

Admission to the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore (NUS)

Applicant Information 2023

This document has been designed to provide applicants invited to take part in the NUS assessment with information about the Situational Judgement Test (SJT). You should read the information and the example questions provided to ensure that you are clear on what will be expected of you.

Why is the SJT used as part of the admissions process at NUS?

SJTs are a popular selection method for assessing professional role-related attributes. Research indicates that they have significant validity in predicting role performance. Role analyses of numerous specialties in the medical context have led to wide acknowledgment that non-cognitive or professional attributes (such as teamwork or perspective taking) are essential requirements for a medical school student.

Your academic results have been reviewed to determine your suitability to progress to the NUS Assessment Day. Admission into the NUS Medical School will be determined by your SJT results and your performance in the Focused Skills Assessment (FSA), please see the separate information document about the FSA.

The NUS SJT is designed to assess the key attributes that have been identified as important for medical school students; it is concerned with assessing non-academic attributes, such as interpersonal skills and ethical values, rather than knowledge or clinical skills. The NUS SJT has been designed based on an analysis of the medical role, and therefore the assessment content reflects situations relevant to this role. Psychometrically robust assessments, such as the NUS SJT, offer many advantages for the selection of medical school students and will add increased standardisation and validity to the selection process.

Completing the SJT

As part of your assessment, you will be asked to complete the online NUS SJT. You will be provided with full instructions on the day; however you should read through the information below and review the practice questions to prepare yourself in advance.

On the day, you will have **60 minutes** to complete the online NUS SJT.

During the assessment you will be presented with a set of hypothetical scenarios which are based in either an everyday lifestyle setting, a clinical setting or during educational training for a medical career. These scenarios may involve a student, patient or colleague.

You will be asked to read each scenario carefully, and you will then be asked to make judgements about a series of options in response to the scenario. Your responses are evaluated against a pre-determined scoring key to provide a picture of your situational judgement.

The SJT consists of two parts. The two parts have slightly different response formats, so please make sure you read the instructions for each part carefully. For Part One you will be asked to rate the **appropriateness** of a series of options in response to the scenario.

1. An option is **a very appropriate thing to do** if this is a very good thing to do in response to the scenario and one that will address at least one aspect (but not necessarily all aspects) of the situation.
2. An option is **appropriate, but not ideal** if this is something that could be done, but is not necessarily a very good thing to do in response to the scenario.
3. An option is **inappropriate, but not terrible** if this is something that should not really be done, but would not be a terrible thing to do in response to the scenario.
4. An option is **a very inappropriate thing to do** if this is something that should definitely not be done in response to the scenario and would make the situation worse.

For Part Two you will be asked to rate the **importance** of a series of options in response to the scenario.

1. An option is **very important** if this is something that is vital to take into account when considering how to respond to the scenario.
2. An option is **important** if this is something that is important, but not vital, to take into account when considering how to respond to the scenario.
3. An option is **of minor importance** if this is something that could be taken into account, but it does not matter if it is considered or not when responding to the scenario.
4. An option is **not important at all** if this is something that should definitely not be taken into account when considering how to respond to the scenario.

Within a single scenario, **each rating can be used more than once or not at all**; for example all response options can be given the same rating of 'very appropriate' or 'very important' if you feel that these are the correct ratings.

You should consider the responses in relation to what the individual **should do**, rather than what they may be likely to do given the circumstances.

In response to any given scenario in Part One, there may be multiple actions that should be taken. You should make a judgement about a particular response regardless of whether it is the only thing that is done, or if it is done in combination with multiple actions. For example, if the wrong medication is provided to a patient, there are a number of steps that should be taken including checking that the patient is ok and assessing the patient medically. The response 'ask the patient if they are ok' should still be judged as appropriate, as this in itself is an appropriate response. It should not be judged as if this is the only action that will be taken.

Each response option should be treated independently; you should make a judgement as to the appropriateness or importance of a particular response option independent from the other options presented within the scenario.

The response options within each scenario provided are not intended to represent all possible options; it may well be that the response you think would be the most appropriate or most important in that particular situation is not present. That is fine; we are just asking you to make a judgement about the options that are provided.

