

How to Balance UCAT and Year 12 Study

This guide is written to reassure **students** who feel overwhelmed and **parents** who want structure and balance. It blends **practical time management**, **study strategy**, and **InMed's expert guidance**, positioning your workshops as the trusted solution.

Introduction: You Can Excel in Both UCAT and Year 12

Preparing for **Year 12 exams** and the **UCAT** can feel impossible — two huge challenges, one limited calendar.

But with the right structure and mindset, you can manage both **without burning out**. The key is not doing *more* work, but doing the *right* work, in the right way, at the right time.

At **InMed Academy**, we've guided students through this exact balance — helping them maintain strong academic results *and* achieve competitive UCAT scores.

1. Understand the Different Demands of Each

	Year 12	UCAT
What it tests	Content knowledge (science, math, English)	Cognitive skills (speed, logic, reasoning)
Prep style	Memorise and practise subject material	Build test-taking skills through repetition
Improvement curve	Gradual — topic by topic	Skill-based — requires consistent short practice

💡 InMed Insight:

Treat the UCAT as a *skill sport*, not another subject. You can't cram it — it needs **small, regular practice** just like physical training.

2. Map Out Your Timeline Early

The **best balance** comes from planning early.

Most students sit the UCAT between **late July and early August**, right before trial exams. That means your **peak UCAT practice phase** will overlap with **heavy Year 12 study**.

Here's what that looks like when managed properly:

Period	Focus	UCAT Study	Year 12 Study
Jan–Mar	Build understanding	Learn UCAT strategies	Light school review
Apr–Jun	Build speed & accuracy	Timed drills & mocks	Term 2 coursework
Jul–Aug	Simulate exam & refine	Full UCAT mocks	Trial prep
Sep–Nov	Focus on ATAR exams	Maintain UCAT reflection skills	Major exam prep

💡 InMed Tip:

Start **12-24 months before** your UCAT. You'll be ready early — and reduce pressure when Year 12 peaks.

3. Use the “3-Block” Weekly Routine

Students often ask: “How many hours should I spend on UCAT each week?”

The answer: it depends on your school load, but consistency is key.

Here’s a simple InMed-recommended model that works for most students:

◆ **Block 1 – Learn (1–2 hrs)**

Focus on understanding strategies for each UCAT section (VR, DM, QR, SJT).

Watch video lessons or attend InMed workshops.

◆ **Block 2 – Practise (1–2 hrs)**

Do short timed drills.

E.g.

- 20-minute VR set
- 10 Decision Making questions
- 10 Quantitative Reasoning questions

◆ **Block 3 – Review (1 hr)**

Go through your mistakes.

Ask: *What went wrong?* and *What pattern do I keep repeating?*

Total = 3–5 hours per week — manageable alongside Year 12 study.

💡 **InMed Tip:**

UCAT prep fits best into *short bursts*. 30–45 minutes daily is far more effective than one long weekend session.

4. Integrate UCAT Practice into Your School Routine

Combining UCAT with your Year 12 schedule doesn’t mean doubling your workload — it means overlapping your habits:

School Task	UCAT Skill Boost
Reading comprehension (English)	Improves Verbal Reasoning
Logical arguments (Science/Economics)	Supports Decision Making
Calculations and graphs (Maths)	Reinforces Quantitative Reasoning
Ethical discussions (Health, Society)	Aligns with Situational Judgement

💡 **InMed Tip:**

Use your **school subjects** as UCAT training opportunities.

Example: when reading a long article, time yourself and summarise key points like in a VR passage.

5. Manage Energy, Not Just Time

Year 12 is mentally demanding — the UCAT adds another layer of intensity.

Students often forget that **rest and recovery** are part of performance.

Practical ways to protect energy:

- Keep UCAT practice under **1 hour per session** (unless attending a workshop)
- Take a **day off each week** from both UCAT and academics.
- Sleep 7–8 hours minimum — reasoning ability drops quickly with fatigue.

- Exercise or walk regularly to maintain focus and reduce stress.

💡 **InMed Insight:**

Top scorers aren't the ones who study the longest — they're the ones who manage their focus and recovery best.

6. Set Realistic Goals

Avoid the “all or nothing” mindset.

Set **achievable micro-goals** that maintain motivation without overwhelming you.

Example UCAT weekly goals:

- Complete 2 VR sets and 1 QR mini-test
- Review one full Decision Making mock
- Watch one Situational Judgement lesson

Use these small wins to build momentum — just like you do for school assignments.

💡 **InMed Tip:**

Track your goals in a shared planner or app — and celebrate consistency, not just score improvement.

7. Communicate with Teachers and Parents

For parents:

Support your child by **encouraging structure, not pressure**. Let them lead their own preparation while providing reassurance and space.

For students:

Inform teachers early about your UCAT schedule — especially around mock exam periods — to avoid last-minute conflicts.

💡 **InMed Insight:**

Open communication reduces stress. Everyone works better when expectations are clear.

8. Use Mocks to Prepare for Both Exams

Mock exams serve both Year 12 and UCAT preparation:

- UCAT mocks train **focus, time management, and calm under pressure**.
- Year 12 mocks test **knowledge, memory, and essay planning**.

Both demand similar **exam discipline** — pacing, endurance, and composure.

💡 **InMed Tip:**

Simulate UCAT mocks on weekends or study-free afternoons. This conditions your brain for high-pressure performance without interrupting school work.

9. Don't Compare Your Progress

Every student's journey looks different.

Some improve quickly in VR; others take longer with QR or SJT.

Comparing your scores to friends only adds pressure and confusion.

💡 **InMed Tip:**

Focus on **your personal data** — your accuracy, timing, and improvement curve. That’s what determines success.

10. Seek Support When You Need It

Balancing UCAT and Year 12 can be stressful — and that’s normal.

If you feel overwhelmed:

- Take a short break from UCAT to reset.
- Speak with your teachers, family, or mentors.
- Join a structured study group or workshop.

InMed Tip:

InMed workshops are built around **supportive coaching** — where students learn from top UCAT performers who understand what it’s like to juggle Year 12.

Summary: Smart Balance = Strong Results

Focus Area	Student Benefit	Parent Reassurance
Consistent short study	Builds skill without burnout	Healthy workload balance
Early planning	Reduces panic mid-year	Structured preparation
Guided practice	Faster improvement	Expert-led support
Rest and wellbeing	Maintains motivation	Sustainable performance

Final Advice from InMed Academy

Balancing UCAT and Year 12 is not about doing more — it’s about **doing smarter**. With structure, planning, and the right strategies, you can excel in both.

At **InMed Academy**, we help students:

- Build efficient UCAT routines
- Learn proven test-day strategies
- Receive expert feedback and coaching
- Stay balanced through Year 12 with confidence

Next Steps

1. **Download this free guide** and share it with your parents.
2. **Review our ‘Understanding UCAT Scores and Percentiles’ guide** to learn more about scoring
3. **Join an InMed UCAT Workshop** to learn effective study planning and section strategies.
4. **Start early, stay steady, and believe in balance.**