

Admissions to CU Medicine

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I. General information

These notes are based on the results of admissions in previous years, and only provide a guide to the expected admission criteria and results in 2017.

For 2017, the intake quota is 235 students. This includes the Joint University Programmes Admission System (JUPAS) for local Hong Kong resident students studying for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE), and other Hong Kong residents under the non-JUPAS process that is administered by the University. Non-resident international students are not eligible apart from a few students from China under a specific Mainland scheme. A Global-Physician-Leadership Stream (GPS) is offered to top students.

All students are initially selected for interview based on their academic results. The decision to offer an applicant a place in Medicine is based mainly on academic results and assessment at the interview, but all information provided by the candidate will be considered. Interviews are offered to three times as many applicants as there are places available. Multiple interview sessions are held from April to August 2017.

JUPAS applications are made through the JUPAS office <http://www.jupas.edu.hk/en> and applicants' schools.

Non-JUPAS applications are made through the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid (OAFA) <http://www.oafa.cuhk.edu.hk/>. Please visit the OAFA website for more details of the admissions process at CUHK for all students.

Historical notes

Up to 2012, our professional Medicine programme approved and accredited by the Medical Council of Hong Kong (MCHK) was a 5-year curriculum, comprising mostly courses in medical subjects, and some courses in University general education, College general education, Chinese and English language, and physical education. Under the “334 scheme” reform, the Education Bureau required degree programmes to be extended by one year to provide more general all-round education. Consequently, the extra courses were not meant to be

additional focused work in the major subject of the degree, (ie not more medical courses for Medicine), but courses in other subjects or University-wide broad based courses that would provide more flexible all-round learning opportunities for students. The new 6-year Medicine programme starting in 2012 was structured as the previous 5-year programme, now taught in years 2-6, preceded by one year of non-medical courses such as Core University courses (University general education, College general education, Chinese and English language, information technology and physical education) and introductory biomedical science courses. The new 6-year programme was approved and accredited by the MCHK in 2013.

With the old 5-year curriculum, students were admitted to Year 1 whether they were JUPAS Form 7 students, JUPAS Form 6 students under the Early Admissions Scheme, or non-JUPAS students with varying qualifications. With the new 6-year curriculum, there are opportunities for more flexible study programmes because the University recognizes that some students already have some of the all-round education and experience that the extra first year at University was designed to provide. Thus, exceptional students who qualify for exemptions from some of the Core University courses and introductory science courses may be able to start the Medicine programme in Year 2, and take the remaining non-exempt courses either concurrently with Year 2, or at a later stage. Students admitted to Year 2 must still complete all the medical courses, and the overall course requirements for the 6-year Medicine programme before they can graduate.

Although this flexible admission policy had been in place for some years, there was some controversy and objections raised in mid-2015. As a result, this admission policy was reviewed again by the MCHK in 2015. In May 2016, the Medical Council of Hong Kong formally accepted our flexible admission policy of allowing selected students who want to enrich their learning experience to commence in Year 2. The Medical Council believes that we can maintain the required standard of medical education and training, and achieve the same learning outcomes for these students as for those admitted to Year 1. The

Education Bureau understands that this admission arrangement will not undermine the 3-3-4 education structure.

Thus starting from 2016, entry to Year 2 has been an option offered to selected JUPAS and non-JUPAS students.

2. JUPAS Applicants (HKDSE)

2a. General

The minimum requirements for admission are 4 Core subjects and 2 Elective subjects. However, as the Faculty ranking formula gives credit for the third elective, and also potentially for the extended mathematics module, we advise students that they should take three electives. The minimum grade requirements are 4 in English and 3 in the other subjects.

Change in Required Elective Subjects from 2014 onwards

Biology OR Chemistry must be one of the elective subjects. We recommend that students take both Biology and Chemistry.

Interview and selection procedures

There are three sets of interviews. The first interviews in May 2017 are for students selected by invited schools. In June 2017, interviews are held for students under JUPAS Sub-schemes (e.g. the School Principals' Nomination Scheme and Sports Scholarship Scheme). The last JUPAS interviews will be held in late July 2017 after the HKDSE results are released on 12th July 2017. It is not expected that students will be interviewed again if they have already been selected for interview in the earlier rounds.

After the HKDSE results are released, students will be ranked according to their total HKDSE score. This is calculated first by converting examination grades to scores: 5** = 7, 5* = 6, 5 = 5, 4 = 4, and 3 = 3. Students that take Category C language subjects will use the scale: A = 5, B = 4, and C = 3. The total HKDSE score is the sum of the individual scores for the 4 core subjects and the best 3 elective subjects, after modification by the extended mathematics module.

