

HPAT Scoring – Complete Guide (Ireland)

Understanding **how HPAT scoring works** is essential for students applying to **undergraduate Medicine in Ireland**. HPAT uses a **scaled and weighted scoring system**, meaning your final score is **not based on the number of questions you get right**, but on how you perform compared to other candidates.

This guide explains **how HPAT scores are calculated**, **how sections are weighted**, **what different score ranges mean**, and **how HPAT combines with Leaving Certificate points**, including the **changes from 2027 onwards**.

How HPAT Scores Are Calculated (Simple Explanation)

HPAT scoring happens in **two clear steps**.

Step 1: Your Answers Are Converted into Scaled Scores

In the HPAT exam, you answer **110 multiple-choice questions** across three sections:

- **Section 1: Logical Reasoning – 44 questions**
- **Section 2: Interpersonal Understanding – 40 questions**
- **Section 3: Non-Verbal Reasoning – 26 questions**

Your **raw score** is simply how many questions you answered correctly in each section. However, **raw scores are never shown** to candidates.

Instead, ACER (the organisation that runs HPAT) converts raw scores into **scaled scores** for each section. These scaled scores usually fall in the **0–100 range**.

Why Are Scores Scaled?

Scaling is used to:

- Make sure the exam is fair if one year's paper is slightly harder or easier
- Compare all candidates on the same scale
- Adjust for differences in question difficulty

Important: Because this process is statistical and confidential, **you cannot calculate your own scaled score** from the number of correct answers.

Step 2: Your Scaled Scores Are Combined into One Final HPAT Score

Once each section has a scaled score, they are combined to create your **overall HPAT score**.

Section Weightings

- **Section 1 (Logical Reasoning): 40%**
- **Section 2 (Interpersonal Understanding): 40%**
- **Section 3 (Non-Verbal Reasoning): 20%**

This means:

- Sections 1 and 2 have **the biggest impact** on your final score
- Section 3 still matters, but counts for **half as much**

Final HPAT Score

- **Maximum possible score: 300**
- **Minimum possible score: 0**

Your final HPAT score is the number that is used for **medical school selection**.

Understanding Your HPAT Results

When results are released, you receive a **Statement of Results** showing:

1. A scaled score for each section
2. Your **overall HPAT score (out of 300)**
3. Your **percentile rank**

What Does Percentile Rank Mean?

Your percentile shows how you performed compared to **all other candidates in the same year**.

- **90th percentile:** You scored higher than 90% of candidates
- **75th percentile:** You scored higher than 75% of candidates
- **50th percentile:** Average performance

Percentiles can change slightly each year depending on how strong the applicant group is.

What Is a “Good” HPAT Score?

There is **no pass or fail** in HPAT. Scores are competitive and must be considered **together with Leaving Certificate points**.

General HPAT Score Guide

- **200+:** Exceptional (top 1%)
- **185–199:** Excellent
- **170–184:** Very good
- **160–169:** Good
- **150–159:** Average

Most successful Medicine applicants score **170 or higher**, or **160–169 with very high Leaving Certificate points (600+)**.

How HPAT Combines with Leaving Certificate Points (Until 2026)

Current CAO Scoring System

Your total score for Medicine entry is:

Combined Score = Adjusted Leaving Certificate Points + HPAT Score

- Leaving Certificate points up to **550** count in full
 - Points above 550 are adjusted down
 - Maximum adjusted LC score: **565**
 - Maximum combined score: **865**
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HPAT & Leaving Certificate Changes from 2027

From **2027 onwards**, the points system for Medicine entry will change:

- **HPAT maximum:** 150 points (reduced from 300)
- **Leaving Certificate points:** Count in full, up to **625 points**
- **New maximum combined score: 775 points**
- **480 Leaving Certificate minimum** still applies
- **Same-year HPAT requirement** remains

This means **Leaving Certificate results will carry more weight**, while HPAT remains an important ranking tool.

HPAT FAQs

Can I calculate my HPAT score from the number of questions I got right?

No. HPAT uses scaled scoring, and ACER does not release the conversion formula.

Is HPAT scored as a percentage?

No. HPAT scores are **not percentages**.

Is there negative marking in HPAT?

No. There is **no penalty for incorrect answers**.

Can I improve my HPAT score with practice?

Yes. Familiarity with question types, timing, and exam strategy can significantly improve results.

How long are HPAT scores valid?

HPAT scores are valid for **one year only**.

HPAT Score Improvement Tips

- Focus more on **Sections 1 and 2**, as they count for **80% of your total score**
 - Do not ignore Section 3, but understand its lower weighting
 - Practise under **timed conditions**
 - Balance HPAT preparation with **Leaving Certificate study**, especially from 2027 onwards
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Final Advice for Medicine Applicants

- Aim to maximise your **combined score**, not HPAT alone
- Prioritise **Leaving Certificate performance**
- Prepare strategically and early for HPAT
- Stay informed through official **CAO and ACER updates**

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