



Muslim Medical Association of Canada



# Medical School Interviews: A Brief Introduction

2020 Edition

وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

And whoever saves [a life], it is as if he has saved all  
of humanity [5:32]



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# Introduction

*Disclaimer: The following document is meant to serve as a guide for students hoping to enter medical school. Although we have tried to create a comprehensive guide containing admission requirements, this document is not official and is not endorsed by any of the following medical schools, so it is important to conduct your own research. Further, this guide is meant specifically for Canadian students, so the requirements may not hold true for other countries. Lastly, keep in mind that advice provided by applicants are personal and are coming from their point of view, so they may not be the most representative views coming from their colleagues. All university logos, badges and emblems are copyrighted and belong to their respective universities*

## Message from the Editors

Dear Reader,

In keeping with the Muslim Medical Association of Canada's commitment to moral and ethical conduct, no information that may be deemed confidential regarding the interview process at any of the Universities presented can be disclosed. This document is to be used simply as a guide and is a consolidation of information available on the internet, the medical schools themselves, and from previous applicants. We hope you find this guide helpful in your interviews. We look forward to hearing your comments and suggestions for future editions. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the MMAC at [education@muslimmeds.ca](mailto:education@muslimmeds.ca)

Sincerely,

MMAC University Representative Body

## General Advice

Alhamdulillah, you got an interview! This in itself is a great feat and in sha Allah with some hard work and dedication, this may just be the last stage before you becoming a full-fledged medical student! It is a big deal, so start off on the right step. Make dua that Allah puts barakah in your actions! As you approach people for advice regarding interviews you'll receive a variety of

opinions and approaches: reading *Doing Right* by Hébert, reading the bioethics article series by the CMAJ, looking at a mirror and loudly practicing your phonics all while making funny faces... Nevertheless, we would strongly recommend that you contact anyone you know and trust in the medical field for information and advice on what to expect. This document is meant to be an introduction to the interviews – with some general and school-specific information as a preliminary guide. Feel free to contact the university representatives at the email addresses provided regarding your upcoming interviews.

## The Interview Process

In general, the interview process includes an orientation and tour in addition to the interview itself. Some students use the orientation and tour to intimidate other students - stay calm and focused, and do not let this intimidate you. Use this orientation to relax and gather your thoughts. Remember, the mere fact that you were invited for an interview means that they want you as much as you want them. The tour is the university's chance to give you their sales pitch. A medical student or volunteer who has no bearing on any decisions when it comes to admissions usually gives the tour. Feel free to ask any questions and use this time to get a general sense of what the school is about. This will prove useful when it comes time to decide between one or more schools in the future. Be sure to arrive early, and if you live far from the institution you're interviewing at, be sure to arrive the night before. If you know any medical students, you may ask to stay with them as they can usually provide



some good insight as to what it is like to study at this school. It's also a good idea to get to know the city that you are interviewing at, so take this opportunity to have a tour!

## **The Interview**

Here are a few general tips to keep in mind as you prepare for your interview:

### *Know your School*

Research the medical school to which you're applying. It would only make sense that you have a good understanding of the curriculum and program of a school if you plan to attend it for the next 3-4 years of your life. You can do this by accessing the university's medical school website and finding details about the curriculum, strengths, etc. Keep in mind, no one can tell you about the school as much as someone who is currently going there, so do your best to get their advice.

### *Know yourself*

Interviews are a way for interviewers to get to know you. Be yourself, but make sure you know your strengths, weaknesses, and experiences well so that your full potential comes out in the short time that you have to make an impression. Be sure to be concise and organized in your speech because what you say can make a lot more impact in how you say it.

### *Why medicine?*

This is a common question – and understandably so – so be sure to have an idea as to how you would like to approach this. One thing for sure is that if your motivation to go into medicine was kept in mind during the application stage, it can be very easy to formulate it during the interview. If you have the opportunity to write out your motivations formally, be sure

to do so. Try not to sound scripted but make sure you research the things a physician does and what separates medicine from many of the other healthcare fields (i.e. nursing, paramedics, etc).

### *Role playing*

Many interviews will have a question or two in which you have to role play. Be prepared for this and try to be natural. The purpose of these scenarios are simply to see your communication and judgment. Do your best in these and show the interviewers your interpersonal skills.

### *Be punctual*

Make sure to sign in for any interview *at least* 15 minutes earlier than your start time. At many institutions, you will need to complete a coat check before signing in for an interview, so it is important to factor in time for this coat check. It is always safer to come a little early and take a walk around the school than to rush in late for an interview.

### *Be professional*

Be professional in your approach. Dress appropriately in professional attire and make sure you do the little things like sitting straight, making eye contact, and being conscious of any bad habits you may have (biting your lip, twitching your legs, etc). Also answer questions appropriately – make sure you're being yourself, but this may be different from the 'you' that is around your friends.



# Styles of Interviews

## **Multiple Mini Interviews**

The multiple mini-interview (MMI) is a format that assesses an applicant's communication skills when interacting with colleagues and patients. The MMI typically consists of six to ten relatively short timed interviews, each about a specific scenario. Each station assesses a different domain – domains can range from ethics, professionalism, interpersonal relationships, management skills, communication, collaboration or even the ability to perform a task. Stations are typically run simultaneously in a circuit. The timing of these circuits is strict. Students will be warned when they have a certain amount of time left and then again, when their time has ended. Each candidate rotates through the entire circuit of stations. For instance, if there are 9 stations each 8 minutes long, the entire MMI will take 72 minutes to complete.

