

Undergraduate Admissions Policy

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Introduction

This document outlines the principles and procedures followed by the Norwich Medical School / University of East Anglia during the recruitment and selection of students for the MB BS A100, five-year programme and the MB BS with a foundation year A104, six-year programme. Graduates from these programmes of study are entitled to provisional registration with the General Medical Council (GMC) with a license to practise, subject to demonstrating to the GMC that their fitness to practise is not impaired.

Reference Points

Norwich Medical School, which is based at the UEA, is committed to employing fair selection processes that are valid, reliable and objective. The process is informed by research evidence, recognised best practice, and relevant guidance and legislation. The following sources have informed the development of this policy:

- University of East Anglia Admissions Policy¹
- University of East Anglia Interview Policy²
- Tomorrow's Doctors: The Outcome and Standards for Undergraduate Medical Education (General Medical Council: 2009)³
- Guiding Principles for the Admission of Medical Students (Medical Schools Council: 2010)⁴
- Selecting for Excellence Final Report (Medical Schools Council: 2014)⁵

- Doctors in Society. Medical professionalism in a changing world (The Royal College of physicians:2005)⁶
- Statement on the core values and attributes needed to study medicine (Medical Schools Council: 2014)⁷
- Work Experience Guidelines for Applicants to Medicine (Medical Schools Council: 2014) ⁸
- National Values Based Recruitment Framework (NHS England: 2014) ⁹
- Gateways to the Professions (General Medical Council 2008) ¹⁰
- Recommendations on selection of students with specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia (Medical Schools Council, 2005) ¹¹
- Medical and Dental Students: Health Clearance for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and Tuberculosis (Medical Schools Council: 2014)¹²
- The Higher Education Occupational Physicians/Practitioners (HEOPS): Medical Student - Standards of fitness to train¹³
- University of East Anglia-Widening Participation Strategy 2016-20¹⁴

The GMC, the professional body responsible for regulating the MB BS programme, states that “Selection for medical school implies selection for the medical profession” and define the standards and evidence they require (Box 1). No applicant will be offered a place to study at Norwich Medical School without demonstrating that they have both the academic potential to succeed, and the appropriate personal values and attributes. These will be assessed by review of the UCAS application form and an interview.

Norwich Medical School supports widening participation initiatives; the School runs the A104 programme aimed at widening participation particularly among school leavers from East Anglia. For the A100 programme, Norwich Medical School believes that young people wishing to study medicine should have a second chance to demonstrate their potential, if circumstances have compromised their first attempt, for example, we consider applications from those resitting A-levels, or with non-traditional qualifications such as Access courses. Such applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Number of Places on Programme (as of 2014/15)

A100: 154 places for Home/EU students and 13 places for Overseas Students. Up to 24 of the places for Home/EU students are held for students progressing from the foundation year (A104). Total = 167

A104: 24 places for Home students, who also meet widening participation criteria.

Entry Requirements (A100)

Entry onto the A100 programme is competitive, with 1200 or more applications annually. It is an academically demanding, integrated, modular curriculum that uses

problem-based learning (PBL) supported by lectures, seminars and clinical teaching to deliver its learning outcomes. Successful doctors must have both knowledge and humanity; successful applicants to the programme come from a range of backgrounds, but all are able to demonstrate the academic and personal qualities required to enable completion.

Academic requirements

A100

All applicants are usually expected to have or expected to achieve before entry:

- a minimum of SIX GCSE passes, usually at grade A or above to include an English, Maths and two Science subjects (or equivalent)
- taken the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) prior to submitting their application. The UKCAT is only valid in the year in which it is taken.

