FAQ – Optometry (BOptom)

Can I get into Optometry (BOptom) directly from school?

No. Applicants completing a secondary qualification in New Zealand or overseas are not eligible to apply directly for the BOptom programme at the University of Auckland.

There are only two application categories into the BOptom programme:

1. Undergraduate Entry:
   - BSc (Biomedical Science) at the University of Auckland, or;
   - Health Sciences First Year at the University of Otago

Applicants must complete the first year courses (minimum of 120 points) and achieve a minimum expected GPA of 6 (B+ average) in order to be eligible for consideration for interview.

All applicants deemed eligible will then be ranked on the grades achieved in the prerequisite courses (as listed below and highlighted with shading).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSc Biomedical Science (UoA)</th>
<th>Health Sciences First Year (Otago)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 110</td>
<td>CHEM 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOSCI 107</td>
<td>CELS 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICS 160</td>
<td>PSHI 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOSCI 106</td>
<td>BIOC 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDSCI 142</td>
<td>HUBS 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOSCI 101</td>
<td>HUBS 191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POPHLTH 111</td>
<td>PUBH 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENEDU**</td>
<td>Optional Paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* POPLHLTH 111 is recommended but optional

**During your BSc first year at UoA, you should take one General Education course from either the Faculty Schedule (EMHSS) or the Open Schedule (O), excluding BIOSCI 100G, MEDSCI 100G, MEDSCI 101G, POPHLTH 103G, POPHLTH 104G.

For more information, visit: www.auckland.ac.nz/generaleducation

2. Graduate Entry

Graduates who have completed a relevant degree from any New Zealand university, or from a recognised overseas tertiary institution, are eligible for consideration for an admission interview.

What if I am not eligible to apply under the admission categories outlined above?

Applicants whose education background differs to those outlined in the application categories above should contact the Faculty Admissions Office for advice: fmhs@auckland.ac.nz

Preferential Entry Categories

You may apply through one of the following as either an Undergraduate or Graduate applicant:

**RRAS:** Up to 5 Places are allocated each intake for students who have undertaken either the full course of their pre-secondary education or at least 3 years of secondary education in a regional or rural area. For the purpose of the scheme, a regional rural area is defined as any part of New Zealand that does not fall within the local authority boundaries of the Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, Porirua, Hutt, Upper Hutt, Christchurch or Dunedin City Councils.

**MAPAS:** This category is for students of Māori or Pacific descent. Up to 12 Places will be offered to MAPAS candidates in each intake. Those applying under this scheme must be able to demonstrate a willingness to participate in their culture.

Application categories for Undergraduate Entry:

- Regional Rural Area Students (RRAS) - Up to 5 places are allocated each intake for students who have undertaken either the full course of their pre-secondary education or at least 3 years of secondary education in a regional or rural area. For the purpose of the scheme, a regional rural area is defined as any part of New Zealand that does not fall within the local authority boundaries of Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington, Porirua, Hutt, Upper Hutt, Christchurch or Dunedin City Councils.

- Māori and Pacific Access to Studies (MAPAS) - 12 places each intake for students of Māori or Pacific descent. Each intake will consider applications for up to 12 students who can demonstrate a willingness to participate in their culture.

Entry into the BOptom programme, the course provides a strong foundation for a number of concepts addressed in the Optometry programme. For this reason, students are strongly encouraged to take POPLHLTH 111.

### What subjects should I take in high school?

It is recommended that potential applicants for the BOptom take a range of science subjects at Year 13 level, including biology, chemistry and physics. If applicants have to choose, or wish to take, two science subjects only, biology and chemistry are recommended. At least one English rich subject is also strongly recommended.

**What are the entry requirements for BSc in Biomedical Science?**

Entry into the first-year of the BSc in Biomedical Science specialisation is limited. Guaranteed school-leaver entry into this specialisation will require:

- a rank score of 280 at NCEA level 3, or;
- a rank score of 310 in CIE, or;
- a score of 33 in IB.

More information about the BSc Biomedical Science is available at [http://www.science.auckland.ac.nz/ua/](http://www.science.auckland.ac.nz/ua/)

### Is POPLHLTH 111 a prerequisite course for entry into the BOptom?

While POPLHLTH 111 is not a required course for entry into the BOptom programme, the course provides a strong foundation for a number of concepts addressed in the Optometry programme. For this reason, students are strongly encouraged to take POPLHLTH 111.

### When will the admission interviews take place?

Interviews for both Undergraduate and Graduate categories will be held in late November – early December each year.
When will I find out whether or not I have been offered an interview?

Applicants who will be invited to attend an admissions interview will be notified by e-mail in mid-November.

What is the GPA cut-off for an interview?

This varies from year to year, and is determined once we have received and reviewed the entire application pool for that admission period.

What sort of things do you ask in the interview?

Applicants who are invited to an interview will be assessed on personal attributes considered by the Faculty to be important for those wishing to pursue a career in optometry, including communication skills, maturity, awareness and knowledge, career choice and well-roundedness.

Ideal applicants should have a mature attitude and good communication skills; therefore, good English speaking skills are essential. Applicants will also be assessed on their awareness and knowledge of structure and issues of the New Zealand health system, and political and societal issues in New Zealand community in general. It is essential that applicants can explain why they aspire to become a health professional.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities, whether sports or other social or community groups.

Is UMAT required for BOptom?

No.

Is there a mid-year intake for BOptom?

No.

Can I study the BOptom part-time?

No. The workload demands and the length and design of the programme mean that students must take the degree full-time unless approved by the Head of School in exceptional circumstances.

How many Graduate applicants get in?

Approximately 20% of available places in the programme will be reserved for Graduate applicants.

How many times can I apply for the BOptom?

There is no limit to the number of times you can apply for the BOptom.

How many apply altogether?

Each year over approximately 300 applications are received for the BOptom programme.

Are Australian students considered as International applicants?

No. Citizens and permanent residents of Australia, and students from the Cook Islands, Tokelau or Niue who are New Zealand citizens, are eligible for enrolment on the same basis as New Zealand students.

What if I am an International Student?

International applicants may compete for a limited number of places in the BOptom programme. The University of Auckland is unable to offer International students financial assistance by way of scholarships and the like.

International applicants may apply under the same two categories as domestic applicants. International graduate applicants will be assessed on the basis of their academic achievements and (if shortlisted) an interview.

Do I need to sit IELTS if my first language is not English?

Applicants whose first language is not English will have to meet the University’s minimum English requirements for admission and provide evidence of one of the following:

- an IELTS academic module to 7.5 (with no band less than 7.0), or;
- TOEFL 625 (paper-based) plus Essay (TWE) of 5.0 or 106 (internet-based) plus a Writing score of 24

However, IELTS/TOEFL is not required if applicants have completed a degree from a New Zealand university or the University of Auckland first year BSc Biomedical Science.

If I study Optometry in NZ, can I work in Australia and New Zealand automatically or do I have to do more tests to be registered? Where else can I work with an NZ qualification?

The NZ BOptom qualification is registrable in both NZ and Australia without further examination. However, in order to work in other countries, Optometry graduates may be required to sit further exams. Please check with relevant registration authorities in the country of interest.

Application Closing Dates

BOptom: 1 October
BSc Biomedical Science: 8 December

Late or incomplete applications will NOT be accepted.

* As selection criteria may change from year to year, applicants should consult the faculty website, prospectus, or the Faculty Student Centre for the latest information