The extended mathematics module contributes to the total HKDSE score if the grade in that module is better than the worst of the seven subjects (4 core subjects + the best 3 elective subjects). In that case, the score for the worst subject is replaced by a new score comprising half the original score for that subject and half the score of the extended mathematics module: (e.g. the worst subject is

Grade 5 and the extended mathematics is Grade 5*, then the new score for that subject is $(5+6)/2 = 5.5$)

Students that only have 2 electives and an extended mathematics module can count half the extended mathematics module score in the total score. This is a result of the missing 3rd elective being scored as 0, and the extended mathematics weighting described above.

Based on the 2015 and 2016 results, we estimate that students will require a total HKDSE score of 41 points to be offered an interview in 2017. After all interviews are conducted, the Faculty will prepare a ranking list based on both the academic results and the assessment at interview. It is possible that a student with a better interview performance will be ranked above another student with a slightly better total HKDSE score. When students have the same rank after interview, HKDSE performance in English, Chemistry and Biology will be taken into consideration. The JUPAS office will announce the Main Round offer results on 7th August 2017.

Students with a total HKDSE score of 44 or above, with 5* in English, Biology and Chemistry may be exempted from some of the introductory Faculty package science courses. Students with 5** in Chinese can be exempted the Core Chinese requirement of 6 units, and those with 5* in English can be exempted from the Core English Year 1 requirement of 4 units. Selected students with these exemptions may be offered entry to Year 2 of the Medicine programme.

Students that are not successful in the Main Round can be reconsidered if their marks are upgraded on appeal, and their upgraded mark is at least equal to the cut-off mark used to select students for interview. These students will still need to be interviewed to determine their final rank. They will receive an offer if their final rank is above the lowest ranked applicant admitted in the Main Round.

Although students may not receive an offer in the Main Round, there are opportunities later for admission. Students may apply for transfer after Year 1 studies in other programmes, or after completing their degree. In recent years, 15-

20% of the class has been undergraduates or graduates.

2b. Global Physician-Leadership Stream (GPS) for high-achieving students

In 2013, the faculty launched a new stream for admission. The GPS aims to develop physician leaders by providing opportunities for graduate studies (Masters and Doctorate degrees), international experience and leadership or research training in an accelerated and streamlined manner. Note that this stream has a different JUPAS course catalogue number (JS4502) from the normal Medicine programme (JS4501).

This stream allows students with high academic and leadership potential to choose the option of starting in Year 2 of the Medicine programme, and to pursue other graduate studies, e.g. 1-year Master in Research Medicine after year 3, or Master of Public Health after year 5. The student may also opt for a PhD programme after year 6 at CUHK, or overseas institutions including Oxford or Cambridge. Students still have to complete all University Core and medical course requirements before graduation, but they now have the flexibility of completing the Core requirements at a later stage instead of in Year 1. For example, students may take remaining University Core requirements in conjunction with the Master programme and still complete the MBChB programme in 6 years. Students that manage to complete all the required medical course and University Core requirements before 6 years may even apply to shorten their normative period of study.

The minimum admission criteria to GPS for JUPAS students are: HKDSE total score of **46 in 7 subjects and 5** in at least 4 subjects**. (For the number of subjects with 5**, Mathematics and the Extended Modules are only counted as one subject and a grade of 5** will only be counted once). Students will undergo a selection interview process similar to other applicants of the Medicine programme. Students will be selected based on the total HKDSE score, interview performance and past record of achievements. The quota for this elite stream will be around 25-30 students per year (i.e. around top 10% - 15% of the class). Further details of this stream can be found at: <http://gps.med.cuhk.edu.hk/>.

3. Non-JUPAS Applicants

3a. General

In 2015 and 2016, there were over 800 applicants each year for about 80-90 places that were eventually allocated to non-JUPAS students. There is no specific quota for JUPAS and non-JUPAS places. The same merit based selection criteria are applied to all applicants and the final distribution is determined by the quality of the applicants. Academic results are the main criteria used to select for interview approximately three times as many applicants as there are places available, although other information in the whole application will be reviewed before a decision is made. Interviews are held throughout the year, usually from April to August. Applicants interviewed early are usually those with complete academic results available for assessment. Most applicants are not interviewed until they have finished their academic year and provided us with official transcripts of their final examination results. Unfortunately many applications are incomplete and are left unprocessed until expired. Applicants can check their status using the online enquiry system.