## **Panel Interviews**

Panel interviews are thought of as a more traditional interview style where the applicant is asked questions by one or more interviewers.

The remaining of this document contains descriptions of the interview process for all the universities in Canada (from east coast to west) and those from abroad. Emails are provided to answer any questions you may have. May Allah bless you in your work!

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## Interview Format

- TaMMI – Traditional interview + MMI
- Traditional Interview
  - 30 minutes long
  - 2 personal panel interview
- MMI
  - 8 stations. 10 minutes per station. 80 minutes total.
  - 1 interviewer/assessor per station

## Interviewers

- Doctors, residents, medical students (any year), scientists, researchers, community members, etc. Honestly, just about anyone can be your interviewers, however, majority have some sort of a medical background.

## Important things that make the school stand out

- MUN Med is VERY focused on rural medicine. Because of the geographic location of Newfoundland, and the hundreds of small towns and communities within Newfoundland, rural medicine is huge here. Know that rural medicine is a big part of Newfoundland and MUN Med, be open (and enthusiastic) about rural medicine, and read up on rural medicine and what the latest challenges/issues are with rural medicine

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- The traditional interview is honestly more informal than you would imagine! The interviewers are, for the vast majority, super nice people who understand this is extremely stressful for you. They will try their best to make you as comfortable as possible. They are truly there to have a chat with you and get to you the type of person you are. Do not overthink and stress yourself out about this part of the interview.

## Typical Interview Day

- In province applicants are typically interviewed in the first half of the day (8AM-1PM), and out-of-province/ International students are interviewed in the second half of the day (1PM-5PM)
- Example of day:
  - Come to MUN and register by 8AM
  - Interviews start around 8:30AM
    - All candidates will be split into two groups. One group (Group A) will start with the Traditional interview (30 minutes), and the other group (Group B) will start with the MMI (80 minutes)
    - Short break
    - Now, Group A will do their MMI, and Group B will do their Traditional interview
    -
- Interviews done between 11:30AM-12:30PM



## Interview Format

- Multiple mini interview (MMI)
  - 10 Stations (2 are rest stations)
  - Interviewee has 2 minutes to read the prompt (shown outside the room) and 8 minutes to respond
  - Typically, the applicant is given a hypothetical scenario (not necessarily relating to medicine) and must use their problem-solving and communication skills to formulate a response

## Types of Questions Asked

- There are many types of questions; ethical questions, critical thinking questions, personal questions, communication focused questions and knowledge of the healthcare system etc. The stations focus on personal qualities, such as problem solving, ability to think on your feet, leadership, empathy, compassion, motivation, critical thinking, awareness of societal health issues, communication skills and ethics.

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Small class size
- Teaching facility is great
- Dalhousie has extensive training sites in the Maritimes allowing for students to get hands on experience in a variety of different settings, including both urban and rural areas. Dalhousie is renowned for its strong rural medical training component.

## Things to prepare before the interview

- Practise responding to typical MMI scenarios with friends. While we emphasize the importance of 'being yourself' for the interview, make sure you get some practise in structuring 6-8 minute-long answers.
- Read up on pertinent healthcare issues in Atlantic Canada (for e.g. indigenous health, opioid crisis, doctor shortages, public vs. private healthcare, etc....). Your knowledge and depth in these topics may be tested in some stations!

## Typical Interview Day

- You will be assigned to a 'track' along with 9 other candidates
- The MMI usually takes place in a hospital setting
- Each candidate will be assigned to a different room, each A buzzer will sound to alert you when your 2 minutes to read the prompt are up and when your discussion time has run out
- There will be many volunteers around your track who can serve you some water and show you where the bathrooms are

## Advice from Successful Applicants

- Get to know what the Maritimes has to offer so that you can incorporate this into your answers and explain what you can gain from studying there.

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## More Advice from Successful Applicants



- Make sure that your personal statement is genuine and gives a sense of who you are as a person. You want to make sure that it is coherent, and that it flows well. Get your statement reviewed by many people who you trust that will give critical feedback.
- Attend the mixers, especially the one the evening before your interview so that you can speak with current students and gain insight into what their experience at Dal Med is like

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## Interview Format

- Mandatory on-site Multiple Mini-Interviews (MMI)
- These mini-interviews consist of multiple stations that can be task-oriented, simulation- or scenario-oriented, or discussion-oriented. Stations are designed to evaluate the various abilities and skills that form the basis of the Physicianship curriculum component (<https://www.mcgill.ca/physicianship/>)
- For the interview typically one of the stations will be CV station, organized like a standard one-on-one panel interview

## Types of Questions Asked

- Tend to ask questions concerning:
  - Ethics
  - Interest in Medicine
  - Personal attributes:
    - Empathy, Compassion, Ability to collaborate with others
  - Problem solving ability
    - One or two stations tend to be more task oriented requiring you to complete a task in a specified time
  - Team work
    - There tends to be a station where you need to cooperate with individuals that are harder to work with due to their attitude or lack of engagement

## Important things that make the school stand out

- First medical school in Canada, and one of the top medical schools in Canada and in the world
- Internationally renowned professors in almost every discipline imaginable
- A number of extracurricular activities and research opportunities available for students
- The school is located in a beautiful bilingual city, giving its students the opportunity to learn a new language.

