



4 June 2020

K Roe

By email to fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Roe

I write in response to your second Official Information Act request of 6 May 2020. This seeks statistical information about domestic applicants aged 20 and over to the MB ChB for the past five years.

The University holds information on this in its central Student Management System, but only back to 2017. I am thus able to provide the following information for the last four years, noting that I have assessed student age on the basis of the date of application (i.e. students who were 20 or older on the date their application was submitted are including in the figures below).

Year (for which admission was sought)	Total applications recorded	Applicants offered places	Applicants not offered places or declined admission on the basis of ineligibility
2017	440	120	320
2018	486	119	367
2019	512	123	389
2020	498	116	382

Producing data for the fifth year would require manually extracting birthdates from files which would be very time consuming and would impact on University operations. On that basis, I need to refuse the request for 2016 data pursuant to Section 18(f) of the Official Information Act, on the basis that the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. However, as you will see from the table above, the data are reasonably stable from year to year.

I noted in an Official Information Act request response which I provided to you on 27 May 2020 that age is not a determining factor in the selection of candidates for the MB ChB at Otago. In light of the relatively consistent figures above, it may be useful to note that the University considers domestic applicants under three broad categories:

- the *Health Sciences First Year* category, which is based on a year of prescribed university study, and will tend to be made up of applicants under 20 who often proceed into this year of study following high school
- the *Graduate* category, which is for recent graduates who have already completed degrees, and will therefore tend to be made up of applicants over 20, and
- the *Alternative* category, which is for applicants who have completed a range of possible study or health-related work, and again will tend to be made up of applicants over 20.

The relative stability of the data provided most likely relates to these underlying categories of admission, rather than any specific selection based on age.

I advise of your right to seek review of decisions in this response via complaint to an Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes that form a stylized representation of the name 'Chris Stoddart'.

Chris Stoddart
Registrar
University of Otago