



Health Sciences First Year

Mātau Hauora Tau Tuatahi

“HSFY gave me insight into the direction I wanted to take in the health field. The course was a great first-year experience, and the wide range of learning set a good foundation for me to build upon. I enjoyed meeting new people, gaining more knowledge of the sciences, and experiencing practical hands-on learning.”

Esther Yu
BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY

Bring science to life

Health Sciences First Year (HSFY) is the essential first step for professional programmes in Dentistry, Medical Laboratory Science, Medicine, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy, and is great preparation for Oral Health, Dental Technology and Radiation Therapy.

HSFY is also an excellent way to begin degrees in biological, biomedical and health sciences.

0800 80 80 98 | otago.ac.nz | university@otago.ac.nz



What is Health Sciences First Year?

Health Sciences First Year (HSFY) is only available at Otago. The programme, which must be completed in the first year of your university study, consists of seven compulsory papers plus the option to take an approved eighth paper in semester 2. It is a busy year that includes lectures, tutorials, laboratories, tests and readings.

What will you study?

Staff from departments across the University teach the HSFY compulsory papers, which cover a wide range of topics from the sciences, biomedical sciences and humanities. You will gain foundational knowledge about how the body functions at various levels: from the physical, chemical, biochemical, molecular and cellular levels, through to functional organ systems and factors affecting health and disease in human populations.

Compulsory papers

Semester 1:

CELS 191	Cell and Molecular Biology
CHEM 191	The Chemical Basis of Biology and Human Health
HUBS 191	Human Body Systems I
PHSI 191	Biological Physics

Semester 2:

BIOC 192	Foundations of Biochemistry
HUBS 192	Human Body Systems II
POPH 192	Population Health

All HSFY students will be required to sit a compulsory English diagnostic test in the first semester. Students who are identified by the test as requiring additional English support will be required to take and pass ENGL 126 English for University Purposes.

Optional eighth paper

The optional eighth paper is an opportunity to study something outside of health sciences. The list of approved papers is varied and extensive and includes subjects in Sciences, Humanities and Commerce.

otago.ac.nz/hsfy8thpaper

Background required

There are no subject requirements for entry into HSFY, but we strongly recommend you take chemistry, physics and calculus in Year 13.

Career opportunities

HSFY is the gateway to a career in healthcare or medical, biomedical and health sciences. These careers provide opportunities to work in private practice, community clinics, hospitals, academia, research institutions, industry, government departments and agencies, and the emergency services.

By the end of HSFY, you should have developed:

- A sense of the interconnectedness between different fields of knowledge in the health sciences.
- An awareness of why this knowledge is relevant to the study of ill-health.
- A sound understanding of broader principles and concepts underpinning all biomedical and life sciences.
- A strengthened understanding, commitment, and enthusiasm for science and the scientific method.
- Awareness of different worldviews of what it means to be healthy.

What comes after HSFY?

HSFY is well-known as the competitive first year of study for five of Otago's professional programmes, but it also gives you a number of other options – ranging from useful background knowledge for three other professional programmes, to counting as the first year of a Bachelor of Biomedical Sciences, Bachelor of Health Sciences or Bachelor of Science degree.

Applications for entry into Dentistry, Medical Laboratory Science, Medicine, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy programmes close on 15 September annually.

HSFY is also useful preparation – but not compulsory – for Dental Technology, Oral Health and Radiation Therapy. Applications for these programmes also close on 15 September annually.

Or, you may find that as you explore the wide range of subjects presented during HSFY you discover new areas of interest. There are many opportunities at Otago after HSFY, as its papers can be credited towards a range of degrees.

Want to know more about admission to a professional programme?

Application information for entry into the Health Sciences professional programmes is available at:

otago.ac.nz/healthsciences

Information is distributed to HSFY students upon enrolment and throughout the year. Each professional programme has specific criteria for admission from HSFY. Apart from HSFY, there are also other pathways to seek admission to the professional programmes. Contact AskOtago for information about these options:

Tel 0800 80 80 98

Email university@otago.ac.nz

International applications

If you do not hold New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence, please contact the University's International Office:

Tel +64 3 479 7000

Email international@otago.ac.nz

NB: HSFY must be your first year of university study. You are advised to contact AskOtago if you are considering tertiary study before enrolling in HSFY to avoid missing the opportunity to enrol in this course.

For questions about
Health Sciences First Year
otago.ac.nz/hsfy



PROFILES

Cam Young Bachelor of Science in Anatomy (major) and Pacific Islands Studies (minor)

"HSFY gave me a strong foundation in scientific and public health knowledge, and tools for open-mindedness, determination and academic scholarship.

I was exposed to a bigger world than I had imagined, with countless career opportunities in research and academia, allied health professions, science communication and health policy.

Perhaps the most important part of my story is that I wasn't offered a place in medicine after HSFY. I was disappointed at first and had to pick myself back up and choose what next to study. I realised I had the opportunity of time: time to explore my other interests in anatomical sciences; time to grow as an individual and learn about my Pacific identity, and time to self-reflect and build stronger habits after my first year."



Ivana Barbalich Studying towards a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery

"HSFY was a life-changing experience. It is intense, but completely doable if you set your mind to it and are resilient. It is a very well-organised course with clear expectations, structure and support.

The programme taught me the fundamentals and academic language for a wide variety of topics I have gone on to study in more depth.

I am now in the fourth year of my Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB ChB), and have just started a placement at Christchurch Hospital – I am loving it!

I've also completed research studentships and currently work part-time for the Ministry of Health. In the future, I hope to be a good doctor and a strong advocate for causes I care about."

