

26 August 2024

By email: fyi-request-27755-78c35fa2@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe TK,

I refer to your information request dated 22 July 2024 made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You have requested the information in relation to the 2024 Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB programme) via the Health Sciences First Year (HSFY) category, offered by the University of Otago:

Please see below our responses to each of your questions.

1. The final threshold percentiles and minimum scaled scores for all five subtests (Verbal Reasoning, Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning, Abstract Reasoning, Situational Judgement) and the total score (1200-3600).

The MB ChB UCAT criteria is set annually by the University's Medical Admissions Committee. Applicants must have a UCAT result obtained in the year of application in all five domains, and have achieved scores at the threshold level determined annually by the Committee. The UCAT thresholds for entry to the 2024 MB ChB programme were as follows:

- Verbal reasoning: 20th percentile or higher
- Situational judgement: 10th percentile or higher
- Scores for Decision Making, Quantitative Reasoning and Abstract Reasoning were not considered.

In relation to your request for specific "total scores", we note that individual UCAT scores are not part of the selection process for entry to the MB ChB programme. Instead, the minimum UCAT requirement to receive an offer to enter the MB ChB programme is by meeting the threshold set by the Medical Admissions Committee. Anyone who has received an offer to enter the MB ChB has met the minimum UCAT thresholds, as well as all other eligibility requirements.

2. Information on exemptions made for individual candidates not reaching the threshold, such as the number of exemptions granted, if applicable.

Domestic applicants across all categories for MB ChB (except the Alternative category), must have a valid UCAT score. However, the Medical Admissions Committee may, from time to time, decide not to apply the UCAT thresholds to specific categories. For example, for entry to MB ChB in 2024, the thresholds were only applied to applicants applying via the General category and Rural equity group for Health Sciences First Year and Graduate category applicants.

No exemptions are made for individual UCAT scores as applicants must meet the thresholds in order to be considered for admission where the thresholds are applied. The thresholds are considered to be strict, therefore candidates missing the set thresholds are declined entry to the MB ChB programme.

3. Information on exemptions made for entire subcategories (pathways), if applicable.

As noted above, no exemptions are made for individual UCAT scores as applicants must meet the thresholds in order to be considered for admission where the thresholds are applied. Applicants who do not meet the required UCAT thresholds are ineligible for entry to the MB ChB programme.

4. The number of individuals whose MBChB application was preliminarily rejected due to not meeting the UCAT threshold.

Applicant eligibility for the MB ChB programme under both the UCAT thresholds and HSFY academic requirements is automatically checked in eVision (the University's student management system) at the same time once applications have closed. If an applicant is not eligible (i.e., they do not meet the UCAT thresholds, or the HSFY academic requirements, or both), the reason for this is not specifically recorded. Therefore, the University does not hold separate information on "the number of individuals whose MB CHB application was preliminary rejected due to not meeting the UCAT threshold". However, we are able to provide you with information on the total number of applicants to the 2024 MB ChB programme via the HSFY category, broken down by equity group, who failed to meet the UCAT or HSFY requirements, or both:

2024 MB ChB programme		Number of applicants who failed to meet UCAT and/or HSFY requirements
HSFY	General	72
	Māori	<5
	Pacific	6
	Socioeconomic	<5
	Refugee	<5
	Rural	<5

I trust that this information will be helpful.

If you are not satisfied with our response to your information request, section 28(3) of the Act provides you with the right to ask an Ombudsman to investigate and review this response. However, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss any concerns with you first.

Ngā mihi



Jo Pearson
Official Information Act Administrator
Office of the Registrar