

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
FACULTY OF MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND HEALTH SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

Policy and Procedures for Placing Students in Clinical Schools

(Updated 28/1/09)

OBJECTIVES

This Policy details how the School of Medicine in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences deals with the allocation of students to clinical schools and the subsequent management of appeals against placements or requests for re-allocation.

PRINCIPLES

EQUITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' preferences for clinical placements will be considered • The clinical placement process will strive for a balance of students by gender, entry status and fee status. • There will be an independent and transparent appeal process
RURAL CLINICAL SCHOOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% of all Commonwealth Supported students are required to spend at least one year of their clinical placement in the Rural Clinical School. • Students who have an Extended Rural Cohort Place, a Bonded Medical Place or a Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship will automatically be placed at the Rural Clinical School. The rationale is that those students will be expected to ultimately work in a rural area or area of workforce need and the experience at the RCS will prepare them more appropriately for this. • Students accepting a place in the Extended Rural Cohort at the University of Melbourne will be expected to undertake their 5 semesters of clinical training at the Rural Clinical School's Northern Victoria Regional Medical Education Network (NVRMEN) sites (currently Bendigo, Shepparton and Wangaratta during Semester 8 and 9; and through the Benalla, Echuca, Yarrawonga, Shepparton and Wangaratta hubs for Semesters 10 and 11). The Rural Clinical School will provide training for ERC students at sites in North Eastern Victoria, and in collaboration with Monash University at Bendigo in North Central Victoria. Acceptance of an ERC place indicates acceptance of clinical training in NVRMEN sites. Please note that Ballarat is a Rural Clinical School site but not a NVRMEN site. • About 10 reserves will be chosen at random for the Rural Clinical School to fill places that may be vacated prior to the commencement of semester 8 in any given year. Reserves will be informed 2 calendar months prior to the commencement of the clinical placement that they are no longer required to stand in reserve.

SPECIFIC COHORTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERC, BMP and MRBS students will be allocated to the Rural Clinical School. As stated above, ERC students must be placed at NVRMEN sites and cannot be placed at Ballarat. • TAP and Access students will be treated as other CSP students. • International students will be allocated to one of the metropolitan clinical schools • Each clinical school will attempt to achieve a balance of gender, school leaver/graduate entrants and domestic/international students (metropolitan schools only) • Oral and Maxillofacial students will be allocated to one of the metropolitan clinical schools.
APPEAL PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of submission of preferences, any student may request either a particular clinical school, or that they not be sent to a particular clinical school due to exceptional circumstances. Such requests must be accompanied by verified supporting documentation. A non-exclusive list of acceptable reasons is appended along with a non-exclusive list of non-acceptable reasons. • Students may appeal against a decision made under this policy to the Appeals Committee in the first instance and if necessary, to the Director of the Medical Education Unit and finally to Academic Board. Appeals must be submitted in writing to: Clinical Placements Appeals Committee C/- The Manager, MDHS Student Centre Ground Floor, Medical Building University of Melbourne Vic 3010 Written appeals to the Appeals Committee will be responded to within 15 working days of receipt.

PROCEDURES

The School of Medicine administers Clinical Placements in the following specific ways:

- The School of Medicine will allocate students to a clinical placement for the duration of semesters 8-12 of the medical course. This allocation will occur in or prior to semester 5 for school leavers and semester 3 for graduate entrants. This will allow students a period of no less than one year to organise to attend at their allocated placement.
- Student's requests for being placed with a friend will not be considered.
- Students will be invited to rank the clinical schools in order of preference. These preferences will be taken into consideration in allocating placements but no student will be guaranteed to get their first preference placement. Should a student not submit preferences in a timely manner, it will be assumed that they have no preferences.
- The cohort will be ranked into quartiles by academic results in semesters 1-4 for school leaver entrants and entry rank for graduate entrants.
- All ERC, BMP and MRBS students will first be allocated to the Rural Clinical School and thus taken out of the allocation process.
- Students with acceptable reasons for requesting a particular clinical school will be thus allocated and taken out of the allocation process.

- The remaining students will be chosen randomly by computer and will be allocated in turn to their highest available preferences.
- The resulting lists will be considered by the Clinical Deans (the Clinical Placement Working Group) and some re-allocation may occur to redress imbalances in gender, entry status or fee-status.
- Up to 10 students (3-4 in each quartile) who were allocated to their first preferences, will be chosen at random to be reserves for the Rural Clinical School unless it is oversubscribed, in which case, those students who missed allocation to the RCS, will become the reserves in order of quartile, with randomly-selected students making up the shortfall if any.
- Once semesters 8 -12 are underway, changes to clinical placements can only occur if a student's circumstances change and the new circumstances fall within the range of acceptable reasons. Application for changes must be made in writing with supporting documentation to the Appeals Committee. The committee will hear all requests for changes to clinical placements within 15 days of receipt of the written request.

Guidelines for granting change of clinical placement requests

Acceptable reasons for granting change

1. Family matters (must relate to immediate family and must require that the student takes direct and sole responsibility in extraordinary circumstances)
 - Serious illness of a family member requiring daily and ongoing care by the student.
 - Children or spouse unable to move due to schooling or work commitments
2. Personal (must relate to the student and must require that the student remain within a certain geographic region to fulfil the following on-going commitments)
 - Illness requiring on-going specialist care that is not able to be accessed if the placement proceeds. Must be a need for more than once monthly consultations of a highly specialised nature.
 - Representation in Sports, Arts or other activity at an Australian National level which requires an on-going commitment such as team practice which cannot be undertaken if the placement proceeds.
3. Other on-going and serious circumstances deemed to be exceptional by the Placements Working Group provided adequate documentation is supplied.

Non-acceptable reasons for granting change may include:

1. Family matters
 - Care of a family member that is not immediate family, and/or where the primary responsibility for that family member lies elsewhere (e.g. a sick grandparent where parents or other close family members are able to provide care)
 - Family connections to a particular hospital or clinical school
2. Personal
 - Illness of a more general nature where appropriate treatment is readily available in the region of the placement.
 - Other studies (students are not permitted to undertake concurrent studies in the clinical semesters)
 - Lack of a vehicle
 - Part-time employment
 - Volunteer commitments
 - Leases and mortgages
 - Friendship groups
 - Religious facilities unavailable in the placement region