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 2015.

For 2015, the quota for Year 1 entry is 210 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. An elite Global-Physician-Leadership stream (GPS) is offered to the top students.

The Medicine programme is normally 6 years, comprising medical studies, and compulsory and elective Core University non-medical courses. From 2014, curriculum changes, particularly to Year 2, will enable a more flexible approach to study by providing more opportunities for on-line learning and decreasing the time required in classroom lectures, thereby facilitating some applicants who are eligible for exemptions from some of the Core University and Faculty package courses may be able to take Year 1 and Year 2 courses concurrently.

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 2015.

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.
2. JUPAS Applicants (HKDSE)

2a. General

The minimum requirements for admission are 4 Core subjects and 2 Elective subjects. However, as both the University and Faculty ranking formulae give credit for the third elective, and also potentially for the extended mathematics module, we advise students that they should take three electives and/or the extended mathematics module to be competitive. The minimum grade requirements are 4 in English and 3 in the other subjects.

Change in Required Elective Subjects for 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 on first quarter of 2015 are for students selected by invited schools with an interest in the GPS programme. In June 2015, interviews are held for students under special JUPAS programmes such as the School Principals’ Nomination Scheme and Sports Scholarship Scheme. The last JUPAS interviews will be held in late July 2015 after the HKDSE results are released on 15th July 2015, for all remaining eligible students. 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 three best electives. In
that case, the score for the worst elective is replaced by a new score comprising half the original score for that elective and half the score of the extended mathematics module: (e.g. worst of 3 electives is Grade 5 and extended mathematics is Grade 5*, then new score for that elective 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 2013 and 2104 results, we estimate that students will require a total HKDSE score of 41 points to be offered an interview in 2015. 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 Aug 10, 2015.

Students with a total HKDSE score of 44 or above, with 5* in English, Biology and Chemistry may be exempted from some of the Faculty package 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.

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.

The Faculty wishes to advise students that even though they may not receive an offer in the Main Round, there are still opportunities later for
admission to the Medicine programme. JUPAS students may apply for transfer after Year 1 studies in other programmes, or after completing their degree. In recent years, 20-30% of the class are undergraduate or graduate students. Further details are provided in the non-JUPAS section of these admission notes.

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.

This stream allows students with high academic and leadership potential to have 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 requirements before graduation, but they now have the flexibility of completing these requirements concurrently at a later stage. For example, students may take most of the remaining University Core requirements in conjunction with the Master programme and still complete the MBChB programme in 6 years. Students that manage to complete 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 \textbf{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 2013 and 2014, there were over 800 applicants each year for about 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. Although non-JUPAS applications are administered by the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, the Faculty will also have a separate website for some applicants to enter and update their academic results. 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.
3b. Advanced Standing

Local tertiary institutions have a scheme where some non-JUPAS students may be given credit for previous studies and thereby obtain sufficient exemptions to be admitted directly to Year 2, or at least graduate one year earlier than normal by being allowed to take some advanced Year 2 courses immediately after admission.

Only some non-JUPAS students will be exempted from sufficient Core University and Faculty package courses to enter the Medicine program 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. Students will be informed of their advanced standing status when they receive an admission offer from the Faculty. Applicants that are eligible for the most exemptions will 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:

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-
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 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”.

admissions/programmes/undergraduate-curriculum
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 2014, the IB scores for students admitted ranged from 42 to 45 marks (median 43), and a higher standard is expected for 2015. 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.

Students achieving a final score of $\geq 44$ will be offered the option of direct admission to year 2 as well.

ii. GCE A-level

To be competitive, students must 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. 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 about 95%, and some students with 4 A* will not have sufficiently high marks to be selected for interview. In 2014, the average GCE A-level scores of 4 subjects for students admitted ranged from 94% to 99% (median 96%), and a higher standard is expected for 2015.
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) and the GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level examinations may be interviewed early. (For example 10A* for GCSE, and 4 subjects at AS level, with average marks over 97%.) 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 must also provide the results of other entry examinations such as the United Kingdom Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) or BioMedical Admissions Test (BMAT).

Some students submit applications based on GCE A-level exam results obtained in earlier years. These students are usually already undertaking tertiary studies and it is these subsequent academic results that would be assessed.

**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 University Admissions Index (UAI) or equivalent of 99.5. In 2014, all students admitted had an UAI of at least 99.8. New Zealand students should have obtained Scholarship in at least two subjects. Students must 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 did not admit any such students in 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 ≥ 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

There will be increased opportunities for transfer 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.

Admission to Year 2 of the new curriculum would mean that students bypass the Faculty package of 4 courses normally taught in Year 1, (unless they are already 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 (MEDF1011 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 taken Biology and Chemistry as full subjects 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 are usually major differences between medical schools in what is taught in the different years. These difficulties and other logistic problems often mean that overseas medical students have to transfer to our medicine programme one, or even two, years below their current year of study. This is especially problematic for medical schools that have no or little clinical teaching in the earlier years.

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 20 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.

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