Many applicants will not have their final exam results at the time of application, but these should be submitted as soon as they are available. Applicants from Universities using grading systems other than a GPA where 4.0 = A, must provide an explanatory table of the grades awarded, showing the distribution and percentiles for the grades. Illegible or incomplete results are the most common reasons for applications to remain unprocessed.

Some applicants only provide academic results such as school or university exam results obtained some years in the past. However, we will always evaluate the most recent academic results, and recent life or work experiences, so detailed current information should always be provided.

3b. Advanced Standing

Local tertiary institutions have schemes whereby some non-JUPAS students are given credit for previous studies. With these exemptions, some students may be able to take more advanced Year 2 courses immediately after admission, and some may be able to eventually graduate one year earlier than normal.

For the Medicine programme, only some non-JUPAS students will be exempted from sufficient Core University and introductory Faculty package courses to be given the option of entering the programme in Year 2. Exemptions will be assessed on an individual basis, and students with advanced standing will still need to complete some of the Core University courses and other courses normally taken in Year 1. Students will be informed of their advanced standing status when they receive an admission offer from the Faculty. The applicants that are eligible for the most exemptions will normally receive priority for Year 2 places because these students have less additional University Core courses to complete before graduation.

More information about the exemptions granted under advanced standing can be found in the Undergraduate Student Handbook:

Regulations Governing Undergraduate Medicine Programme:

http://rgsntl.rgs.cuhk.edu.hk/aqs_prd_applx/Public/Handbook/Default.aspx?id=1545&tv=T&lang=en

Although we expect nearly all students to have qualifications granting them exemption from the University Core English Language requirement, a few students may find it useful to take examinations in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) before admission.

4. Academic Requirements for non-JUPAS applicants

The University General and Language admission requirements for non-JUPAS applicants are found on the Oafa website

<http://www.oafa.cuhk.edu.hk/adm/nonjupas/first-year-admissions/programmes/undergraduate-curriculum>

The Faculty wishes to reassure applicants that Chinese language requirements should not be considered as major hurdles to studying Medicine in CUHK. However, students will need to interact with local patients in Cantonese, and students not proficient initially in Cantonese will need to develop these communication skills.

Non-JUPAS applicants come from a variety of backgrounds, and the expected grades before consideration for interview are listed below. Interviews may be offered to students that nearly meet the listed academic standards, depending on other information in the application.

4a. Graduate students and those completing degrees by September

Graduate students are encouraged to apply and are normally expected to have a GPA of at least 3.8 from a highly ranked University. Some Universities have different grading systems, but in general we are expecting grades that would be consistent with the top 10% of the class, or first class honors degrees with high marks. Full academic transcripts must be provided. Applicants should provide the results of other medical entry examinations such as the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) or Graduate Australian Medical School Admissions Test (GAMSAT) as applicable in their country of current study.

4b. Undergraduate students not in their final year of study for award of a degree

In general, few applicants are admitted under this category. Applicants should have a GPA of at least 3.8 from a highly ranked University, and full academic transcripts must be provided. Academic results from high school must be supplied because these will also be taken into consideration. Students that wish to transfer from other Hong Kong tertiary institutions, or other Medical Schools are

considered in the last section “Transfer Students”.

4c. High school students

i. International Baccalaureate

For most applicants, marks are usually released in early July, and interviews conducted in late July. The minimum requirement for interview is a predicted score of $\geq 44/45$ or a final score $\geq 42/45$ in the six subjects (with grades of at least 6,7,7 in the Higher Level subjects). Either Chemistry or Biology should be taken at Higher Level, but taking both is recommended. In 2016, the IB scores for students admitted ranged from 42 to 45 marks (median 43). Students that have taken both languages with A papers, and been awarded a bilingual diploma, may receive extra credit. Some students with high predicted scores may be invited for early interview and possibly even given a conditional offer of admission. However all offers are dependent on the final exam results, and there is no difference in the marks required for admission between those interviewed early and those interviewed after the results are released.

ii. GCE A-level

To be competitive, students should take 4 subjects at A-level (not including Chinese) including Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology (or Human Biology). The 4th subject should not be just another mathematics subject such as Further Mathematics. Further Mathematics will not be counted as a separate 4th subject. Students are ranked by their average score in 4 subjects, using whichever is the higher score between Mathematics and Further Mathematics. The top ranked applicants will be invited for interview. We expect that nearly all successful applicants will have an average of at least 95%, and some students with 4 A* will not have sufficiently high marks to be selected for interview. In 2016, the average GCE A-level scores of 4 subjects for students admitted ranged from 94% to 99% (median 97%).

