



8 March 2023

By email: [fyi-request-21753-50a78dd4@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-21753-50a78dd4@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Kia ora H

I refer to your request for information dated 8 February 2023 made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You have requested information in relation to entry to the Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) and Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB) programmes from 2021 – 2023 via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories.

Subject to the following comments, please see below our responses to each of your questions.

- With regards to the 2023 information you have requested in questions 2, 3, and 4, the University's Medical School and Faculty of Dentistry have not yet confirmed final numbers for their 2023 MB ChB and BDS programmes. This includes the lowest weighted GPAs to receive offers, the median weighted GPAs to receive offers, and the number of applicants to receive offers to both programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories. The data will not be known and therefore will not be available until the end of March 2023 – as student offers continue throughout the first few weeks of teaching in Semester 1. The reasons for late offers relate to students declining entry to the programme after it has commenced (which is permitted providing it is done by the specified deadline) or having to defer for unanticipated reasons. We have decided to grant your request, therefore once the data is available, we will be able to provide you with the 2023 information you have requested in questions 2, 3, and 4.
- Please note that for privacy and student wellbeing reasons, the University's standard practice is not to report on data where it relates to fewer than five individuals. Where the numbers are very low, there is a risk that the identity of those individuals can be determined/inferred. Data for groups with fewer than five individuals will be reported as "<5" (fewer than 5) or "W/H" (withheld). Withholding this information is consistent with section 9(2)(a) of the Act, and we do not consider that the reasons for withholding this information are outweighed by other considerations which would make it desirable in the public interest to make the information available.

#### **1. Entry requirements (academic grades) for BDS and MB ChB for Graduate students**

To be considered for admissions in the Graduate category for BDS and MB ChB, applicants must have completed, normally in the minimum academic time and within three years of the date of application, the requirements of a degree awarded by a University in New Zealand. All applicants in the Graduate category are ranked on the basis of a score derived from the grades achieved in their degree qualification. No preference is given to degree qualification or major subject.

For both programmes, the score for candidates applying in 2022 for entry in 2023 is based on the following:

- Papers are given a weighted academic score and are ranked
- Total points scored would be as per the requirement for the relevant degree (typically 360 points for a three-year degree)
- Using the regulations for a standard three-year University of Otago Bachelor's degree as an example, the admission score would be calculated as follows, in order of preference:
  - Best scoring (maximum of) 120 points at 300-level
  - Best scoring of 200-level and 100-level papers to 360 points
  - With 100-level papers weighted x 0.5, 200-level papers weighted x 1.0, and 300-level papers weighted x 1.5.

Please refer to the Guidelines for Admission for each programme to see further information on Graduate category, as well as examples of how applicants can get an indication of their weighted GPA score:

- [Medicine: Guidelines for Admission](#)
- [Dentistry: Guidelines for Admission](#)

## 2. Lowest academic grades of Māori and Pacific students who got into BDS and MB ChB in the last 3 years

Please see the below tables which show the minimum weighted GPA scores to receive offers to the 2021 and 2022 MB ChB and BDS programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories. As noted above, where there were fewer than five applicants to receive an offer, we have withheld the minimum weighted GPA score pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

Category	Minimum weighted GPA score to receive offer, MB ChB	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	5.00	4.51
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	W/H	4.83

Category	Minimum weighted GPA score to receive offer, BDS	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	W/H	4.99
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	5.05	W/H

## 3. Median academic grades of Māori and Pacific students who got into BDS and MB ChB in the last 3 years

Please see the below tables which show the median weighted GPA scores to receive offers to the 2021 and 2022 MB ChB and BDS programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories. As noted above, where there were fewer than five applicants to receive an offer, we have withheld the minimum weighted GPA score pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act.

Category	Median weighted GPA score to receive offer, MB ChB	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	5.69	5.46
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	W/H	5.44

Category	Median weighted GPA score to receive offer, BDS	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	W/H	5.48
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	5.9	W/H

#### 4. Number of Māori and Pacific students who got into BDS and MB ChB in the last 3 years

Please see the below tables which show the number of applicants to receive offers to the 2021 and 2022 MB ChB and BDS programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories:

Category	Number of Applicants to Receive Offers, MB ChB	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	9	20
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	4	6

Category	Number of Applicants to Receive Offers, BDS	
	2021	2022
Graduate Māori	1	7
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	5	2

#### 5. Number of Māori and Pacific Graduate students who applied for BDS and MB ChB in the last 3 years

Please see the below tables which show the number of applicants to the 2021 – 2023 MB ChB and BDS programme via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories:

Category	Number of Applicants, MB ChB		
	2021	2022	2023
Graduate Māori	15	34	30
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	19	20	30

Category	Number of Applicants, BDS		
	2021	2022	2023
Graduate Māori	9	17	15
Graduate Indigenous Pacific	12	9	18

#### 6. Is there a set number of Māori and Pacific students and set academic grade threshold for BDS and MB ChB entry

There is not a set number of places available for entry to the BDS and MB ChB programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories, nor is there a set academic grade threshold. Therefore, we decline providing this information pursuant to section 18(g) of the Act, on the basis that the information requested does not exist.

However, we note that approximately 30% of candidates are selected through the Graduate category (including all sub-categories) for the MB ChB and BDS programmes. The actual number of places offered to Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific applicants is cohort dependent.

As noted above, information on the entry requirements (including academic requirements) for the MB ChB and BDS programmes via the Graduate Māori and Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories are publicly available online:

- [Medicine: Guidelines for Admission](#)
- [Dentistry: Guidelines for Admission](#)

**7. Were there any changes made due to COVID-19 (e.g. decreasing/increasing the acceptance rate of Māori and Pacific students for BDS and MB ChB)**

There were no changes made to acceptance rates or entry requirements for applicants via the Graduate Māori or Graduate Indigenous Pacific sub-categories for the BDS and MB ChB programmes as a result of COVID-19.

However, we note that for all students, the University of Otago accounted for disruptions created by COVID-19 by introducing grade increases for papers and/or assessments completed under lockdown. These include:

- 5-mark increase to final grades for papers completed in Semester 1 2020;
- Final grades of 47, 48 or 49 bumped up to 50 (pass) for papers completed in Semester 2 2020;
- 5-mark increase to students in full year papers to each of their assessments completed in Semester 1 2020; and
- 5-mark increase to eligible internal assessments completed or submitted between 18 August 2021 and 27 August 2021.

We note that these grade increases will have only been applicable to Graduate category applicants who studied at the University of Otago. Graduate category applicants from other New Zealand universities may or may not have had grade increases for papers and/or assessments completed under COVID-19 conditions.

We trust that you will find this information 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



Jenny Shaw  
Official Information and Compliance Coordinator  
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