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- Take a deep breath and relax are the most important things
- The purpose of the interview is to test who you are as a person, and in a sense your entire life has prepared you for this moment. Act genuinely and be YOU. There is nothing more important. If you tried to be someone else or act in a different way other than yourself it will show, and you won't do as well.
- Practice standardized patient interaction scenarios using past MMI questions found online (<https://www.mcgill.ca/medadmissions/applying/selection-process/multiple-mini-interviews>)

## Typical Interview Day

- You arrive at New Residence Hall at the time of the interview. You then sign in at the tables allocated, where you'll be given a badge with a colour and the letter. The colour corresponds to the group with who you will be doing the interviews and the letter corresponds to your order in the line at the beginning of the interview.





- Once you have your badge, you can go sit down with the other candidates. Everyone is nervous about the interview, so do not hesitate to make new friends and to chat to decrease your stress levels. You might end up studying with the people you meet on that day!
- The dean or assistant dean as well as other members of the faculty will introduce themselves a chat bit. There are also current First Year medical students in the room to allow you to ask questions while you wait for the interview. When the faculty members finish their introduction speech, they will invite candidates of the first 2 groups to leave the room (they will mention the groups by their colour). The people that leave will be starting their interview, while the other students left will wait and chat with the other people on their table. There is food and games present while they wait.
- Once the first 2 groups finish their interview, they are escorted to another room where there will be a debriefing. They can mention if there were stations that were unclear or if they had any other questions. In the meantime, the other 2 groups are escorted to the interview rooms.
- When all groups finished their interview, they are then invited to leave.

#### **Advice from Successful Applicants**

- Stay calm and focused. Don't let the stress get to you. Take the time to meet the other candidates in the room with you and bond over your common stress levels. Do not get intimidated by the backgrounds of the other applicants. From the moment you are invited to the interviews, the only thing that counts is how you do at the interview.
- When tackling a situation, it is important to get a clear picture of what is actually happening. Don't jump to fast to fix a problem if you don't have all the details, because you'll only fix what is on the surface. Dig deep and find the root of the problem, which will be the real problem, allowing you to find the proper solution.

## Type d'entrevue

- MEM
  - Stations de type « jeux de rôle » avec des acteurs
  - Stations de type « discussion » avec un évaluateur
  - Stations impliquant un travail d'équipe avec un autre candidat
  - 10 stations
    - 2 minutes pour lire les consignes
    - Par la suite, 7 minutes accordés à la station
  - 1 ou 2 stations de pause selon le circuit assigné

## Types de questions posées

- Stations de type “jeux de rôle”
  - Résolution de conflit
  - Situations éthiques (i.e. contester une autorité)
  - Situations avec de l'empathie (i.e. acteur qui pleure ou qui est fâché)
- Stations de type « discussion »
  - Parle-moi d'un moment que tu as \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. démontré du leadership, échoué, géré un stress, etc)
- Stations impliquant un travail d'équipe
  - Avec un autre candidat, vous aurez une tâche à compléter ensemble (i.e. analyser un document et expliquer vos conclusions aux évaluateurs).

## Choses que j'aimerais savoir avant mon entrevue

- Il y a des scénarios en équipe avec un autre candidat, donc de s'y attendre.
- Les évaluateurs ne te connaissent absolument pas. Ils peuvent vous demander des questions assez précises quant à vos expériences personnelles. Donc, c'est le moment pour vous démarquer.

## Journée d'entrevue: un horaire typique

- Il est important d'arriver au moins 30 minutes à l'avance
  - Vous allez recevoir une étiquette avec votre nom et votre circuit.
  - Vous allez signer des documents de confidentialité.
  - Vous allez laisser vos effets personnels (i.e. cellulaire, sacs, etc).
- Ils fournissent des collations et des boissons. Allez aux toilettes avant de débiter.
- Vous allez recevoir des informations et des instructions sur le déroulement des entrevues
- Selon votre circuit, vous êtes dirigés en petits groupes pour débiter les entrevues. Il y a un certain temps d'attente avant de commencer.
- L'entrevue dure en moyenne 1h-1h30



- Suite à vos entrevues, vous êtes redirigés à une autre salle pour éviter de croiser les candidats qui attendent leur tour.
  - Ils fournissent un repas et habituellement, les étudiants apprennent à se connaître en jouant à des jeux de sociétés. En aucun cas, vous ne pouvez pas discuter de l'entrevue.
  - Le temps d'attente est très variable

#### **Avis de candidats retenus**

- Il est important de pratiquer le format des entrevues quelques fois avant jour J. Par contre, il ne faut pas pratiquer au point de devenir un robot
  - Si vous cherchez à pratiquer avec des gens, il y a des groupes qui se forment à partir du mois de janvier sur facebook. Restez à l'affût !
- Les entrevues sont en français. Il est important de pratiquer le plus que vous pouvez en français! Si vous oubliez un mot, ce n'est pas la fin du monde si vous le dites en anglais.
- Pour les discussions personnelles
  - Donnez des exemples concrets et dites ce dont vous avez appris de vos expériences
  - Soyez flexible, apprenez à faire des compromis mais n'oubliez pas l'aspect éthique
- **Ne stressez pas. Ne stressez pas. Ne stressez pas.**
  - Si vous pensez que vous avez mal faites une station, cela n'affectera pas l'évaluation des autres stations. Les évaluateurs changent à chaque station