There are several entry routes:

- **Applicants with Science A levels require 3 full A levels at grade A or higher** to include Biology and one other Science, (usually chemistry), but excluding General Studies or Critical Thinking, with a fourth subject at AS level at grade B or higher.
 - Applications from those who have re-sat any A level, or completed their A level over three years are normally expected to have at least one A level at A*.
- **A level equivalent qualifications** include
 - **International Baccalaureate:** 36 points to include a minimum of 6 in HL Biology plus 6 in two other HL subjects, including one other Science.
 - **Scottish Advanced Highers:** AAA to include Biology and one other Science, plus a minimum of grade B in a fourth standard Highers subject
 - **Irish Leaving Certificate: AAAAAA in Higher subjects which must include Biology and one other Science**
- **Applicants with a first degree in a Science-based subject** require at least a 2:1 in their first degree, in addition to 3 A levels at a minimum of Grade ABB at first sitting (to include Biology)
- **Applicants with a first degree in a non-Science-based subject** require a least a 2:1 in their first degree in addition to 3 A levels at a minimum of Grade AAA at first sitting, to include Biology and one other Science (as above). A recognised Access qualification may be substituted for Biology/other Science at A level, if this is not offered at A level (see below).
- **Applicants offering Access qualifications** must have distinction in 45 level 3 credits in an Access programme recognised by the Norwich Medical School. If an applicant offering an Access qualification has previously sat A levels, these must be at a minimum of Grade ABB (or equivalent) at first sitting. If an

applicant offering Access qualification has previously attended university, their first degree must be at 2:1 or higher.

- **For other qualifications**, please contact the admission office for advice. UEA uses UK National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) to map overseas qualifications to the UK qualifications framework¹⁵.

The above are minimum requirements. Due to competition for places on these programmes, meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee an invitation to interview and/or the offer of a place.

Entry Requirements (A104)

This programme is only available to UK applicants who are currently in Year 13 studying A Levels (or equivalent) and who also fulfil our Widening Access Contextual and Social Criteria.

Applicants **MUST** meet the following contextual/social criteria:

- Secondary School (GCSE level education) had 60% or less students achieving 5+ grade A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English and Maths in the year applicants sat GCSE's – (drawing on data from Department of Education website: www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/).

IN ADDITION, applicants **MUST** also meet ONE of the criteria below:

- Household income is less than £35,000 per year excluding Government benefits. (Evidence will be requested)
- Have been in Local Authority Care
- Live in the East Anglia Region (Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Lincolnshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire).

In addition to meeting these criteria, local applicants (East Anglia) and those whose parents (legal guardians) have no higher education qualifications (in UK or abroad) will be given particular consideration.

All applicants are usually expected to have achieved before entry:

- a minimum of SIX GCSE passes, usually at grade B or above to include an English, Maths and a Science subject (or equivalent)
- at least THREE A levels at grades ABB or above OR International Baccalaureate >32 points (or equivalent)
- taken the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) prior to submitting their application. The UKCAT is only valid in the year in which it is taken.

Academic criteria are assessed from information provided on the UCAS form, or submitted to the University on request.

The above are minimum requirements. Due to competition for places on these programmes, meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee an invitation to interview and/or the offer of a place.

Personal Qualities

A100 and A104 Applicants considered suitable for studying at Norwich Medical School based on academic grounds are also required to demonstrate the following personal qualities:

- a caring and supportive attitude, an understanding of health care, insight into the current role of the doctor within the NHS, the values and attitudes necessary for working within the NHS and of the professional responsibilities expected of a doctor
- suitability to join the profession; e.g. conscientiousness, ability to take responsibility, be motivated to achieve the highest standards, and prepared to put others first, altruism, personal effectiveness, and resilience
- an aptitude for working in partnership with patients, teamwork with colleagues, and leadership
- evidence of good communication skills, being able to listen, contribute to discussions and explain potentially complex concepts to others including ethical issues and decision-making
- the capacity to thrive and benefit from the Norwich Medical School curriculum, good organisational skills, able to collaborate effectively with others, and take responsibility for their own learning.

These qualities are assessed through selection interview.

How we handle an application (A100)

Applications received from UCAS, by the closing date of 15 October each year, are reviewed by the central admissions team and checked against the minimum academic entry standards (as specified above).

