our masterclass gave you a bit of an insight into this topic - how did you find it? What can you remember?

Label the different parts of the tooth - see how many you know without looking them up.

Look at the images of the skull - label as many parts as you can remember.
Remember how dentists use a special system to list and record the health of your teeth? You don't need to know this before you start dental school, but understanding it now will give you a head start!

Also, when you next visit the dentist, you'll know what they are talking about when they say all those numbers and letters!

The image on the left shows one system of dental charting commonly used in the UK. You will need to get used to left and right labels always being the patient's left and right, not the dentist's!

Look at the image below of the permanent adult dentition and label the teeth indicated with the full name.
Reflection

How did you find the lectures on dental anatomy? Did it inspire and interest you? Why? Are you more or less sure about studying Dentistry? What have you heard so far about studying Dentistry that has helped you decide?
What did you particularly enjoy about your visit to the University of Leeds?
What did you learn?
What will you now consider when choosing a university? What things are important?
Skills, skills, skills!

What skills are needed by dental professionals?

Consider the skills below. How could you demonstrate that you have them? Give some examples from your own experiences. If you don't feel you can write much at the moment, what could you do?

- **Organisation and time management**
- **Problem solving**
- **Leadership and responsibility**
- **Communication: Speaking, listening, reading and writing**
Skills, skills, skills!

- Care, compassion and patience
- Respect for others
- Teamwork
- Manual dexterity
Work experience guidance

Do you have a part time job or volunteering role? What are your responsibilities and how could this translate to being a dental professional? What could you do over the next few months to further develop and demonstrate your insight into dentistry?
Professional skills

As a dental student, you will be expected to meet certain requirements and standards of behaviour during your training to become a registered dental professional. All members of the dental team must follow the General Dental Council’s nine ethical principles of practice listed below in their work and in their public lives. Although they don’t all apply to you when studying / training, you should be familiar with them, so that by the end of your training you can demonstrate you have the skills and attitude to make an excellent dental professional.

The GDC Standards for the dental team

1. Put patients’ interests first
2. Communicate effectively with patients
3. Obtain valid consent
4. Maintain and protect patients’ information
5. Have a clear and effective complaints procedure
6. Work with colleagues in a way that is in patients’ best interests
7. Maintain, develop and work within your professional knowledge and skills
8. Raise concerns if patients are at risk
9. Make sure your personal behaviour maintains patients’ confidence in you and the dental profession

What does good care and communication look like?

List some examples of GOOD care and communication in the dental setting

List some examples of POOR care and communication in the dental setting
Scenario 1 - A nervous patient

Ben is 19 years old and has been a patient for many years, but he is always nervous. He has presented complaining of tooth pain. You find an infected tooth that needs to be removed. Ben becomes very scared and is refusing to go ahead with the procedure, but if he doesn't get it done, the infection could spread.

What are your main considerations when talking to Ben, and what do you say?

Scenario 2 - Dealing with conflict

A patient has been waiting for his appointment for 45 mins, due to a previous patient needing complicated emergency treatment. The patient needs to return to work and is getting increasingly agitated and angry.

You need to explain to him the reason for his wait and try to keep him calm.

Scenario 3 - Breaking bad news

You are looking after your neighbour's cat while she is away on holiday. The cat went out as normal a few days ago, but has not returned, which is out of character. You've looked everywhere for the cat but now your neighbour is due to arrive home. How do you approach the situation?
The next year for you is going to be busy! You will need to get used to this, as life as a dental student can be pretty full-on at times. But don’t worry - learning to manage your time effectively is a skill that will really help, not just now, but in the future too. Try and get used to planning your time - there are various methods you can use. Don’t forget time for yourself - relaxing, social time, exercise, and sleep - the image below is a gentle reminder of some of the things to include to ensure you are thinking about your health and wellbeing every day.

12 THINGS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR DAY

- **Morning Routine**: Get up and get charged even if you’re not going anywhere
- **Meal Times**: Eat three balanced meals a day
- **Hydration**: Make sure you’re drinking enough water
- **Exercise**: 30-60 mins a day either inside or out
- **Fresh Air and Vitamin D**: Either in your garden or during exercise
- **Connect with Family & Friends**: Keep in touch, Chat, play games, text, call or video call
- **Work, Rest, Play**: Keep the balance
- **Take Care of Yourself & Relax**: Have a bubble bath, shower, paint your nails or meditate
- **Do Things You Enjoy**: Play games, listen to music, read or watch a film or series
- **Create**: Draw, write, build something, dance or cook
- **Bedtime Routine**: Put tech away and take time to wind down
- **Sleep**: Make sure you get enough sleep
For one week, track your activities using the Weekly Time Planning Sheet below. At the end of the week, tally up the number of hours spent in each category. (Use the empty spaces to add additional categories as needed, e.g. tv, gaming, exercise, chores)

Did the time you spend reflect your goals and expectations?
Are you happy with your results?