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uOttawa

## Interview Format

- Traditional panel interview consisting of three interviewers (Faculty, Community member, and Fourth Year Medical Student)
  - 40 minutes in length, can be English or French (depending on which stream you have applied for)

## Types of Questions Asked

- Five themes of questions:
  - Tell me about yourself/why medicine/why uOttawa. Essentially -- Who are you, and why are you here. You should have these questions prepared and be confident in your responses
  - ABS specific questions – i.e. tell me about Activity X, or how did you develop as a person because of Activity Y.
    - Often ask you to explain 1 of your research projects to them in basic terms
  - Ethical scenarios – if you understand the 4 principles of medical ethics, you should be able to reason out any ethical scenario.
  - Situational/behaviour questions – i.e. tell me about a time when you were in a team and faced a conflict – how did you solve it. Look up the STAR method to answering this type of question.
    - Time management and conflict resolution questions/answers are very high yield
  - Random questions – you may get a couple of these. Practice answering random questions spontaneously and this will give you confidence.

## Important things that make the school stand out

- There are three panelists. Respect all of them. When one interviewer asks you a question, focus your response to them, but also make eye contact with the other panelists.
- A panelist may act like you are boring or that your answers are nonsensical. Don't let this faze you – maintain focus and trust your preparation.
- The interview is conversational in nature. Be prepared and know your stuff, but don't be too serious. Of course, that was my experience, and it may be different for you.
- Also, since the interview is conversational, limit your answers to 2-3 minutes. Don't dominate the conversation – yes, you are the subject of the interview, but allow the interviewers a chance to speak as well. If they want more detail about a certain thing you said, they will prompt you, just like one would in a normal conversation.
- Come prepared with several questions to ask of the panel. This isn't a time to slack off. Research the med school and ask specific questions that show you actually looked into Ottawa's program.
  - I would hesitate to ask questions regarding residency matching (etc - what % of your class matches into X speciality is not a good question to ask in my opinion)

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- Even though this is one of the most (if not the most) important days of your life, I would try to keep it as conversational as possible. They want you as much as you want them. So smile, laugh, and tell them why you deserve to be a uOttawa medical student.



- Prior to being called in for the interview, you will sit around with other applicants (many of whom will have multiple interview offers and they will TALK about these other interview offers), but don't let this distract you.

### **Typical Interview Day**

- You are expected to arrive an hour or so before your interview, to register and meet other applicants. Take the time to actually talk to other students, this will relieve nervousness and pre-interview jitters. You can also take a tour before or after your interview. The entirety of your time at the Faculty is considered 'official interview time', so be respectful and courteous with everyone, just like you (hopefully) would be on an ordinary day.
- Step by step interview routine: After registering, you will sit at a table with a fourth year medical student, and other applicants (some of whom have already interviewed, and others that are still waiting). You will then be called to sit another table where you will be seated with only other applicants who have not interviewed. From there, your interviewer will come get you personally and escort you to your interview room.

### **Advice from Successful Applicants**

- When people tell you to 'just be yourself' in response to how best to prepare for a med school interview, smile, nod gracefully, and pay no heed. If you are lucky enough to receive an interview, you need to prepare for it as though it is the single most important academic-related occurrence during the month or two of time that you have between your offer and your interview date. You don't want to 'just be yourself' -- you just want to be the "best" version of yourself – you owe that much to yourself after all this hard work.
- Prepare all the standard questions – write out the major points to be covered. You should know the exact points you will hit upon when asked why medicine for example, although you don't need to and shouldn't memorize word-for-word (it will just trip you up if you forget). And the only way to know if you have prepared these is through practice. Practise everyday for an hour or so – force yourself to sit across from somebody who will ask you sample questions that you should then respond as though you are in the real thing (i.e. keep going even if you mess up or forget your points or start stammering). This is the only way you will become comfortable with yourself. Also get your partner to ask you off-the-wall/random questions that you can in no way prepare for – this will boost your confidence in answering a spontaneous question coherently. If you have practised consistently for several weeks, you will notice that you feel more confident and thoughtful when you respond to a question
- Marks don't really matter at this point once you get an interview offer, everyone is on a even playing field, and whether you get in or not depends almost entirely on your interview (in my opinion).
- Have stories/examples/scenarios regarding: Time management, conflict resolution, and CanMED roles ready to go (using STAR method)
- I would highly recommend reading medical journal articles to support some of your answers and bringing this up in your interviews as it shows you are a intellectually curious person who does their research to support their points of view.

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## Interview Format

- Those invited for an interview will be asked to select an interview date and time through an online booking system.
- The interview consists of an MMI section and a panel interview section.
- During the MMI, there are several different stations. You have 2 minutes to review the prompt and a voice will notify you when to enter the room. You have 8 minutes to provide your answer and you will be evaluated by different people in each station. There will be a chime at the 7-minute mark to indicate that the station is coming to a close, and you will be notified at the 8 minute mark to move to the next station.
- Following the MMI, you will be taken to the Panel Interview section where you will have the opportunity to speak about yourself and ask any questions.

