



APPLICANT PREPARATION FOR PANEL INTERVIEW



The following Frequently Asked Questions are designed to help applicants assimilate this information before being approved for an Admissions Panel interview.

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OUM CURRICULUM

How does OUM's medical school curriculum compare to those of traditional medical schools?

The OUM MD program is a full and rigorous medical school curriculum, based largely on US and Australian medical education models. The difference is that OUM facilitates online delivery of the pre-clinical portion of the curriculum. OUM's unique approach enables students to complete the pre-clinical modules while remaining in their own communities. As with traditional medical schools, once OUM students successfully complete their pre-clinical modules, clinical rotations occur on site at select teaching hospitals and/or clinics.

Does this mean I can continue working while attending medical school?

This really depends on the student. Medical school requires a tremendous time commitment to absorb and digest a huge quantity of very complex information. Many students find it difficult to work while also devoting a sufficient amount of time to their studies. OUM has no official policy against students working while attending medical school, but we do stress that academic studies must take priority, and of course students must successfully complete all their courses in order to progress.

Is the OUM program shorter than a traditional medical school?

No. The curriculum is designed so that a student who attends full-time, without interruption, other than the natural breaks between modules, will complete the program in 4.5 years (5 years for the USMLE Pathway).

You offer two MD Pathways. How do I know which one to choose?

The Standard Pathway is for students who do not intend to practice in the United States. The USMLE Pathway is for students who do intend to practice in the United States.

The United States requires foreign medical graduates to pass a series of hurdle exams known as the United States Medical Licensing Exams (USMLE). While other countries also have hurdle exams, the USMLE is much more focused on the basic sciences. To address this special need, OUM developed a separate pathway with added emphasis on the basic sciences, designed specifically for students who intend to take the USMLE.

How many weeks are spent on the online pre-clinical phase of the curriculum?

The pre-clinical phase lasts 90 weeks, and includes the 8-week General Principles Course, and 82 weeks of System-Based modules. For students in the USMLE Pathway there is an additional period of study for the USMLE Prep Course and USMLE Step 1.

What is the General Principles Course in the pre-clinical phase of the curriculum?

After Orientation, students commence an 8-week General Principles Course, which will introduce them to the disciplines covered in upcoming Systems-Based Modules. Students are required to successfully complete this course before progressing.

What are the System-Based Modules in the pre-clinical phase of the curriculum?

The basic sciences are the foundation of medical studies. Both the Standard Pathway and the USMLE Pathway cover the same 10 disciplines. System-Based Modules utilize case-based learning organized around human body systems to demonstrate the practical application of the basic sciences to the practice of medicine. Each of the 10 System-Based Modules (82 weeks) listed below combines the basic and clinical sciences in a case-based format:

- Cardiovascular System (12 weeks)
- Urinary System (10 weeks)
- Pulmonary System (10 weeks)
- Endocrine System (8 weeks)
- Reproductive System (8 weeks)
- Gastrointestinal System (6 weeks)
- Hemi-Immune System (8 weeks)
- Neurology & Neuroscience (12 weeks)
- Rheumatology (4 weeks)
- Behavioral Medicine (4 weeks).

What is the Clinical Skills Course?

Between the pre-clinical and clinical phases of the curriculum, students complete the eight-week Clinical Skills Course with an online academic component and a five-day face-to-face practical instruction component. Students must pass this course before being permitted to begin clinical rotations.

What is OUM's clinical program?

Upon completing pre-clinical training and passing the Clinical Skills Course, students become eligible to begin the required 72 weeks of clinical clerkships/rotations. Core clinical rotations cover 56 weeks, followed by 16 additional weeks of advanced medical/surgical and general elective rotations. Rotations must be completed in hospitals approved by the University. Hospital fees may apply, in addition to tuition.

MD students who intend to complete clinical rotations at US teaching hospitals, and all students seeking to practice medicine in the United States, must pass the USMLE Step 1 to be eligible to proceed into the clinical phase of study.

INTERACTIVE LECTURES, CLASS TIMES, EXAMS, AND MORE

Are the classroom lectures “live” even though they are virtual?

Yes. Students attend live, instructor-led, interactive sessions four days each week, delivered via the Zoom meeting. All live lectures are also recorded, allowing for study review.

- Australia/New Zealand/Samoa class times: Tuesday through Friday, late morning through midday
- US/Canada class times: Monday through Thursday, 8:00 PM to 10:00 PM, ET

Note: Times may change slightly with Daylight Saving Time in students' various countries.

