

## **Planning for University – Your First Steps Webinar FAQ's**

### **What are the main differences between the Life Science Program and Health Sciences Program?**

**Content of the programs:** With the Health Sciences program, you're studying human health, illness and wellness through multiple disciplines including biology, biomedical sciences, population systems and much more. With Life Sciences, you have a broader scope as you can choose to study science through any multiple different living systems (plants, animals or humans) depending on your interest.

**Program Structure:** Life Sciences has a lot of flexibility to tailor your study to your interests as it is a gateway program. You have a general first year after which you are able to specialize in one of the over 30 specializations available (check out [mapsci.ca](http://mapsci.ca) for full list). In contrast, Health Sciences is a direct entry program in which you do all 4 years in that program. There is one specialization in Child Health and a number of certificates and minors, but generally speaking your studies are going to be focused on human health from a variety of lenses.

**Teaching Methods:** Health Sciences is a small program that involves a lot of group work and self-directed learning in our inquiry courses. The Life Sciences uses more of a guided, traditional approach to teaching, but you will still take many courses that incorporate group research projects. In Life Sciences, the size of the classes may also get smaller as you move into upper level programs. Both programs will allow you to develop strong critical thinking and communication skills – it just depends on which program style is a better fit for the type of learner you are.

### **How can we check the admission requirements/supplementary application for each program?**

For information on the admission requirements of each program please visit our website (<https://future.mcmaster.ca/apply/requirements/>) on this page you will receive information pertaining to the target enrolment of the program, the courses required to apply, anticipated admission averages needed to be considered for the program, and more information about the supplementary application (if applicable).

### **How many programs can I apply to?**

You can apply to up to three programs at McMaster University. If you are interested in applying to multiply programs, we encourage you to apply to each (up to the maximum of three), as McMaster University typically does not provide alternate offers of admission and will only consider you for the programs that you've applied for.

**What are the main differences between a major, minor, diploma and certificate? Are they offered in all programs?**

A major is your primary topic you are studying (majority of your courses focus on this topic) for example Biology. A minor is something you are studying through your choice of elective courses, for example, you could complete a Biology major while completing a minor in sustainability. Certificates are additional credentials offered by select programs. Diplomas are only offered by some programs and would be an additional designation that you graduate with.

**Does McMaster take our OUAC Rankings into consideration when reviewing applications?**

When applying on OUAC (Ontario University Applications Centre), the application will ask you to rank the programs across all the universities that you've applied for. McMaster University does not consider how you rank us compared to other universities for admission purposes.

**What is the difference between a direct-entry and a gateway program?**

A Direct-entry program is a program that you apply to directly from high school and you will remain in this program for the entire duration of your degree. A gateway program is a program you apply into from high school, will consist of a more exploratory content in your first year(s), and then provide you with the opportunity to select a major, specialization, or area of focus beyond Level I.

**What's McMasters policy on repeated courses?**

If you have repeated up to two courses, the highest mark reported will be used to calculate your admission average. If you repeat more than two courses, or an individual course three or more times, you may be asked to provide a letter of explanation, which may be considered when determining admission.

**What is the recommended deadline for the 2023/2024 cycle?**

The recommended application deadline for the 2023/2024 cycle is January 15, 2024. We encourage students to submit their applications by this deadline, as after this date some programs will begin to close.

**What is the difference between a Bachelors without honours and Honours Bachelors degree?**

An Honours Bachelors degree is typically a 4-year program in which a student will complete a major project (thesis, reflection, etc.) in their final year of study. In order to receive an Honours Bachelors degree there is a minimum grade point average that you must meet which is program specific.

A non-honours Bachelors degree is typically a 3-year program. These degrees may also be known as exit degrees for students who may have applied to professional schools or post-grad opportunities to allow them to complete their degree in a shorter duration. However, these degrees may also be for students who did not meet the minimum GPA required for the "Honours" degree.

**Does McMaster provide Advanced Credit for IB/AP courses?**

Advanced credit is assessed at the request of the applicant after accepting their offer of admission and clearing conditions of admission as outlined in their offer letter. International Baccalaureate (IB): Diploma or certificate students may request advanced credit, of up to 18 units, for completion of higher-level subjects with a minimum final grade of 5, at the discretion of the faculty. Advanced Placement (AP): AP students may request advanced credit, of up to 18 units, for completion of AP exams in acceptable subjects with a minimum final score of 4, at the discretion of the faculty.