## Interviewers

- Two interviewers at each MMI station and two interviewers in the panel
- Second-year MD students and faculty are the interviewers

## Types of Questions Asked

- The MMI stations are variable and can cover absolutely anything, including topics on healthcare, current events, ethics, problem-solving and more. Depending on the station, be prepared for the unexpected and to analyze, reason, and provide an opinion.
- The panel interview consists mostly of personal questions and an opportunity to give your interviewers a sense of who you are. It is similar to what you might expect at any panel interview.

## Important things that make the school stand out

- First medical school in Canada, and one of the top medical schools in Canada and in the world
- Internationally renowned professors in almost every discipline imaginable
- A number of extracurricular activities and research opportunities available for students

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- There are lots of opportunities to set up observerships in different specialties and to seek guidance from various mentors that are senior medical students, residents or faculty.
- Queen's Medicine boasts one of the highest residency matching rates.
- Queen's Medicine does not publicize the types of applicants they accept, but as with other schools, applicants are generally well-rounded with broad interests and experiences.

## Typical Interview Day

- Coat check in (20 minutes before slotted interview time) – Make sure to come in at least 15 minutes before your slotted interview time. The coat check-in is not at the same location as check-in so be sure to factor in time for coat check-in, 20 minutes is recommended at minimum
- MMI Interview
- Panel Interview



### **Advice from Successful Applicants**

Congratulations on making it this far in the application process, getting an interview invitation is a tremendous accomplishment! Here are a few pieces of advice:

1. Plan your interview day beforehand. Know the hotel/accommodation you will be staying at the night before the interview, and the route to the medical building.
2. Eat a decent breakfast on the day of and arrive at least 20-30 min before your interview time.
3. Read up on current healthcare topics relevant to the Canadian healthcare system. It's good to have an awareness of the field you are getting into.
4. Know your ABS cold, and the relevance of each item that you've written.
5. DO NOT freak out if you think you messed up an interview station. The MMI format is purposely designed so that one station's outcome does not influence that of another. We are usually more self-critical of ourselves so you might have done better than you thought.

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## Interview Format

- Modified Personal Interview (MPW) – four successive but brief interviews, each with an individual interviewer
- Some parts will be open file. Others will not, though it will be clear to you when it is. The total interview time with breaks inserted between each interview will be approximately one hour.
- Note that it is not an MMI. Though there are four separate small interviews, there are no prompts on the doors and no actors or role play.
- There is a fair amount of literature in the public domain on the U of T MPI - we encourage you to seek this literature out and read it - it will help you prepare. This is also true for other medical school interviews. There is a fair amount of research and evidence behind these interviews and some of it is available simply by searching on Google

## Interviewers

- Fourth-year medical students, residents and physicians

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Anatomy labs
- Different styles of teaching (lectures, case-based learning, online self learning modules)
- Opportunities for research (i.e. longitudinal and summer CREMS, international CREMS)
- Easy access to several hospitals in the downtown core and research opportunities

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- Bring a change of shoes for the campus tour as you will not want to ruin your formals if it's raining/snowing. Best to bring outdoor comfortable and indoor formal shoes (esp. for females), note that the campus/hospital tours aren't mandatory if you want to take a moment to yourself prior to the interview
- Student guides and interviewers are very friendly - don't hesitate to ask questions
- Everyone is nervous on interview day – don't feel intimidated and do what you think it is that you need to make yourself calm and confident

## Typical Interview Day

- Arrival at interview location (downtown Toronto), check in with ID, interview orientation explaining how the day will proceed
- Split into three groups with different interview times (earlier interview times have interview first followed by campus tour while later interview candidates have the opposite)
- Information session on finances and financial aid before or after your interview, depending on your interview time



## Interview Format

- MMI
  - Be prepared for scenarios that will test: ethical decision making, critical thinking, problem solving and conflict management, communication skills (involving a certain degree of acting at times), and knowledge of current healthcare and societal issues. You are also likely to encounter one or more stations that ask standard, personal interview questions. Think of it as CASPer, but in real life
  - 12 stations. 10 of which are actual stations and 2 of which are break stations. The order in which each candidate experiences a station or a break is dependent on which station the candidate starts
  - Each station is a total of 10 minutes with the non-Break stations giving you roughly 2 minutes to read the passage and 8 minutes to walk in and deliver your talk. The next station timer begins immediately after the preceding one so in reality, you have less than 2 minutes to comfortably read the question without cutting into station speaking time.

## Interviewers

- There is usually only one interviewer in the room but there can be more depending on the scenario being presented.
- The interviewers can come from various walks – ranging from medical students, residents, physicians and non-medical professionals

## Types of questions asked

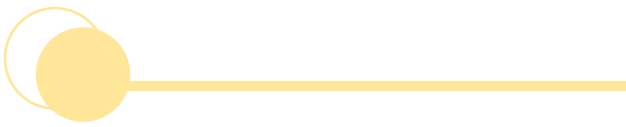
- The scenarios (not always questions) can be from a multitude of angles and are virtually unpredictable. However the following link has a huge list of good practice ones:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6Xt-tlSCG13ek1JZUZkcG5RMjg/edit>

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Problem-based learning – practical learning is emphasized and gives you the opportunity to learn by thinking about cases and learning practically. It also encourages an independent learning style in which you set your goals and figure out how to best achieve them according to your convenience and schedule.
- Early clinical exposure – having electives in your first year allows you to get early exposure to the clinical side of medicine in whatever field you have an interest in. This can make things easier when it comes to choosing a specialty.
- 3-year program – this allows you to get into residency one year earlier than almost all other schools, with the exception being the University of Calgary. This also means a significant saving on total tuition costs over the duration of the program

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- There is no timer at the stations! Only buzzers for two minute and ten-minute warnings. So, either practice timing or practice with a watch which you bring on interview day. If the latter, make sure you are able to discreetly eye the watch while interviewing. Also, it is better to



inquire about the policy on watches in the coming years since it is unknown how the advent of smartwatches will impact policy.

