



**Australian  
Competition &  
Consumer  
Commission**

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8 August 2014

Jasmine Hope  
Senior Lawyer  
Australian National University

***Via email: [jasmine.hope@anu.edu.au](mailto:jasmine.hope@anu.edu.au)***

Dear Ms Hope

**Re: The Australian National University and Ors ('GAMSAT Consortium') application for re-authorisation of Interview and Preference policies for graduate-entry medical schools (A91441 – A91443) – interested party submissions and information request**

I refer to the above application for authorisation lodged with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (the ACCC) on 1 July 2014.

As you are aware, on 9 July 2014 the ACCC wrote to interested parties seeking submissions in relation to the application. The ACCC requested submissions be provided by 31 July 2014.

The ACCC has received a public submission from SA Health. A copy of this submission is attached. All publicly available submissions are also posted on the ACCC's website at [www.accc.gov.au/AuthorisationsRegister](http://www.accc.gov.au/AuthorisationsRegister).

Further, the ACCC has been advised that it can expect to receive another interested party submission by the end of this week. The ACCC will forward any additional public submissions to you as soon as possible after receipt.

### **Issues raised by interested parties**

1. SA Health's submission notes the foreshadowed reforms to the higher education sector, including the removal of the fee caps in Commonwealth supported places from January 2016. It submits that 'if this change is implemented this may allow each university to set their own fees to study medicine.'
  - a) Please explain what impacts the above mentioned reforms might have on the operation of the Interview and Preference Policies for which authorisation is sought.
  - b) Please explain what impact the above mentioned reforms might have on the public benefits and detriments likely to result from the Interview and Preference Policies.

## Information request

The ACCC also seeks further information about the extent of the public benefits and detriments flowing from the Interview and Preference Policies during the term of the current authorisation, as well as the operation of the policies more generally. In particular:

1. At paragraph 26 of the supporting submission to the application, the applicants advise that The University of Sydney withdrew its membership of the GAMSAT Consortium in 2011. Since then, The University of Sydney has conducted its own application and interview processes for graduate-entry medical students.
  - a) Can you please list any other graduate-entry medical schools in Australia that are not currently members of the GAMSAT Consortium.
  - b) For each intake since 2011, please outline what impact, if any, The University of Sydney conducting its own application and interview processes has had on the GAMSAT Consortium's processes. In your response, please outline any delays experienced, increases in the total number of interviews conducted and the number of rounds of offers required to fill graduate-entry medical school places.
  - c) Please explain the steps that students would need to undertake in order to apply for a graduate-entry position at both The University of Sydney and GAMSAT Consortium medical schools, including whether applicants to The University of Sydney are required to sit the GAMSAT exam, and the relevant deadlines in selection and interview processes.
2. The ACCC understands that interviewees receive a numerical score for their performance at interview. To allow for the interviewee's application to potentially be 'passed on' to a lower preferred medical school, all interview scores are then 'standardised'.

The ACCC also understands that the 'standardisation process' was reviewed following the 2011/12 selection round, and that GAMSAT Committee members concluded that the current method of standardisation was valid and equitable and would be continued to be used.

- a) Can you please clarify whether the GAMSAT Consortium develops common questions to be used by each medical school during interviews, or whether each medical school develops its own interview questions.
- b) In receiving scores from applicants interviewed at a higher preferred school, please explain how each medical school ensures its own selection/information requirements are met – for example, are there agreed core subjects which are covered by all medical schools during interviews, and are the raw results and interview questions exchanged between medical schools for these applicants?

3. At paragraph 79 of the supporting submission to the application, the applicants submit that without the Interview and Preference Policies, the GAMSAT Consortium medical schools would be required to interview considerably more applicants. Further, the applicants submit that since the introduction of the policies, Australian graduate entry medical schools typically interview about 125 per cent to 150 per cent of the applicants needed to fill the available places.
  - a) To the extent possible, for each member of the GAMSAT Consortium please provide the total number of interviews conducted and the number of positions available for each year between 2007 and the current intake.

Please provide a response to these issues and any other issues raised in interested party submissions by **18 August 2014**.

This letter has been placed on the ACCC's public register. If you wish to discuss any aspect of this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Jaime Martin on (03) 9290 1477.

Yours sincerely



Susan Philp  
Director  
Adjudication Branch