Making Improvements:
Using the Weekly Schedule (on the next page), at the beginning of the week, plan your week using the concepts and information from our sessions. Follow your plan for one week.
At the end of the week, tally up the number of hours spent in each category.
How did your planned week compare to the unplanned week?

Are you happy with your results? Do you need to change anything? Does planning in advance work for you?

### Weekly time planning sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours spent this week</th>
<th>Priority (1=high, 8=low)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular (clubs etc)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 Noon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 Midnight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reflection

Time for your thoughts again. How are you feeling now about applying to university? It's nearly summer holidays - what are your plans? How can they help your application? What do you need to do? How are you doing academically? What do you need to focus on?
It's a good idea to start thinking about what to write in your personal statement over the summer break. Think about the following themes and consider what you might include. Your time on Dental Futures will help with this, so look back on the Reflection exercises.

Points to consider: Insight and motivation, skills and experiences, responsibilities, interests and achievements.
Inspire me!

When things seem overwhelming, or it all gets a bit too much, imagine yourself in 2, 3, 5 years time, as a dental student and on your way to becoming a qualified dental professional.
Admissions tests - Preparing for the UCAT

Start by ensuring that you understand the format of the test, questions types, timings and expected content, before you have a go at some practice questions. The table below shows you the question breakdown along with approximate timings for each section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCAT Section</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
<th>Seconds per question</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Reasoning</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>300-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>300-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>300-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract Reasoning</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>300-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational Judgement</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Band 1-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*add 1 minute per section for instructions

Preparation progress tracker

Registration completed  ☐
Access arrangements (if required)  ☐
Bursary application (if eligible)  ☐
My test date  .......................  📅

Visit the UCAT website and watch their preparation video: ucat.ac.uk/prepare/
Use the question banks for each section before you attempt a test under timed conditions.

What sections do you need to focus on?
What sections do you feel confident on?
UCAT ten top tips

01. Understand the format of the test, question types, timings and how scoring works.

02. Practice using the free online question banks for each section to get used to the different question types in your own time, along with the answer explanations.

03. Plan your preparation and practice time in advance, focusing on the areas you feel less confident on. Make a plan that works for you and stick to it.

04. Practice the tests online under timed conditions, once you are used to the questions. Understand how much time you have for each question / section - the test is about answering questions quickly as well as correctly.

05. Consider creating a mnemonic to use in the Abstract Reasoning section, e.g. shape, number, position, symmetry, reflection.

06. Read newspapers / online articles to increase reading speed and improve critical reasoning skills.

07. Look at the GMC ‘Good Medical Practice’ to inform your responses to the Situational Judgement section.

08. Work on your maths skills! Get comfortable with percentages, ratios and fractions. Practice mental maths to save time.

09. Know exactly where you are taking the test in advance so you won't be late on the day - give yourself plenty of time so you don't arrive in a rush and panic.

10. Flag questions you can't answer immediately and come back to them. Never leave empty answers! Have a guess - you won't lose marks. Are there any answers you can definitely exclude? This will increase your chances of getting the right answer.
My summer action plan

The summer break is approaching! What are your plans? Consider what you have to/want to do over the holidays and start making a plan. Make sure you factor in preparing for your admissions test(s).
Admissions tests - preparing for the BMAT

Only the University of Leeds requests the BMAT as part of your application to our Dental Surgery degree. If you are not planning to apply to Leeds / take the BMAT, you can skip the next few pages.

1st September - Registration opens
Early October - Registration closes
Early November - Test date
Late November - Results released

Look back on your notes following Session 4 on pages 9&10, so you can think about planning your time with these dates in mind, ahead of the test date in early November.

One of the things to know about the BMAT in comparison to the UCAT is that it’s not supposed to be as time-pressured, which means the questions you’ll be presented with will often be multi-step. The UCAT is looking to see how quickly you can work, and you’ll have just seconds to answer some of the questions.

However when answering BMAT questions, you should be prepared to carefully work your way through them in a logical manner, rather than making an educated guess.

One advantage if you are taking the BMAT, is that you will probably have already sat your UCAT, so will have experience of an admissions test already, which should take a bit of the pressure off!

The table below shows you the question breakdown, along with approximate timings for each section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMAT Section</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
<th>Seconds per question</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 1: Thinking Skills</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td>Between 1.0-9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2 - Scientific Knowledge</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Between 1.0-9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3 - Writing Task</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>One essay</td>
<td></td>
<td>Content 1.0-5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English A-E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Useful resources

BMAT official website - includes practice and past papers, online demo test, question guides to each section, full subject specification for Section 2, marking criteria, YouTube playlist with student voices.

Books containing hundreds of practice questions - look for second hand on Amazon or Ebay.

Websites such as The Medic Portal and The Student Room have lots of tips, advice and discussion and there are many student-led videos on YouTube - there is so much free help available - you do not need to pay for content, such as Medify - save your money!
Start by practising questions at your own pace, then move onto timed practice. There is an online 'Computer-based demo' on the BMAT website, which looks exactly how the actual test will look.