- As aforementioned, the two minutes to read the prompt for the station are often less than two minutes due to the fact that it takes time to exit the preceding station and begin at the next.
- On a positive note, there is plenty of time to cool down and relax before beginning to interview as is described below. In other words, you are not thrust into the interviews right after arrival.
- Remember, each mini-interview is independent of the last and that means you have a fresh chance to impress your interviewer – if you have a bad station then forget it and move on. This is crucial – refresh at every scenario.

### **Typical Interview Day**

- Arrival, then sign-in as they arrange you into your interview groups.
- Some time to kill with your student volunteer/representative as a group and ask them questions while people arrive and are getting arranged. Breakfast food is laid out for interviewees.
- A presentation welcoming the interviewees.
- Interview groups head off to their MMI areas.
- MMI takes place.
- Post-MMI Presentation about McMaster and what it has to offer.
- Optional campus tours after the presentation.
- Relief!

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## Interview Format

- Standardized, traditional panel format
- The interview typically runs for 45 minutes
- Objective marked answers (some questions have right answers)

## Interviewers

- Current medical students, residents, professors and other members of the community

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Western really does care about the student. A lot is invested by administration to ensure that students have the best medical undergraduate education and experience. The curriculum is molded by student input so that future students are taught in a more understandable way.
- Western has a Windsor campus allowing students to choose where they would like to learn. Though the campuses are separate Western does a great job of making the students on each campus feel connected. During lectures London and Windsor students are video conferenced in.
- Western has many extracurricular programs such as Discovery Week. Students here get to shadow a family physician in different places in Southwestern Ontario. Furthermore, Schulich has many different clubs that make one's medical school experience even more exciting.

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- The interview is closed file, meaning that the interviewers have no prior knowledge of your academic and extracurricular experiences. You must describe some of your most important experiences to the interviewers. I wish I spent more time making sure that I was well-versed with my experiences and was able to describe them more succinctly.
- How your interview feels has no correlation with how it went

## Typical Interview Day

- Walk in, people clap
- Go to registration
- Sit in room and wait for your interview
- Go to interview
- Kill the interview
- Go home
- Mission accomplished

## Advice from Successful Applicants

- 2019 interview had a lot of questions that would have been difficult without knowledge of the healthcare system (brush up on issues in the Canadian healthcare system and how our system works in general i.e., lack of rural doctors, indigenous health, MAID, long ER wait times, limited resources in Canadian health care)

# NORTHERN ONTARIO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

To contact students at NOSM, please e-mail [networking@muslimmeds.ca](mailto:networking@muslimmeds.ca)

## Interview Format

- MMI format

## Important things that make the school stand out

- The school has a heavy focus on rural medicine and just about all students admitted to the school come from rural backgrounds
- Very small class size (64)
- It is one of the few medical schools that was established specifically to tackle the physician distribution problem in Canada, with peer-reviewed articles showing the positive effect this has created in rural communities
- Across the region, NOSM learners (medical students, residents, and learners from other health disciplines such as rehabilitation sciences, dietetics, and physician assistants), are gaining relevant clinical experience under the guidance of health professionals in community hospitals, clinics, and family practices. The School brings together over 70 community partners, over 1000 clinical, human, and medical sciences stipendiary faculty, and more than 200 employees



Northern Ontario  
School of Medicine

## Useful Links

- Admissions Website: <https://www.nosm.ca/education/md-program/admissions/>
- OMSAS guide. MUST READ! <https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/omsas-guide/>

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## Interview Format

- MMIs
- 12 MMI stations with no acting scenarios (one rest station)
  - A passing mark on 9 of 11 MMI stations and a total MMI score greater than two standard deviations below the mean and a mean score acceptable to the Admissions committee is required for entry

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Interviewers are looking for applicants who:
  - Show a high level of professionalism and MATURITY
  - Show that you are a down to earth and relatable person
  - Show a level of depth, intelligence and sophistication in your answers
  - Show passion and love of humanity
  - Show that you have really done your research and contemplated why medicine is right for you
  - Show that you are a good perspective taker
  - Show that you are well rounded and live a balanced lifestyle
  - Show that you understand and can relate to the CANMED ROLE

## Typical Interview Day

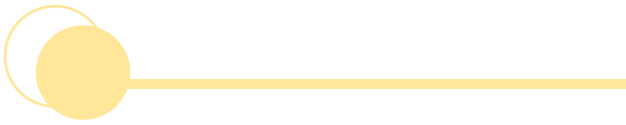
- Breakfast or lunch with the first-year medical students
- Tour of the campus
- Tour of the hospital
- MMI interview

## Useful Links

- [https://umanitoba.ca/student/admissions/media/medicine\\_bulletin.pdf](https://umanitoba.ca/student/admissions/media/medicine_bulletin.pdf)

