OBJECTIVE
This policy details how the Melbourne Medical School in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) administers requests from students in the MD course to Opt-In to the Extended Rural Cohort (ERC) stream.

POLICY
The Director, ERC will determine when to invite students to Opt-In to the ERC stream when the number of enrolled students in the ERC stream is not meeting the required quota. Applicants will be ranked and offered a place in the ERC stream subject to availability.

Guidelines for consideration of applications
The ERC Panel will consider applications using the following criteria:
1. A written application including reasons for the student’s preference to pursue a career in rural medicine.
2. The applicant’s ability to meet the academic requirements in a rural environment, taking notice of previous academic performance and evidence of engagement in rural communities.
3. Capacity within the ERC stream

Appeal Process
• Students may appeal against a decision made under the ERC Opt-In Policy in writing within ten working days of the outcome notification.
• Appeals should be addressed and submitted to:
  » ERC Appeals Committee
  e: md-enquiries@unimelb.edu.au
• The ERC Appeals Committee comprises:
  » Director, MEU (Chair)
  » Director, Medical Student Education (Metro)
  » Academic Programs Manager
• An acknowledgment of receipt of the appeal will be sent to the student within three (3) working days of its receipt.
• The student will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal within fifteen (15) working days of receipt of the appeal.
• Appeals should comprise a one page cover letter outlining the reason for the appeal, with supporting documentation attached. Verbal or emailed appeals will not be considered.
• If a student does not believe that the appeal has been adequately considered, they may follow the formal grievance procedures outlined in the Melbourne Medical School Student Grievance Procedures located at http://medicine.unimelb.edu.au/students/policies

PROCEDURES
The Rural Clinical School will administer the Opt-In process as follows:
• Notify students of the opportunity to Opt-In to the ERC stream, including the closing date for applications.
• Students wishing to Opt-In into the ERC stream are required to submit an application form to the Rural Clinical School Manager (e: rcs-admin@lists.unimelb.edu.au). Applicants may nominate up to two referees to support the application.
• The Director, ERC will perform an initial review of each application and submit a recommendation to the ERC Panel.
• The ERC Panel will review all applications and determine the outcome. The ERC Panel will comprise of:
  » Rural Clinical School Director of Medical Student Education
  » Deputy Director of Medical Student Education - Shepparton
  » Rural Clinical School Manager
• Students will be notified of the outcome of their request within fifteen working days of receipt of the application.