



11 March 2024

By email: fyi-request-25804-8ee9271a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Charlotte

I refer to your information request dated 20 February 2024 made under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). You have requested the following information:

Please clarify the meaning of completing a degree in the 'minimum academic time' for the graduate pathway into medicine. Please refer to the following example: A student who has completed the health science first-year programme and is pursuing a double major degree. There are three 300-level papers in the first semester of the third year and five 300-level papers in the second semester that the student wants to take to complete this double major degree. All of the 300-level papers require 200-level requisites. None of the desired 300-level papers can be taken in the second year as the 300-level papers with a semester 1 200-level paper prerequisite are also semester 1 papers. Would the student have to take the five 300-level papers in the second semester of the last year or would they be able to take one of them in a fourth year and still have completed the degree in the 'minimum academic time'? If so, would this paper in the fourth year be allowed to be alongside other papers?

Please see below our response to your request.

To be considered for admission in the Graduate category to the University of Otago's Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB) programme, applicants must have completed, 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. No preference is given to degree qualification or major subject, and the qualifying degree is the first university degree awarded to the applicant.

The intent of "minimum academic time" is that an applicant continues to progress their degree and completes their programme without taking a break from study. For example, a student studying part-time would complete their degree in the minimum time, if they continued throughout their degree part-time without taking leave during their studies (e.g., withdrawing for a semester or a year). If students are physically unable to take certain papers for their degree in a specific year and complete them in the next consecutive semester (as noted in the example you provided in your request), it is still within the minimum academic time.

We note that students are welcome to double check their degree plan with a student adviser through [AskOtago](#).

In terms of your request for whether a paper in the fourth year of study be allowed to "be alongside" other papers, scores for candidates applying to the MB ChB programme via the Graduate category 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 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 of 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 scoring examples and templates found on the University's website via the [Medicine: Guidelines for Admission](#) to get an indication of your weighted GPA score. Please note that the examples and templates include four- and five-year degrees. Please note that weighted GPA scores will be confirmed as part of application processes, and that the example and template spreadsheets are for example purposes only.

I trust that this information will be helpful.

Ngā mihi



Kelsey Kennard
Official Information and Compliance Coordinator
Office of the Registrar