## Advice from Successful Applicants

- Try your best not to be overwhelmed by the interview. Interviewers are simply looking to have a conversation with you. My advice to you every interviewee is go in there and have as much fun as you can.
- I've taken the interview at the U of M twice and there were some major differences between what I did in my first unsuccessful interview and my second successful one – here is what I learned
  1. Never too early to start prepping – I started light prepping in August and started an MMI prep group in October. Steadily increased my prep time as I approached interview day
  2. Very important to know what topics your particular school of choice cares about as they will be the topics they ask you about on the interview (Canada wide and region specific health care issues, rural medicine, Indigenous issues, Research, and Recreational Drugs are all big ticket items at the U of M)



3. Also know what types of stations your school will have – U of M leans more heavily to practical topics (like the ones listed above) and personal questions over theoretical scenarios or ethics questions
  4. Know yourself, find a way to add something personal to each question (makes you human and relatable to the interviewer, not to mention helps you stand out!)
  5. Also find a way to relate the questions/prompts to health care or your role as a future health care professional in one way or another
  6. Finally, all the interviewers are just regular people, so go in there, act like you're talking to an old friend (relax, have fun) and you will give off a great impression and do well inshaAllah
- May Allah make it easy on you! Keep us in your duaas. We are more than happy to help feel free to email iA. Best of luck!

To contact students at the University of Saskatchewan, email [networking@muslimmeds.ca](mailto:networking@muslimmeds.ca)



## Interview Format

- MMI Format
  - 10 Stations (10 minutes each) and 1-2 rest stations (10 minutes)
  - Break Down:
    - 2 Minutes: Reading of the prompt.
    - 8 Minutes: Interview session with 1 minute warning after 9 minutes elapsed.

## Types of Questions Asked

- There are different types of scenarios. There are usually 1-2 acting stations that will involve an actor and a separate examiner (who is marking your performance-communication skills are tested here).
- There are straight forwards ethical/social issue questions as well. Some are interactive, such as impromptu art displays. This year there was a writing station.
- The College of Medicine posts more information regarding the MMI content on their website. Be sure to review what they are looking for in the 10 stations!

## Interviewers

- Doctors, faculty members, residents, students and other volunteers from the community at large

## Important things that make the school stand out

- USask will always dedicate a station regarding Aboriginal Health, which is very prevalent in Saskatchewan. It's a good idea to bring it up in other stations as well.

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- Be your professional self. If you think you bombed a station, just forget about it and move on. You likely did better than you thought!

## Typical Interview Day

- Students will check in all their belongings and register at the Royal University Hospital. All interviewees are separated in different groups. Each group will be part of one MMI track. You'll hear some speeches from faculty and staff and will be guided by upper-year medical students. They are usually quite friendly, so be sure to ask questions should you have any!
- The MMI is fairly standard and takes place in different wards around the hospital. There is a mandatory post-MMI information session that includes information about the College and a Q &A with the head of admissions.

## Useful Links

- <https://medicine.usask.ca/admission-to-the-md-program/how-to-apply.php#MultipleMiniInterview>

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UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

## Interview Format

- MMI + traditional interview panel
- 12 MMI stations with ½ page prompts posted outside the door
- 2 minutes to read the prompt and prepare, and 7 minutes to interact with the interviewer

## Interviewers

- Current medical students, resident doctors, professors and other community members

## Types of Questions Asked

- Questions will test the applicant's ability to show: empathy, integrity, altruism, and compassion (see the questions in the sample link below)

## Important things that make the school stand out

- An ability to communicate maturely will allow the candidates to stand out. Effective communication skills, empathy, and the exhibition of Can Med competencies are of the highest importance in responding to the scenarios.

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

- Bring a change of shoes for the campus tour as you will not want to ruin your formals if it's raining/snowing
- Candidates are not allowed to use the washrooms once the MMIs begin. It can be a really enjoyable experience if you are able to immerse yourself in the scenario

## Typical Interview Day

- ½ hour introduction by Dr. Walker where candidates arrive and settle down
- 2 hours of interviewing
- ½ hour of snack breaks
- 1 hour introduction by current students, faculty, and staff
- ½ hour optional tour of the school

## Advice from Successful Applicant

- For preparation, practicing many MMI questions and typical job interview questions is important

## Useful Links

- UofC MMI Information: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/mdprogram/admissions/mmi-information>
- UofC sample MMIs: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/mdprogram/files/mdprogram/2008\\_09-mmi-cases.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/mdprogram/files/mdprogram/2008_09-mmi-cases.pdf)
- UofC sample MMI video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOVbDD9INjE>



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## Interview Format

- The interview process at the University of Alberta consists of one panel interview (20 minutes in length) and 6 MMI stations (10 minutes each) during an 80-minute interview process. The panel will be conducted by 2-3 interviewers; MMI stations will be conducted by one interviewer.
- MMI and Panel (since 2018)
- 6 MMI stations and one panel station each applicant is given a score between 1 and 7
- Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) stations have been used as part of the University of Alberta (UofA) MD Program interview process since 2008. It has been shown to be both reliable and valid for measuring the non-cognitive traits of candidates. At these stations there will be a question attached to the door of a small room; there is also a copy of the question inside the room for you to refer to. The candidate will be allowed 2 minutes to read the question after which time they will be prompted to enter the room. The candidate will then be allowed 8 minutes to answer the question. You will be notified when there is one-minute remaining and then again when the station has finished. This prompt is also an indication that the next station has started and therefore the candidate must quickly move to the next station. This sequence will continue for all stations, including the panel station. There will be additional prompts to guide candidates in and out of the panel stations.

