

## Selection Policy Statement

### **Use of this Policy Statement**

The Selection Policy Statement has been endorsed by the Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand as a guideline statement. All University medical schools are provided with a copy of the policy to be implemented locally as required by individual medical schools.

This document has been developed by:  
Medical Deans Social Accountability Coalition Committee

There is an international consensus that medical schools should graduate health professionals who reflect and are responsive to the diversity within the communities they serve.(1-4, 5, p249, 6) This principle is central to the social accountability obligation of medical schools, with indigenous health being an area of special responsibility.

The Australian Medical Council has for many years recognised the importance of encouraging and prioritising student diversity in its guidelines for the accreditation of medical schools.(7)

The socio-demographic profile of medical students is important because, in part, these characteristics influence future career choices in terms of place of practice and types of populations served.(8-10)

In Australia and New Zealand, inequalities remain in the health status of various social and ethnic groups. Medical schools have a responsibility to select and train students who can be expected to respond to the needs and challenges of the whole community, including the health care of these groups. This responsibility includes selection of students who are members of such groups. Medical schools should embed indigenous health within their curricula, and provide opportunities for learning and provision of service in under-served communities.

In summary, while scholastic performance is highly important, the traditional criterion of scholastic aptitude alone is not enough. Schools with a strong commitment to social accountability use scholastic aptitude as well as recruiting students as broad representatives of the populations to be served in terms of three key dimensions: 1) ethnicity; 2) socioeconomic status; 3) geography / rurality of origin.

## Recommendations

All medical schools should have a selection policy statement that defines:

1. The overall objectives of their selection policies, with reference to the priority needs of the populations whom they serve
2. Their defined target population(s) among prospective students

## References

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