

Medicine

HEO ALUMNI GUIDE FOR CLASS OF 2023

SO, INTERESTED IN APPLYING TO MEDICINE? OVERVIEW AND WORDS OF COUNSEL

Why Medicine?

There are 2 medical schools in Singapore – NUS' Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (YLL), and NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKC). Medicine is highly competitive, as you may have noted from the IGPs, where the 10th and 90th percentiles are both AAA/A.

#HEOadvice: if you are applying for Medicine, it should be because your interests, aptitude (academic and beyond), skills and personality are a **fit for the field**. Avoid applying simply because “others are doing so”, or because you do not know what else to apply for. If you don't know, explore!

Also avoid fixation: while you will want to put your best foot forward, keep open to outcomes as they happen. Don't neglect all the possibilities around. When applying for Medicine, one of your key questions should be: what are my **alternative options, besides Med?** Ensure you have safe options in your 2nd or 3rd choices onwards.



HEO GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2024



Application Portals and Submissions

You will want to prepare for, and ensure you submit the necessary on time. Be pro-active in outlining what needs to be done and do it on time.

NUS

<https://medicine.nus.edu.sg/prospective-students/how-to-apply/>

Portfolio comprising:

- Personal statement (500 words)
- List of 10 achievements
- Official testimonial
- 2 referee reports

Admissions Assessment:

- Focused Skills Assessment (FSA)
- Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

Referee reports

Ping your referees directly from the university portals, giving them details as/where necessary. Before you do so, it is only considerate to approach your tutors personally.

Please approach the same set of 2 tutors for NUS and NTU. One needs to be your CT, the other can be a subject/CCA tutor. HEO's recommendation is to approach subject tutors given the academic nature of Med. It's a misperception that character is not seen in the academic classroom.

A note of counsel: Approach your tutors personally to request for a reference first. Then set up your accounts early, ping your teachers as early as possible. They need time to write for the many of you.

Which option should I apply under?

If your UAS meets the requirement, you should apply under the Standard Scheme.

If you apply under the Aptitude-Based Admissions Scheme (ABAS), take note of the earlier submission deadline for NUS (5 Mar).

NTU

[https://www.ntu.edu.sg/medicine/education/bachelor-of-medicine-and-bachelor-of-surgery-\(mbbs\)/application-procedures](https://www.ntu.edu.sg/medicine/education/bachelor-of-medicine-and-bachelor-of-surgery-(mbbs)/application-procedures)

- UCAT score (from last year)
- Personal statement (300 words)
- 2 referee reports (incl. Civics Tutor)
- Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI)



HEO ALUMNI GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2024

Approaching the personal statement

1) Responding with conciseness & specificity

Keep an eye on the word limit and specific question(s) to answer. Given the short word counts (only 300 for NTU), focus on key skills that demonstrate your fit for Medicine. It pays to explicate in depth as opposed to generalised breadth.

Some questions for you to consider: what **specific** activities/leadership experiences have you had in secondary school and JC, both within and without school, that have taught and honed **relevant** skills for Med? How and why **exactly** are these important in Med?

In writing, **avoid** generalities and sweeping statements. For instance, skills like empathy and teamwork are necessary in all fields. Instead of saying "Empathy is important in Medicine", go for greater thoughtfulness instead, as this highlights your understanding of the discipline. Consider **context and nuance**. E.g., why is empathy required **specifically** in Med? Any **particular situation or context**? In nuancing, for example: 'teamwork' is vague. What **exact** feature about teamwork is important, and why, **in Medicine**?



2) Your intentions & motivations

Clarify your intentions and purpose for pursuing Medicine. Why this field, *and not others*? Beyond original intent, what activities you have taken part in, which **further demonstrates suitability** for Med?

While a personal anecdote may make for an intro, avoid overemphasizing on emotive stories in the entire statement. You are applying for a **professional** field. Keep in mind thus that passion is demonstrated, not stated.

3) Heart *and* Head

Medicine is an academically rigorous field. Demonstration of fit is not only in the soft skills. What have you enjoyed **academically** (independently or as part of school, formally or informally), that is relevant to Medicine? Any areas of interest? What are some of the central tensions and dilemmas in Medicine? What is **your** stand on ethical issues? Are you up to date with news, in Singapore and globally on the health front?

In preparation especially for interviews, it's useful to think through some of these tough questions and **know your own position on things. Keep calm and cool, and respond to situations the way a professional doctor would do.**

Note that HEO does not read Medicine statements given their brevity, specific prompts and the need for personal voice. The above is meant to guide you in writing.



HEO GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2024

The Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be called up for selection interviews between late Mar through Apr. Apart from the conventional format of an interview, it can often also include simulated scenarios. For more details and to know what to expect, refer to the universities directly (links on page 2). If you are shortlisted, your university will let you know your exact interview date(s). So please keep a constant lookout in your email.

#HEOprotips:

- Prepare yourself mentally and probably even physically. Ensure you dress appropriately (refer to the dress code given by the universities).
- Think through some of the fundamental and key questions first, before you go for the interview. These include basics, such as questions about your reasons for wanting to join the profession, your values and ethical stands on issues, your strengths/weaknesses etc. What are the soft skills you possess, that make you a fit for Medicine? What are possible skills that you will want to work on?
- While it is natural to be nervous in interviews, keep calm and composed, and conduct yourself **professionally**. If caught in a bind, your guiding question: what would a doctor do in this situation?

Importantly, be yourself. Nothing beats sincerity and authenticity of voice. So have confidence in putting your best foot forward!

Final notes

The best medical professionals demonstrate their suitability in everything they do, not just in what they say or write. It is through your actions that fit is demonstrated, through the consistency of your deeds that character is shown.

#HEOadvice: Please ensure you have a safety! Even as you put your best foot forward, you will want to ask yourself: if not Medicine, what else? Be open to options.

Wishing you all the best in your applications!