## Interviewers

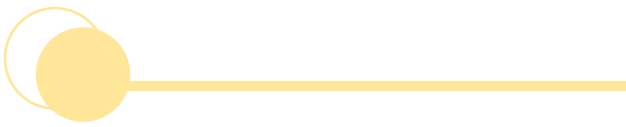
- Second year MD students, residents, attendings, basic science faculty and members of the general public

## Types of Questions Asked

- Usually scenario based MMI questions (what would you do? How would you handle this?).
- Panel station is usually about why medicine, tell me about yourself, or some type of a personal question (overcoming challenges, facing adversity, etc)
- Usually one question on aboriginal issues, LGBTQ, refugee health, etc
- Usually one question on the health care system (rural, remote and northern medicine)
- Usually one question on creativity (drawings, making up stories, etc.)
- The questions are designed to evaluate the candidates' competencies in areas such as:
  - critical thinking
  - ethical decision making
  - communication skills
  - cultural awareness
  - professionalism
  - general knowledge of the healthcare system

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Curriculum that adapts to the changing needs of the local community. Pre-clerkship curriculum is broken down into blocks (Infection, Endocrine, Cardio, Respiratory, Renal, etc) with emphasis on integration of concepts throughout the two years



- Traditional lecture and exam format where all of the testing material comes from the lectures
- Academically

#### **Things I wish I had known before the interview**

- UofA is more or less a very traditional MMI approach so make sure to practice your approach and delivering a succinct and logical answer in the allotted time
- The biggest difference between a great answer and an average answer is how organized your answer is so make sure to practice
- Panel interview is your chance to show what makes you unique so make sure you really reflect on what makes you stand out as an applicant and be ready to talk about anything you may have written in your application

#### **Typical Interview Day**

- You're placed in groups of eight and seated in a large hall where they give you a short talk on the MMI process. Then 1st year students will take you to MMI area. After the MMI you will come back together to watch the MMI video and current students and faculty will tell you more about the school

#### **Advice from Successful Applicant**

- Get a good nights sleep, relax, smile and be friendly.
- Do not worry if you mess up a station. Most people who get in typically say they felt awful about at least one station. Most scores tend to hover around the average score so even if you think you messed a station up, chances are you probably still didn't do too poorly.
- Have a broad knowledge and show enthusiasm for the topics being discussed, these are usually issues that there is no right answer for but the MMI is designed to evaluate how you think and communicate.
- Have fun! You deserve to be here if you have gotten this far so be confident 😊

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## Interview Format

- MMI
- 11 stations
- 7 minutes per station, with 2 minutes of transition period
- One 30 minute writing station

## Interviewers

- Third & Fourth-year medical students, residents and physicians, members of the community.

## Important things that make the school stand out

- Anatomy labs
- Different styles of teaching (lectures, problem-based learning, case-based learning)
- Opportunities for research.
- Easy access to several hospitals in the downtown.
- Distributed medical program – has several sites (Northern, Kelowna, Victoria), allows for more intimate styles of learning and also rural opportunities.

## Things I wish I had known before the interview

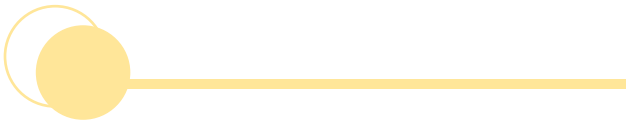
- Bring a change of shoes for the campus tour as you will not want to ruin your formals if it's raining/snowing
- Student guides and interviewers are very friendly - don't hesitate to ask questions
- You may carry a water bottle
- You are not allowed a watch

## Typical Interview Day

- Arrival at interview location (Life science center) check in with ID Interview orientation explaining how the day will proceed
- Split into groups with different interview times (earlier interview times have interview first followed by campus tour while later interview candidates have the opposite)
- Group chat with one of the admissions deans at UBC before the interview.
- Tour of UBC campus

## Advice from Successful Applicant

- For the UBC interview, it is an MMI style of interview. There will be 11 stations with each station being 7 minutes in duration with a 2 minute transition period. There is also a 30 minute writing station at the end. The MMI and writing station will take approximately 2.5 hours. For the interview, I would suggest being as natural as possible. Do not come to the interview with memorized answers or a formula for how you are going to answer each question. I personally



believe that this comes across as robotic and I do not believe this is something that will make you stand out amongst other applicants.

- As UBC has stated, the interview is more designed to make you think on your feet and assessing how you communicate. You are expected to have a basic understanding of the health care system, contemporary issues, and knowledge about a career in medicine.
- There are many sample interview questions online that can be searched. I would advise printing these out and practicing them with friends and family. Make sure that you are practicing these questions with the actual time limits. This is because in the real interview there will be no clocks and you are not allowed to have a watch, so it is important to get a sense of how long 7 minutes feels like.
- When I prepared for my interview I read “Doing Right” which is a Canadian medical ethics book. There are also many other MMI prep books that you may want to take a look at online.