As the results are not released until mid-August, interviews for these students are usually held in late August. A few applicants with outstanding results

in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) may be interviewed early. All offers are dependent on the final exam results and there is no difference in the marks required for admission between those interviewed early and those interviewed after the results are released.

Applicants should also provide the results of other entry examinations such as the United Kingdom Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) or BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT).

iii. Cambridge Pre-U

Some students take these examinations in combination with A-levels. D1 and D2 grades are expected and, as for A-levels, 4 subjects are required, including Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology.

iv. Australia and New Zealand

Australian students should have an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or equivalent of 99.5. In 2016, the only student admitted had an ATAR of 99.9. New Zealand students should have obtained Scholarship in at least two subjects. Students should also provide their Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT) results, or International Students Admissions Test (ISAT) for some international students.

v. Canadian and US curriculum

Canadian curriculum students should have scored over 95% in their final examinations in at least six subjects, including chemistry and biology. US curriculum students should have SAT composite score of 2250 or higher, or American College Testing (ACT) score of 34 or higher. Students should have taken chemistry and biology, with Advanced Placement examination grades of 5, or SAT subject test scores of nearly 800.

vi. China

Students are first admitted to CUHK based on their scores in the National Joint College Entrance Examination (高考).

vii. High school students in their first year of the two-year GCE A-level or IB

The University entrance requirements state that candidates who have only completed GCE AS or the first year of the IB Diploma “may be considered for admission under special circumstances on individual merits case-by-case.” However the Faculty has not admitted any such students from 2014 and does not intend to admit any in the future. These students do not have a University entrance qualification, and they will be competing directly with other non-JUPAS students who have completed the GCE-A levels exams and IB Diploma, as well as all other non-JUPAS students with full University entrance qualifications.

4d. Global Physician-Leadership Stream for Non-JUPAS students

The minimum admission criteria to Global stream will be a total score of ≥ 44 for IB, and four A* with average marks $\geq 97\%$ for GCE A-level. For other categories of Non-JUPAS students, selection will be based on academic merits, interview performance and past record of achievements. Further details of this stream can be found at: <http://gps.med.cuhk.edu.hk/>.

5. Transfer Students

5a. Internal transfer by CUHK students

Students may be offered transfer to Year 1 or Year 2 of the new Medical curriculum depending on their previous studies. Students are expected to have a GPA of around 3.7 before they are considered for interview. Secondary school academic results will also be evaluated for all applicants.

A prerequisite for admission to Year 2 is exemption from some of the introductory Faculty package courses normally taught in Year 1, (unless already passed by students of the Faculty in other programs). Thus, students should have taken courses in Biology and Chemistry either at secondary school or at University that would permit us to exempt them from taking the two Foundation Courses in Health Sciences (MEDF1010 and MEDF1012) components of the Faculty package in Year 1. There is currently no specific list of courses permitting exemption, but in general we would expect that students have top grades in Biology and Chemistry in the final year at high school, or in Year 1 at University. The deadline for applications is usually in June.

5b. Applicants from undergraduates at other tertiary institutions in Hong Kong

The University Grants Committee discourages transfer between tertiary institutions when a year of study needs to be repeated. There may be a limited opportunity for students in Year 1 at other tertiary institutions to enter Year 2 of our MBChB programme if they are able to be exempted from sufficient Year 1 courses, especially English and Health Sciences. Applicants should have a GPA of at least 3.8, and excellent academic results from high school comparable with students who have been directly admitted to Medicine. Students should have taken Biology and Chemistry courses. Full academic transcripts must be provided. Students apply as non-JUPAS applicants, and their applications will not be processed until their final results are available at the end of the academic year.

5c. Transfer to Medicine by existing medical students

Existing medical students can apply for transfer to Year 2, 3 or 4. Students are expected to have already covered the material taught in our earlier years. Our experience is that there may be major differences between medical schools in what is taught in the different years. These difficulties and other logistic problems mean that some overseas medical students have to transfer to our medicine programme one year below their current year of study.

The onus is on the student to supply sufficient information to facilitate a detailed assessment and comparison of curricula. As an indication, this material should contain at least 10 pages of detailed course and lecture descriptions. Applicants should have excellent academic results, and their ranking should be confirmed in a letter of reference from the Dean or equivalent authority of their medical school. Our Year 4 also starts in early July and some potential applicants leave it too late to complete the process before the year starts.

Dec 2016