How do I take exams at OUM?

Exams are electronically monitored and delivered online. Exam integrity is assured by use of monitoring software that must be installed on your computer. OUM students are required to have a functioning webcam and microphone that remain on during the entirety of the exam attempt. Students must have a quiet, private location where they take their exams, and are required to perform a video room scan of their test-taking environment immediately prior to every attempt.

When do I take my quizzes and exams?

To accommodate student schedules and geographic distribution, exams are available during designated windows of 24-48 hours, generally scheduled on weekends.

WHAT TO EXPECT AS AN OUM STUDENT

Is there additional academic support outside the classroom?

Yes. Students receive plenty of support throughout the program. OUM provides both an Academic Advisor and a Research Advisor. Both key supports are available to all students at no cost. Academic Advisors remain with students throughout the degree program.

What is the role of the Clinical Mentor?

The role of a Clinical Mentor is that of guide, coach, and role model. As active clinicians located in the student's same geographic proximity, the clinical mentors share clinical experiences and patient-doctor interactions and aid in assessing the student's comprehension of the problem-based learning cases they are reviewing in class. Students are urged to identify their prospective Mentor early in the program before their Systems-Based Modules (SBMs). To register for the first SBM, each student must have their Clinical Mentor approved by OUM.

What is the research requirement?

A formal Research Project is a requirement for graduation from OUM. The Research Methodology course provides recorded lectures, 20 hours of one-on-one faculty support, and other activities to help students develop their Research Project.

Do I ever actually meet other students, faculty, and administration? Do OUM students form study groups?

Yes. There are numerous opportunities for students to meet informally online, in online study groups, and to meet each other and members of the faculty and administration, face-to-face, at regular student conferences. Every OUM student has access to an OUM Zoom account, including the ability to schedule meetings and invite others, inside and outside OUM. Students also may join the Oceania University of Medicine Student Association (OUMSA).

WHERE DO OUM GRADUATES PRACTICE?

Will I be able to practice medicine after graduating with an MD degree from OUM?

Yes. Graduates who take and pass the required exams for licensure/registration and complete an internship/residency in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Samoa, the United States, or other jurisdictions, are able to practice medicine. Please speak with your Admissions Counselor about specific requirements and possible limitations.

Does OUM have the necessary accreditation for International Medical Graduates to practice after graduation?

Yes. OUM is an internationally accredited medical school, providing the required credentials which graduates of foreign medical schools need to practice in most countries.

TIME COMMITMENT

How much time do I need to dedicate to my studies?

Each pre-clinical module requires mastery of extensive information during a relatively short period. Modules are designed anticipating a minimum of 40 hours per week for successful completion. In a recent survey, OUM students reported spending on average 44 hours per week on their pre-clinical studies.

Between hands-on rotations and clinical curriculum assignments, students spend 60+ hours per week completing each clinical module. Given the intense workload, students should devote themselves full-time during the clinical phase of the program.

How long does it take to complete OUM's MD degree program?

Students who attend OUM full-time, with no interruptions other than the existing breaks within modules, may finish the program in 4.5 years (5 years for the USMLE Pathway).

During the clinical phase, in addition to hospital and clinic time, students should plan for a minimum two-week break between rotations to complete their logbooks and end-of-rotation exam. Given the intense workload of the clinical phase, students should expect to complete the required 72 weeks of clinical rotations within two years.

May I attend part-time?

The online pre-clinical study allows students to maintain a full-time or part-time work schedule throughout the first half of medical school. During this time, students will spend an average of 40-50 hours per week on their studies. OUM essentially becomes a full-time job, and some students seek flexible work schedules to accommodate their studies.

Most students complete the program in 4.5 years. Students who work during the pre-clinical phase, or those who plan to practice in the US, may take up to 5 years to complete their degree.

TUITION & FEES

What is the cost of OUM's MD program?

Information below is effective 1 January 2023. For tuition information prior to 2023, refer to the Student Handbook.

Tuition for the MD Program is dependent upon the pathway taken by the student. Students undertaking the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Pathway are expected to complete the program in 4.5 years (no longer than 5 years). Students undertaking the Standard Pathway are expected to complete the program in 4 years (no longer than 4.5 years). Students who plan to practice in the US must take the USMLE Pathway.

