



30 September 2022

John Yang

By email: fyi-request-20458-8bf26052@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear John

I refer to your information request dated 3 September 2022 made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You have requested information in relation to UCAT thresholds for entry to the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB) programme at the University of Otago.

Please see our responses to each of your questions below.

- 1. The rationale behind only setting UCAT thresholds for Verbal Reasoning and Situational Judgement for each of the admission years 2019, 2020 and 2021.**
- 2. The reason(s) as to why UCAT thresholds were not set for the Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning sections of the UCAT for each of the admission years 2019, 2020 and 2021.**

UCAT thresholds for entry to the MB ChB programme are set and reviewed annually by the Medical Admissions Committee. The decision to set thresholds in the Verbal Reasoning and Situational Judgement sections, and not to consider thresholds in the remaining sections (Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning), has been made in previous years as the Verbal Reasoning and Situational Judgement sections were the two sections that most closely corresponded to similar sections in the UMAT test. UCAT replaced UMAT in 2019, so these decisions have been made in the interests of continuity.

- 3. The reason(s) as to why the University of Otago sets the UCAT thresholds 'conservatively' rather than 'competitively' (i.e. more people are able to satisfy the threshold requirement than not) over the last three admission years 2019, 2020 and 2021.**
- 4. Given that UCAT is a test that is specifically designed to help select applicants with the most appropriate abilities and professional behaviours required for new doctors, why does the University of Otago continue to use the UCAT generously. That is, the rather low UCAT thresholds in the previous admission years question the necessity of using UCAT for the MB ChB programme in the first place.**

The Medical Admissions Committee prefers to use UCAT conservatively as it is a relatively new test in our context and our evaluation of it is still evolving.

As mentioned above, the Medical Admissions Committee reviews the UCAT thresholds and how UCAT will be used each year, and considers any new emerging evidence of its effectiveness in Medical student selection in that year, for setting these thresholds.

I trust that this information will be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelsey Kennard', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelsey Kennard
Official Information and Compliance Coordinator
Office of the Registrar