



## UKCAT Candidate Survey 2009

In December 2009 UKCAT candidates were requested to complete a questionnaire regarding the test. 4620 candidates responded out of a total of 23,721 who registered and took the test (19.5% response rate). The more significant outcomes are summarised here.

- Whilst the majority of candidates consider the test to be 'useful', candidates remain unconvinced it tests the right attributes to become a good medical/dental student or a doctor/dentist. Candidates consider the test to be a hard one. Candidates agree that Consortium members should provide more information about how the test is used.
- Disappointingly, 40% candidates felt their school/college was not well informed about the test. Only 34% of candidates reported they found out about the test from these sources.
- Candidates find the website helpful. Better links through to the bursary section of the site are needed. Candidates requested an increase in the number of practice questions, for the practice tests to be marked on line, details regarding how the test is marked and tips about taking the test to help their preparation.
- Candidates felt that the on-line tests were useful. A quarter had attended medlink (or equivalent) but had not thought it helpful with regards to UKCAT. The most popular source of preparation was books – with three quarters having purchased/had access to them and most finding them useful. Specific preparation courses are thought useful though relatively small numbers of candidates have attended them. 40% candidates were not aware that UKCAT does not endorse commercially available training materials.
- Only 4% candidates were negative regarding their experience when booking into the test centre. A small minority of candidates who reported faulty or missing equipment.
- 90% of candidates were happy with their testing environment. The most significant comment made by those with concerns was regarding disturbance from other candidates.
- A significant number seek help during testing and many reported waiting for assistance.

### Actions taken in response to the survey:

- ❖ UKCAT continues to work with Consortium members to ensure that sufficient information is provided to candidates regarding their use of the test.
- ❖ Communication links through to schools/colleges are under review.
- ❖ The website contains a specific Bursary section linked directly from the front page.
- ❖ An additional fully timed practice test has been provided with the ability to mark on line.
- ❖ A Hints and Tips section has been introduced to the website.
- ❖ UKCAT is continuing to discuss with Pearson Vue how we ensure that equipment provided to candidates is suitable, disturbance from other test candidates is minimised and that candidate problems during testing are dealt with promptly.