Effective January 2023, tuition for the Standard Pathway will be \$43,000 per annum for four years (8 semesters). Tuition for the USMLE Pathway will be \$39,000 per annum for four-and-a-half years (9 semesters). The total amount paid by all students is approximately the same. (Standard Pathway students pay more per annum as they are paying over a shorter period of time than USMLE Pathway students.) These fees are subject to an annual indexation (inflationary adjustment reflecting Consumer Price Index changes). The yearly CPI, as published in July, will be used and the new fee will be set in August for the next year beginning 1 January. Students in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Samoa, and the United States pay fees in their local currency.

Tuition Payment Plan Options

Prior to commencing their first semester, students will be required to pay the Intake Payment Fee of \$10,000, which will be deducted from the first semester tuition fee. Tuition fees will then be charged and payable by semester. A monthly payment plan is also available upon request and will be subject to a 2% Administrative Fee. The election of fee payment type (semester or monthly) must be arranged with the University by the census dates of 31 January or 31 July for the respective intake.

The tuition fees for 2023 will include fees that have previously been charged separately. The following fees are now included in tuition: Clinical Key (Library), Exam Proctor, Clinical Skills Course (CSC), Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), and Student ID card.

Tuition covers the entire program as described above, regardless of actual time to complete the program. There will be no additional charge if the course duration extends beyond the expected 4.5 or 5-year time frame. This is most likely to occur due to the timing of a clinical rotation for which the fees would have already been paid.

Other Fees

In some cases, particularly in North America, students may be charged fees by hospitals when undertaking clinical rotations. This will be referred to as the Clinical Rotation Fee and is separate from OUM tuition. In the event of late payment, there will be a Late Fee of \$25 per occurrence.

There will be additional tuition charges if a student is required to retake a course due to failure. If a module or rotation must be repeated due to failure, then the additional fee of \$750/week will apply.

Refund Policy

Tuition payments will be refunded in the case of withdrawal/dismissal from the program but may be subject to an Administrative Fee as follows:

If a student withdraws or is dismissed:

- Prior to the start of Orientation, there will be a full refund and no Administrative Fee.
- Prior to the start of the General Principles Course, there will be a \$1,000 Administrative Fee.
- Within the first two weeks of the General Principles Course, there will be a \$5,000 Administrative Fee.
- After the second week of the General Principles Course, the total amount of tuition will be divided by the number of weeks in the program, then multiplied by the number of weeks of instruction received at OUM. This is the Prorated Tuition Cost. A Student's Withdrawn/Dismissed Tuition Cost will be equal to the Prorated Tuition Cost, or \$10,000, whichever is greater. The Withdrawn/Dismissed Tuition Cost will be subtracted from the tuition payments previously made (not including tuition fee credits such as mentor honoraria), and any overage will be refunded, less a 5% Administrative Fee.

Application Fees are not refundable or applicable to other fees. Tuition payments are refunded pro-rata only in the event of withdrawal or dismissal.

OTHER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does it matter if I obtained my prerequisite degree several years ago?

No. All MD candidates must have completed a bachelor's degree or higher at an appropriately accredited tertiary educational institution. Generally, for medical school success, applicants are expected to have a credit-level degree or GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent. Applications are accepted from all undergraduate majors. A science major is not a prerequisite at OUM.

What if I already have an advanced healthcare degree?

The MD degree is a stand-alone degree and, while other degrees may enhance a student's ability to accumulate knowledge, they do not offer any acceleration in the MD degree program.

Is it possible to speak with other OUM students and graduates before enrolling?

Yes. OUM sponsors Meet the Student, Meet the Graduate, and Admissions Info Sessions where prospective students may interact with current students and graduates. For details, please contact your Admissions Counselor.

Where do I find OUM's policies, rules, and regulations?

Prospective and incoming students should review the Student Handbook for the latest details on academic policies and admission and graduation requirements.

NOTE: At the time of matriculation, students are required to sign a statement that they have read and understood all the information in the Student Handbook and that they agree to abide by these rules and regulations. OUM reserves the right to add or alter policies as the need arises.

How long has OUM been in existence?

OUM was founded in 2002 in response to the shortage of doctors in Samoa and other areas of the South Pacific. The University now has a global reach, with over 250 students from over 50 countries of origin, who are attracted to the University's innovative hybrid course and the ability to spend the first 2.5 years of their medical studies in their home environment.

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