



Procedure for consideration of declared and non-declared information in the health sciences professional programmes

Category	Academic
Type	Procedure
Approved by	Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Division of Health Sciences
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Sponsor	Pro-Vice Chancellor, Division of Health Sciences
Responsible Officer	Director, Policy and Programmes
Review Date	17 August 2019

Purpose

This procedure outlines:

- The process for reviewing fitness to practice issues disclosed in applications for admission into any of Health Sciences nine health professional programmes.
- The process for dealing with an applicant's failure to declare fitness to practise issues.

Organisational Scope

This procedure is relevant to the Division of Health Sciences and specifically, the admission process for the following qualifications: Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Technology, Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Oral Health, Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Physiotherapy, Bachelor of Radiation Therapy, Master of Nursing Science and any other Health Sciences course to which this policy may apply.

Definitions

Definition

For the purposes of this procedure, health science professional programmes refer to the following qualifications: Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS), Bachelor of Dental Technology (BDentTech), Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science (BMLSc), Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB), Bachelor of Oral Health (BOH), Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPharm), Bachelor of Physiotherapy (BPhty), Bachelor of Radiation Therapy (BRT), Master of Nursing Science (MNSc) and any other Health Sciences course to which this policy may apply.

Definition	Fitness to practise issues include issues in relation to health status, criminal charges and disciplinary proceedings taken by any tertiary institution or regulatory body.
Definition	For the purposes of this document The Health and Conduct Review Group (Admissions) will be referred to as the Group.

Content

1. Summary

The Division of Health Sciences requires all applicants applying for any of its health professional programmes to declare any criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings they have faced, or are facing, and any health status issues which could affect their participation in clinical aspects of the programme or their overall fitness to practise.

Factors which could have a material influence on an applicant's fitness to practise include, but are not limited to:

- (a) the existence of a health issue that may affect the applicant's ability to participate in clinical aspects of the programme or to meet the registration requirements of the relevant regulatory body following graduation.
- (b) the circumstances leading to criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings.
- (c) a student's failure to declare relevant information. Honesty and integrity are considered to be essential attributes for registered health professionals. If it were to come to light that a student failed to declare something relevant to their fitness to practise as a health professional it could indicate a lack of honesty and integrity.

2. Procedure for dealing with criminal and health status declarations at the point of admission

- (a) The Manager of Admissions reviews all applications for professional programmes to ensure the declaration form has been completed and to identify any declared criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings and/or health status issues.
- (b) The Manager of Admissions refers all applications with declared criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings and/or health status issues to the relevant Associate Dean Admissions or Programme Director for an initial review. If that person considers the concerns sufficiently serious the matter is to be referred to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences who determines whether the matter is to be referred to the Health and Conduct Review Group (**Group**).
- (c) Criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings and health status issues arising at the point of a student's potential admission to a professional programme shall be referred to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences to determine whether the matter is to be referred to the Group.
- (d) The Group convenes to determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether or not information referred to it discloses matters that could materially influence an applicant's fitness to practise. The Group may consult with third parties including Fitness to Practise Committees, those responsible for University Disciplinary processes, and representatives of the relevant health profession;
- (e) Where the Group is considering an applicant's suitability for entry to the programme or the likelihood of attaining registration following completion of the degree it will provide the applicant a reasonable opportunity to respond to the information on which it will base any recommendation it may make.
- (f) The Group will consider the applicant's explanation (if any) before making a final recommendation regarding the applicant's suitability.

- (g) The Group may require applicants to undergo further assessments or provide further information in order to reach its final decision
- (h) Where an applicant refuses to undergo further assessments or withholds or limits access to information which the Group considers relevant to the satisfactory assessment of the application, the Group may recommend that the applicant be declined.
- (i) The Manager of Admissions shall communicate the final recommendation of the Group to the applicant and those responsible for admission and exclusion decisions.
- (j) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall have general delegated authority to advance matters with an applicant on behalf of the Group between Group meetings and may be given a specific delegation by the Group in particular cases to finalise the recommendation to be made to those responsible for admission and exclusion decisions.
- (k) Cases reviewed by the Group will be held on record and may be referenced for any future application.

3. Procedure for dealing with undeclared criminal and health status issues up to the point of commencement of study:

- (a) Any instance or suspected instance of non-disclosure of information shall be referred to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences, who shall determine whether the matter should be referred to the Health and Conduct Review Group (Group).
- (b) The Group convenes to determine whether or not the information that was not declared, and/or the fact of its non-declaration, could materially influence the applicant's admission to or continuation in the programme. The Group may consult with third parties including Fitness to Practise Committees, those responsible for University Disciplinary processes, and representatives of the relevant health profession;
- (c) If the Group considers that the undeclared information, or the fact it was not declared, may affect the student's admission to, or continuation in, the programme it will raise these concerns with the applicant in question and, the applicant will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the Group's concerns and to provide further information about the undeclared issue and the failure to make the declaration.
- (d) The Group will consider the applicant's explanation (if any) before making a final determination regarding the applicant's suitability.
- (e) The Group may require applicants to undergo further assessments or provide further information in order to reach its final decision.
- (f) Where an applicant refuses to undergo further assessments or withholds or limits access to information which the Group considers relevant to the satisfactory assessment of the application, the Group may recommend that the applicant be declined.
- (g) The Manager of Admissions shall communicate the final decision of the Group to the applicant and those responsible for admission decisions.
- (h) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall have general delegated authority to advance matters with an applicant on behalf of the Group between Group meetings and may be given a specific delegation by the Group in particular cases to finalise the recommendation to be made to those responsible for admission and exclusion decisions.
- (i) Cases reviewed by the Group will be held on record and may be referenced for any future application.

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

Contact for further information about this Policy

If you have any queries regarding the content of this policy, procedure or guideline or need further clarification, contact Director, Policy and Programmes, Health Sciences on andrea.howard@otago.ac.nz

Keywords

Health Sciences Professional Programme Health and Conduct procedure.

Consultation

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Divisional Associate Dean (Academic)
Melissa Lethaby, Disability Information and Support, Student Services
Diccon Sim, University Legal Representative
Jan Flood, Registrar & Secretary to the Council
Chris Stoddart, Manager, Policy and Compliance

Implementation Process

All Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Codes of Practice must include an implementation plan, which should respond to each of the following headings:

Person responsible	<i>Director, Policy and Programmes – Health Sciences</i>
Communication strategy	
Other Actions/tasks	
Resources	
Completion Date	