UCAT Question Types Explained

Introduction: Know the Test, Master the Strategy

The UCAT (University Clinical Aptitude Test) is very different from your school exams.

It doesn't test your knowledge of science or maths — instead, it measures how you **think, reason, and respond under time pressure**.

Understanding each question type is the first step toward success.

In this guide, we'll break down the **five UCAT subtests**, explain **what they test**, show you **how questions are structured**, and share **proven strategies** for each one.

Verbal Reasoning (VR)

Tests: Reading comprehension, critical thinking, and identifying evidence-based conclusions.

Format: 44 questions in 22 minutes.

What It Looks Like:

You'll read short passages (usually 200–300 words) and answer questions based on the text.

Each passage has 4 questions — often multiple choice or true/false/can't tell.

Example:

Passage: "Researchers found that people who slept fewer than 6 hours were more likely to develop high blood pressure. However, the study noted that stress levels were not controlled."

Question: "According to the passage, stress levels were considered in the study."

Options:

A. True   B. False   C. Can't Tell

✅ ***Answer:** C — the passage states that stress levels were not controlled.*

Key Challenges:

- Reading speed and comprehension under tight time limits
- Avoiding assumptions — answers must come *only* from the passage

InMed Tip:

Skim for keywords, not full sentences. Learn to identify where in the passage the answer is found.

Our workshops teach time-efficient reading and elimination techniques.

Decision Making (DM)

Tests: Logical reasoning, evaluating arguments, and interpreting data.

Format: 35 questions in 37 minutes.

What It Looks Like:

You'll solve problems involving charts, text, or logic puzzles.

Question formats vary — from syllogisms and probability to argument evaluation.

Example:

Premise 1: All surgeons are doctors.

Premise 2: Some doctors are researchers.

Question: Which conclusion follows?

Options:

A. All surgeons are researchers

B. Some surgeons are researchers

C. Some doctors are not surgeons

D. None of the above

✅ **Answer:** *C — some doctors are not surgeons.*

Key Challenges:

- Understanding complex information quickly
- Avoiding logical traps and emotional reasoning

InMed Tip:

Learn to diagram logic problems and eliminate incorrect options fast. Decision Making rewards *clear reasoning over guessing*.

Quantitative Reasoning (QR)

Tests: Numerical reasoning and problem-solving using real-world data.

Format: 36 questions in 26 minutes.

What It Looks Like:

Questions involve tables, charts, and word problems. You'll often need to calculate percentages, ratios, or time.

Example:

A clinic has 20 doctors. 40% are part-time. How many are full-time?

✅ **Answer:** *60% of 20 =* **12 full-time doctors***.*

Key Challenges:

- Fast calculations under time pressure
- Interpreting data correctly without overthinking

InMed Tip:

Learn quick percentage and ratio shortcuts, and use the on-screen calculator efficiently. Our UCAT workshops include calculator drills and time-saving numerical strategies.

Situational Judgement (SJT)

Tests: Ethical reasoning, empathy, and understanding professional behaviour.

Format: 69 questions in 26 minutes.

What It Looks Like:

You'll read short scenarios about medical or teamwork situations and judge how appropriate or important certain actions are.

Example:

Scenario: You notice a classmate has copied part of your UCAT preparation notes. What is the most appropriate response?

A. Report them to the university immediately

B. Confront them angrily in front of others

C. Calmly discuss it privately and remind them of academic integrity

D. Ignore it — it's not serious

✅ **Answer:** C — *professional behaviour prioritises calm communication and fairness.*

Key Challenges:

- Understanding the professional values expected of future doctors
- Balancing empathy with responsibility

InMed Tip:

SJT success comes from understanding **medical professionalism**, not personal opinion. We teach frameworks for evaluating each scenario logically and consistently.

Bringing It All Together

Each UCAT subtest demands a unique skill set — and mastering all four takes structured practice. Here's how they fit together:

UCAT Section	Skill Tested	Time Pressure	Primary Focus
Verbal Reasoning	Reading comprehension	High	Speed + accuracy
Decision Making	Logical thinking	Moderate	Reasoned conclusions
Quantitative Reasoning	Numerical reasoning	High	Efficient calculations
Situational Judgement	Ethical awareness	Moderate	Professionalism

How InMed Academy Helps You Master Each Section

At **InMed Academy**, our UCAT workshops break down each section into step-by-step skill-building lessons.

You'll get:

- **Section-specific strategy sessions** for VR, DM, QR, and SJT
- **Exam-style practice question**, via MedEntry, with detailed explanations
- **Timing drills** and performance feedback
- **Mock exams** that simulate the real UCAT experience

Our tutors — all **top 5% UCAT scorers** — teach you exactly how to approach each question type with confidence and efficiency.

Next Steps

1. **Download our "Example UCAT Questions & Answers" guide** to see real test-style problems.
2. **Join an InMed UCAT Workshop** to learn expert strategies for every section.
3. **Start practising early** — skill-based preparation is the key to success.