

Demand for admission to study Medicine outstrips availability

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The University has announced that it received more than 3000 applications for 2008, while there are only 200 places available. "The number of places available at medical schools in South Africa is determined by the Health Professions Council of South Africa and there are only 1500 places available country wide," says Prof. Gerhardt Lindeque, Chairperson of the Medical School at the University of Pretoria.

At UP, students are selected in two broad categories - school leavers and students who already have tertiary experience. School leavers need a M-score of 25 or more, six subjects on higher grade that include two languages - one of which should be English - as well as maths and science. Outstanding learners apply and the general performance category boasts school leavers with M-scores of 29 and 30.

According to Prof. Lindeque the selection of prospective medical students takes place the year before they start with their studies. The selection process takes into account the Grade 11 marks, placing test results and the M-score (selection is on the aggregate of the marks for the four identified subjects plus the best of the rest, and not the number of distinctions obtained) which are converted according to a set formula. According to that, a selection order figure is calculated.

The placing test is managed by the HPCSA and **managed by** the Committee of Deans of Faculties of Health Sciences countrywide. The Department of Health's guidelines determine that the intake should reflect the population composition of the country.

UP compiles a waiting list of applicants who fall just under the cut-off point. All other students are informed that they were unsuccessful.

"If a person, who has been unsuccessful before, now obtains eight or nine distinctions, it will not influence the selection, because applicants were informed before the matric exams when they had been unsuccessful," Prof. Lindeque says.

Candidates who were successful in their application cannot perform poorly in their matric exams as the M-score (achieved in matric) should not drop with more than 2 points. All subjects should also be passed on higher grade and maths and science symbols should not be lower than a C.

For the full selection procedure brochure, visit www.up.ac.za/medselect