Look out for little ‘trick’ words which could be used to completely change the meaning of some statements, for instance the word ‘not’, and also beware of ‘distractors’: is there any useless information that you don’t need?

Don’t make any assumptions and conclusions from your own knowledge that aren’t clearly stated in the passage.

It might help you to read through the questions first before the text, then your brain is prepared for what is coming up. Practice to see if this works for you.

Problem solving questions may use a bit of maths - practice mental maths in your head and get comfortable with percentages, ratios and fractions.

Try not to panic too much in this section! If you have sat the UCAT you will definitely be able to see the similarities with Verbal Reasoning, so taking a similar but more careful approach will help. Once you start practising questions, you should start to identify and understand ‘patterns’.
Look up the subject specification on the BMAT website and use it as a checklist, focus attention on areas you are not currently studying e.g. if you are not taking Physics A Level, you may need to concentrate more on this.

Ask your science teachers at college for help if you are stuck on anything. Be aware that there may be areas you were not taught at GCSE, as the test covers all exam boards.

Mental maths is vital for this section, as you won't have a calculator. Practising mental maths using quizzes or puzzles can make your revision more fun! Make sure that you also memorise all the relevant formulae.

Start off by trying questions without worrying about timing, and then apply time constraints so that you build up to working under exam conditions.

Read the question, take a look at the answer options then begin to eliminate. If you run out of time and have to guess, you'll have a better chance if there are fewer answers.

Try using study books such as CGP GCSE books, which you can pick up cheaply second hand, and I also found the BBC Bitesize website helpful.
BMAT top tips

Section 3: Writing task

01. Look up the marking criteria on the BMAT website - you are marked on your content as well as quality of English - the marking schedule will describe what is expected for each score.

02. If you are not used to essay writing, make sure you brush up on your grammar, punctuation and spelling - there is no spell checker! Reading newspapers and books can help you to grasp the correct writing style.

03. Practice using the Notepad app on your computer, staying within the word count of 550, as well as having a go with the online demo on the BMAT website - this is how it will look when you take the actual test.

04. Read 'Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction' by M. Dunn & T. Hope to help with questions that have an ethical dimension.

05. Get feedback on your written essays - this could be from a teacher or family member - they do not have to be an expert, but can tell you if it reads well and forms a good answer to the question.

Take 5-10 mins to plan what you will write, rather than launching straight into it before you have a plan. Keep an eye on the time and ensure you have covered all parts of the question. Create a 'mini plan' for at least two of the questions - you might be surprised that you know more about a question than you first thought.
**BMAT: Preparation progress tracker**

Registration completed  
Access arrangements (if required)  
Eligible for fee reimbursement?  
My test date  

Rate your confidence from 1-10 on the different sections and track over the next weeks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1: Thinking skills</th>
<th>Add dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>• • • • • •</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>• • • • • •</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 2: Scientific knowledge and application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 3: Writing task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
What sections do you need to focus on? What sections do you feel confident on?
Preparing for interviews

Now that you know which universities you are applying to, you can find out what types of interview to expect.

Using the Dental Schools Council entry requirements guide and the universities' own websites, write down the details of the interview method for each of your choices, not forgetting your fifth choice, which may or may not have an interview.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

Although no one can predict exactly what questions will come up at interview, in most cases, you should expect to be asked questions along these major themes:

- Your motivation to study dentistry and insight into the profession
- Your personality, including compassion, empathy and general suitability to the profession
- Any work experience, including volunteer roles
- Some knowledge of the NHS / public health and basic medical ethics

For your preparation and practice, you should therefore aim to cover the above areas. Look at the websites medicmind.co.uk and the medicportal.com for lots of example questions and get practising!
Example stations

Consider how you would approach the following questions / scenarios and make some notes for each.

**Question 1**
Why do you want to study dentistry and not another health profession?
What would you look forward to from a career in dentistry?

**Question 2**
A six year old girl comes into your clinic with decay in many of her teeth and your clinical opinion is that they need to be extracted. You explain this to the girl's father, who disagrees with you and does not want the teeth to be extracted. How do you approach the situation?

**Question 3**
How do you think COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on oral health and dentistry? Which groups of people do you think have been particularly impacted?
Reflection

How are you feeling about your upcoming interviews? Have you done enough to prepare? What else could you do to practice? How are you feeling as the Dental Futures programme comes to an end?
Congratulations and good luck!

You have now reached the end of Dental Futures! It has been wonderful to work with you and we really hope that the programme has been both useful and enjoyable for you. You should feel proud of your commitment and contribution, and we hope as a Futures 'graduate', you are leaving the programme with confidence, knowledge and skills that you did not possess twelve months ago.

We would like to wish you every success with any upcoming interviews, future exams, entry to university and journey into a dental profession, or whichever path your life takes.

So it's goodbye from us, and we'll leave you with a few motivational quotes to remember us by!

Mark and Paula

- Don't stop until you're proud
- You've totally got this!
- The best way to predict your future is to create it
- Great things never come from comfort zone
- Dream big, work hard, make it happen.