Applications for A100 meeting the minimum requirements are reviewed in greater detail, and scored on the basis of their previous and predicted academic achievement. The top scoring applicants are invited to interview, with approximately 500 applicants selected for interview annually. No applicant is offered a place without interview.

At interview, an applicant's suitability for studying medicine and ability to benefit from the MB BS UEA programme are assessed. Interviews are usually held between mid-December and early March. The interview process normally comprises a seven-station Multiple Mini Interview (MMI), each station lasting five minutes.

Successful applicants are identified based on both academic potential and performance at interview, usually in early March.

How we handle an application (A104)

Applications received from UCAS, by the closing date of 15 October each year, are reviewed by the central admissions team and checked against the minimum academic entry standards (as specified above).

Applications for A104 meeting the minimum requirements are reviewed in greater detail, and scored on the basis of their previous and predicted academic achievements and contextual criteria. The top scoring applicants are invited to interview, with approximately 80-90 applicants selected for interview annually. No applicant is offered a place without interview.

At interview, an applicant's suitability for studying medicine and ability to benefit from the programme are assessed. Interviews are usually held between February and early March. The interview process normally comprises a seven-station Multiple Mini Interview (MMI), each station lasting 5 minutes.

Successful applicants are identified based on both academic potential and performance at interview, usually in early March.

Typical Offer (A100)

Applicants who are made a conditional offer will usually be expected to achieve a minimum of AAA in their A levels (or equivalent).

Typical Offer (A104)

Applicants who are made a conditional offer will usually be expected to achieve a minimum of ABB in their A levels (or equivalent).

International Applications

Applications from overseas candidates are welcome. Overseas qualifications are considered on an equivalence basis, with advice from the UK National Recognition Information Centre (NARIC, as above). For students for whom English is a foreign language, evidence of a high level English language qualification such as IELTS 7.5 is required.

Feedback

It is not possible to give individual detailed feedback to applicants. Reasons for an unsuccessful application will be indicated via UCAS.

Other information

Late applications are not accepted under any circumstances.

Applications for deferred entry are considered on an equal footing, as long as it is declared at the time of the application. Deferral requests made later in the cycle cannot be guaranteed.

Reapplications: Applicants to the programmes will only be considered for two consecutive years. Anyone wishing to reapply after this should contact the admissions office in advance of a further re-application for advice.

Applications from candidates who currently or have previously studied at another medical school will not normally be considered.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL/APEL). All students on the programme must complete all years of study.

Progression agreements: Successful applicants who fail at first attempt three or more assessments in the first three years of the programme will be awarded a BSc in Medical Sciences (unclassified) and will not be permitted to progress to the fourth year of the MB BS.

Plagiarism and deception in the admission process: The practice of medicine requires the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. Failure to declare information that has a material influence on the selection procedure or on an applicant's fitness to practise may lead to termination of their application, or their programme if confirmed after registration. Any applications where plagiarism is suspected, e.g. following notification from the UCAS similarity detection service will be investigated and may lead to termination of the application. As part of the selection process, all applicants who accept an offer of a place at Norwich Medical School are checked against the Medical Schools Council (MSC) excluded student database.

Disclosure and Barring Service and Health Checks: All applicants offered a place on the programme will be subject to a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Occupational Health assessment, including undergoing testing for and/or immunisation against a range of infectious diseases prior to patient contact. All applicants will also be checked against the Medical Schools Council Excluded Student List.

Disability: Applicants with a disability are advised to disclose this on their UCAS application. Any disability disclosed in this way will not be taken into account when assessing the UCAS application, but will enable the university to arrange a consultation with the School's Disability Liaison Officer to determine what, if any, reasonable adjustments may be necessary to enable this potential student to complete the programme. All applicants offered a place, including those with a declared disability will be subject to an Occupational Health assessment prior to commencing patient contact.

Additional information: Only information submitted on the UCAS form will be considered, unless supplementary information is requested by the Admissions team.

