

# School of Medicine Faculty of Health Sciences

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Professor David Wilkinson, Head of School  
MBBS MSc PhD DSc MRCP FRCGP FAFPHM



## Graduate entry to medical school: challenges and opportunities

- Medical school entry is high profile and high stakes
- Broadly similar approaches used, but variable weightings applied
- GPA, GAMSAT/MCAT, interview / psychometric

### Trying to do 2 things

- Manage the demand – supply imbalance
- Select the “students who will become the best doctors”

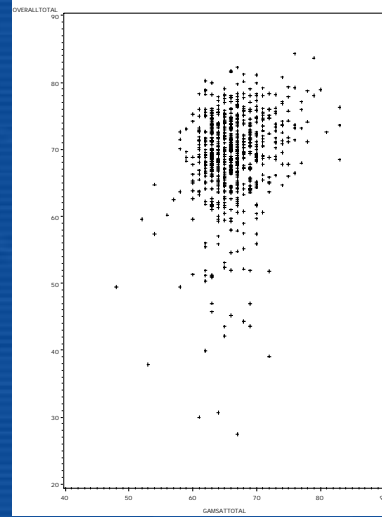
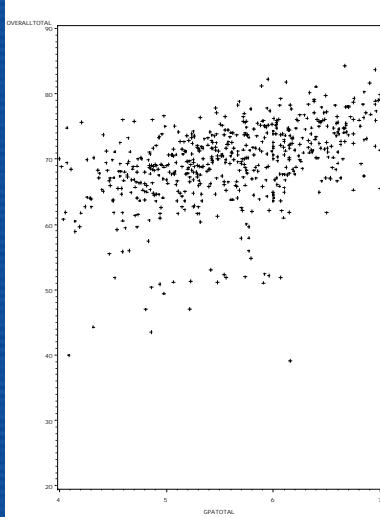
## Questions that arise

- *What is the evidence that current selection processes achieve what they set out to do?*
  - Strongly held opinion
  - Plenty of assertion
  - Uncertainty on our part
- *How sure are we that our processes are of a defensible quality?*
  - 400 students, 500 interviews
  - Recruit and train interviewers
  - QA, cost-benefit
- *Are we sure about what we really want to achieve?*
  - Manage demand – rank (on what)
  - “Select” or “train”

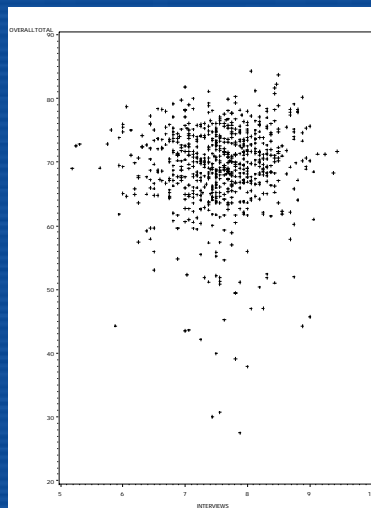
## The study

- 3 complete cohorts >700 students
- 2001-2003, 4 year program exam scores
- Dataset of all admissions data and characteristics plus all assessment results
- Examined correlation between selection scores and exam scores, multivariate models
- Selection process:
  - GPA 4.5-5 hurdle
  - GAMSAT ranking (50/50/50:>60) for interview
  - Combined interview and GAMSAT score – final ranking

## Results



## Results



## Results

### Correlation

- GPA: 0.445
  - Consistent across Years 1-4
  - Higher for written exam, lower for clinical and ethics
- GAMSAT: 0.237
  - Fell from Year 1 to Year 4 (0.33-0.06)
- Interview: 0.035

### Model

- Combined selection criteria-variation in performance
  - Fell from 27% Year 1 to 16% in Year 4

## Conclusions

- Interviews do not predict academic performance
- GAMSAT has modest predictive value that wanes
- GPA has strongest (consistent) predictive value
  
- Given that the program has high progression rates, a strong communication skills program, and a strong PPD program we have changed our entry criteria
  
- No interview; GAMSAT hurdle, GPA ranking
- From “selection” to “admission”
- Intensive monitoring of impact-risk management

## Implications

- Data on interviews and GPA are consistent with literature: we have acted on the findings
- Data on GAMSAT are new and must raise some serious questions about its value and its utility
- Critical discussion about what a “good doctor” is, how this is measured, whether we can “select” for this, the balance between selection and training, and at what stage of training