

Medicine

HEO GUIDE FOR ALUMNI 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 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 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.**



HEO GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2023



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)

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 (7 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)

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

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. You have almost a month to apply, so do **not** leave this to the last minute.

A note of counsel: Do **not** wait until you have finished your *entire* application, and then only ping your tutors "urgently". **If it's urgent, it would never be left to the last minute. Ping your teachers as early as possible, as they need time to write for the many of you.**



HEO GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2023

Approaching the personal statement

1) Conciseness & Specificity

Keep an eye on the word limit and specific question(s) to answer. Given the short word counts, focus 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, both within and without school, that have taught and honed relevant skills for Med? How and why exactly are these important in Med? Given the brevity and specificity of the prompts for these personal statements, HEO does not read them; so we trust you will find this guide useful.

#HEOprotip: Avoid generalities and sweeping statements: skills like empathy and teamwork are necessary in all fields. For greater thoughtfulness:

1) Contextualise: why specifically in Medicine? Any particular situations or realities?

2) Nuance: For instance, 'good communication skills' is very vague. What exact feature in/of communication skills is important, why?



2) Your intentions & 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.

#HEOprotip: Avoid overemphasizing personal anecdotes or overly emotive stories. You are applying for a **professional** field.

3) 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?

#HEOprotip: It's useful to think through some of these tough questions and **know your own position on things**, before your interviews. On the biggest picture, if it is Medicine you are interested in: do you know what the **four pillars of medical ethics** are? Which of the principles are most important to you, and why? Be aware that words are easy, practice is not: principles can conflict, hence the existence of ethical dilemmas.



HEO GUIDE TO MEDICINE APPLICATIONS 2023

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 forwards, you will want to ask yourself: if not Medicine, what else? Be open to options.

Wishing you all the best in your applications!