Applicants with near relatives who are members of staff at UEA: A Senate resolution (4.2.1970, Minute 91) defines near relatives as "husbands or wives or

children of members of staff”, however modern family arrangements can be complex and rather than exhaustively list possible arrangements, staff should make a declaration if they believe an independent observer would consider that the applicant and the member of staff have a relationship that is equivalent in closeness to the Senate definition. The University policy on Applications from staff or their near relatives can be found in the University Admissions Policy www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/our-admissions-policy/application-from-staff-or-their-near-relatives

Box 1: GMC requirements for selection of Medical Students

Standard

71. Processes for student selection will be open, objective and fair.

Criteria

72. The medical school will publish information about the admission system, including guidance about the selection process and the basis on which places at the school will be offered.

73. Selection criteria will take account of the personal and academic qualities needed in a doctor as set out in *Good Medical Practice* and capacity to achieve the outcomes set out in *Tomorrow's Doctors*.

74. Selection processes will be valid, reliable and objective.

75. Those responsible for student selection will include people with a range of expertise and knowledge. They will be trained to apply selection guidelines consistently and fairly. They will also be trained to be able to promote equality and diversity (people's different backgrounds and circumstances) and follow current equal opportunities legislation and good practice, including that covering disabled applicants.

76. Students admitted will pass any health and other checks (such as criminal record checks) required by the medical school's fitness to practise policy. The purpose and implications of each of these checks, and the points at which they are made, should be made clear to applicants and students.

Evidence

77. Evidence for this domain will include:

information about medical school selection processes

data about applicants and selected students

minutes of committees and reports.

Detailed requirements and context

78. Medical schools should base their policies and procedures on relevant guidance, recognised best practice, and research into effective, reliable and valid selection processes which can have the confidence of applicants and the public.

79. Medical schools should also take account of relevant legislation and the *Gateways* guidance in their student selection processes. This includes the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities where the disability would not prevent the applicant from meeting the outcomes for graduates. Schools should be wary of not offering a place on the basis of a judgement about hypothetical barriers to achievement and employment specifically associated with an applicant's disability.

80. The assessment of any risks associated with an applicant's fitness to practise in relation to their health or conduct should be separated from other processes of selection.

Tomorrow's Doctors: Outcomes and standards for undergraduate medical education GMC September 2009

Further references and links

- ¹ <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/our-admissions-policy>
- ² <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/apply/our-admissions-policy/interview-policy>
- ³ General Medical Council. Tomorrow's Doctors. London; General Medical Council 2009.
- ⁴ [http://www.medschools.ac.uk/AboutUs/Projects/Documents/Revised%20MSC%20Admissions%20Principles%202010%20\(final\).pdf](http://www.medschools.ac.uk/AboutUs/Projects/Documents/Revised%20MSC%20Admissions%20Principles%202010%20(final).pdf)
- ⁵ Medical Schools Council. Selecting for Excellence Final Report. London; Medical Schools Council, 2014.
- ⁶ <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/publications/doctors-society>
- ⁷ <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/Statement-on-the-core-values-and-attributes-needed-to-study-medicine.aspx>
- ⁸ <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Work-experience-guidelines-for-applicants-to-medicine.pdf>
- ⁹ <http://hee.nhs.uk/work-programmes/values-based-recruitment/national-vbr-framework/>
- ¹⁰ http://www.gmc-uk.org/static/documents/content/Gateways_to_the_professions_Dec_2014.pdf
- ¹¹ <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/AboutUs/Projects/Documents/Recommendations%20on%20Selection%20of%20Students%20with%20specific%20learning%20disabilities,%20including%20dyslexia.pdf>
- ¹² <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/BBV-2014-MSC-DSC.pdf>
- ¹³ http://www.heops.org.uk/HEOPS_Medical_Students_fitness_standards_2013_v10.pdf
- ¹⁴ Under development
- ¹⁵ <https://www.naric.org.uk/naric/>