It may be that some options are appropriate or important in the *short term* (i.e. immediately addressing a wrong doing) and some options are appropriate or important in the *long term* (i.e. discussing the implications of the wrong doing after the event). **Please consider the appropriateness or importance of a response option irrelevant of the timeframe.**

SJT Example Questions

Two example questions have been provided to give you an opportunity to familiarise yourself with the format of the SJT. Refer to the information above to guide you when considering your responses to these questions. Below each response option the correct rating has also been provided, in addition to a rationale to explain why that is the correct rating.

Example Question 1 (Appropriateness)

A group of first year medical students are on a medical ward as part of a patient-based program. Dr Cheng, their supervising clinician has told them that as part of the program today they must work in pairs with each person conducting a patient interview. She tells the student that there is no need for her to be there to supervise the interviews as long as the pairs work together. Dr Cheng is then called away to attend to a patient. After she has left the ward, the nurse in charge of the ward comes and tells the students that they must not conduct any interviews without having a clinician there to supervise. All students, except one, agree to wait for the supervising clinician to return. This student, Denise, thinks that they should continue conducting the patient interviews.

How **appropriate** are each of the following responses by **Denise** in this situation?

A. Conduct the interview on her own while the other students wait for Dr Cheng to return

Correct Rating: 2

Rationale: *Conducting the interviews whilst Dr Cheng is away is appropriate because the students have already been told by Dr Cheng that there is no need for her to supervise them. However, it is not the best course of action as Dr Cheng has specified that she would like the students to work in pairs. If Denise decides to conduct an interview on her own this is going against Dr Cheng's instructions.*

B. Explain to the nurse in charge that Dr Cheng clearly said that they do not need to be supervised to conduct the interviews

Correct Rating: 1

Rationale: *Explaining to the nurse in charge what Dr Cheng's instructions were is a very appropriate thing to do as it is possible that the nurse has told the students not to conduct the interviews because she is unaware of this information.*

C. Suggest to the nurse in charge that she contacts Dr Cheng to discuss the situation

Correct Rating: 3

Rationale: *In a situation like this, where Dr Cheng has been called away to attend a patient and is obviously busy, Denise and the nurse in charge should attempt to resolve the situation between themselves. Although this is not an ideal response, if Denise did do this it would not be terrible.*

D. Tell the other students that the nurse in charge does not have the authority to stop them from conducting the interviews

Correct Rating: 4

Rationale: *Denise should not be talking about the nurse's authority to the other students, it would be very inappropriate for Denise to do this. Denise should resolve the situation by speaking to the nurse directly, rather than just encouraging all of the students to ignore her. It is not addressing the actual problem.*

Example Question 2 (Importance)

Martin, a junior doctor, is nearing the end of a busy shift on Friday and is looking forward to attending a music concert by one of his favourite artists that evening with an old friend. As Martin is finishing up his last task of the day, he notices that his colleague, Nina, is looking agitated and upset. Nina tells Martin that she has been working additional shifts throughout the week, and she is exhausted. She is unable to leave though because she has just been asked to carry out a series of blood specimens and write up some paperwork.

How **important** are the following considerations for **Martin** when deciding how to respond to the situation?

A. That he may miss the beginning of his concert if he stays to help Nina

Rating: 3

Rationale: *Although it is likely that Martin will not want to miss the beginning of his concert this is only of minor importance due to the fact that he is now aware of how exhausted Nina is and the possible risk to patient safety if Nina continues to complete her additional tasks.*

B. That Nina is exhausted and this may compromise patient safety

Rating: 1

Rationale: *The patient's best interests are paramount here, therefore making this a very important consideration for Martin. If Nina is exhausted she may unknowingly make a mistake or harm a patient.*

C. Nina should not have asked for additional shifts if she was unable to handle the workload

Rating: 4

Rationale: *Just because Nina may be exhausted due to working additional shifts throughout the week does not mean that Martin should not help her to complete her additional tasks.*

D. Whether there is anyone else available that could assist Nina with her workload

Rating: 2

Rationale: *This is an important thing to consider because if there is someone else available it would mean that Nina will get the support she needs with her workload and Martin will still be able to attend his concert. However, it is not a vital thing to consider as Martin could assist her.*