



So, interested in applying to Medicine?

Guide to Medicine Applications 2022

The overview & words of counsel

There are 2 medical schools you can apply to, these would be 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. So here, a very important word of counsel: 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 for prestige, or because you do not know what else you can apply for. If you don't know, explore!

Also avoid fixation: while you will want to put your best foot forward in anything you try for, it's also wise to be open to outcomes, and to accept outcomes with equanimity and grace. Don't neglect all the possibilities around. **Give value to that which values you.**

So, if you are ready, these are the things to take note of in a Medicine application.

1. Application portals and to-dos

NUS: <https://medicine.nus.edu.sg/admissions/how-to-apply/>

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)

As stipulated in the portals themselves, 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**.

Both schools require essays (of different lengths) and two referee reports, in addition to interviews—known as the Multi-Mini Interviews (MMI) in NTU, and the Focused Skills Assessment (FSA) in NUS. Additionally, NTU requires the BMAT, which would have been taken last year. NUS also has the Situational Judgement Test and requires you to detail your list of achievements. For more details and specifics, refer to the links above.

2. Referee reports

One referee is your Civics Tutor. You can approach another subject/CCA teacher as your 2nd referee.

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.** You have almost a month to apply, do not leave this to the last minute. Ping as early as you can so that you give your teachers time to help you. **If something is important enough to you, do it early, do it considerately.**

Students applying under the Aptitude-Based Admissions Scheme (ABAS), note that NUS has an earlier submission deadline of 8 March. Check NTU's website for the most updated information. If your UAS meets the requirement, it is not necessary to apply under ABAS.

3. Approaching the personal statement: 3 tips for writing

- a) **Conciseness & specificity:** The personal statement for Medicine is a short piece of 300 words for LKC, and 500 words for YLL, so keep it concise and focused on **key skills that demonstrate your fit for Medicine**. Avoid overstuffing.

Some questions for you to consider: what specific activities/leadership experiences have you had in secondary school and JC, that have taught you and honed **relevant skills for Medicine**? How and why **exactly** are these skills important in Medicine? **Tip:** Avoid generalities and sweeping statements: skills like empathy and teamwork are necessary in all fields. Reflect thoughtfully: why **specifically** in Medicine?

- b) **Your intentions and motivations:** Clarify your own intentions and purpose for pursuing Medicine. Why this field, and not others? Your original purpose or epiphanic moment (if any), can often make for a good introduction. You can also progressively bring in activities that you

have done across the years, which clarified your **intention and suitability** for the field. **Tip:** Avoid overemphasizing personal anecdotes. You are applying for a **professional** field.

- c) **Heart and Head:** Medicine is an academically rigorous field. Demonstration of fit is not only in the soft skills. What have you learnt and enjoyed **academically** (independently or as part of school/CCA enrichment etc, formally or informally), that is relevant to Medicine? Any areas of interest for instance? 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? **Tip:** it's useful to think through some of these tough questions and know your own position on things, before your interviews.

4. The interviews

Slated to take place in late Mar through April, the interviews are a series of between 5-8 mini-stations. 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. If you are shortlisted, your university will let you know your exact interview date(s). So please keep a constant lookout in your email. As follows:

- NUS: <https://medicine.nus.edu.sg/admissions/admissions-assessment/>
- NTU: [https://www.ntu.edu.sg/medicine/education/bachelor-of-medicine-and-bachelor-of-surgery-\(mbbs\)/about-multiple-mini-interview-\(mmi\)](https://www.ntu.edu.sg/medicine/education/bachelor-of-medicine-and-bachelor-of-surgery-(mbbs)/about-multiple-mini-interview-(mmi))

Summary tips

It's useful to 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 your reasons for wanting to join the profession, your values and ethical stands on issues (particularly central dilemmas to Medicine—read if you don't know what these are!). 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?

Importantly, where soft skills are concerned, know the disposition and temperament required in Medicine: these are what you will want to demonstrate on the day of your interview. **Even as you are tested, never lose your cool. Conduct yourself maturely, calmly, professionally.** If caught in a bind, your guiding question: **what would a doctor do in this situation?**

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

Before we end this guide, read on for a last important note...

Final note: The Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has been with us for the last two years. Many of you may be worried about your 'portfolios'. Stop thinking negative. Instead, reframe your mindset. For one, this pandemic is no different from any global or domestic situation that has disrupted life through the ages—wars, terrorism and poverty regularly cause far more disruption. The reality is that [disruption is a constant in life](#). Instead, consider: [how has the Covid-19 pandemic changed the way you did and viewed things, positively? How have you become more flexible and resilient, stronger and better as a person?](#)

Considering it is Medicine you are applying for, this pandemic has been replete with actual lived experiences about the medical field and the sacrifices of all involved, all that is required to keep the health of the community. Your reflections about the pandemic can encompass personal life skills, to academic/medical insights, to wider community impact and issues. This beats any short-term internship or shadowing you can do, or any textbook knowledge you may have. [How has Covid-19 made you more certain you want to be a doctor?](#)

To end off, a final question for you to reflect on: Have you sought to keep the people around you safe, have you for instance actively encouraged peers and family to keep their masks on, to adhere to safe measures? [Throughout this pandemic, have you demonstrated that you have stood in solidarity with the medical community?](#) Reflect, and walk the talk. This is what the best Rafflesians do.

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.

We trust this has been an enlightening read. All the best in your applications and all that you do from here!

Your teacher-counsellors

Higher Education Office, Raffles Institution

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