

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE FOUR WEEK RURAL PLACEMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN CSP STUDENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE



MELBOURNE
MEDICAL
SCHOOL

OBJECTIVES

This policy details how the Melbourne Medical School in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences will allocate Australian Commonwealth Supported Place students to undertake at least four weeks of a structured rural placement as required by the Federal Government's Department of Health and Ageing.

BACKGROUND

The Rural Clinical Training and Support contract between the University of Melbourne (UoM) and the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) mandates that all DEEWR-supported Australian students must undertake at least four weeks of a structured, residential, rural, clinical placement counted as part of the curriculum in their medical course. The rural placement must be located in an ASGC-RA 2-5 region refer to <http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au/internet/otd/publishing.nsf/Content/RA-intro>

POLICY

The Melbourne Medical School will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the MD Australian CSP students undertake at least four weeks in a rural area during their course
- Reimbursing students for accommodation, and travel costs for getting to and from their rural placement according to the current Rural Clinical School travel policy
- Providing an orientation to the rural placement to give the students a framework through which to view their placement and to ensure safety while on placement.

Australian CSP students allocated to the Rural Clinical School will automatically satisfy the four week rural placement requirement.

EXEMPTION AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, students may apply to the Director of Medical Student Education (DMSE), Rural Clinical School to seek an exemption from undertaking the four week rural placement. Applications should comprise a one page cover letter outlining the reason, with supporting documentation attached. Verbal or emailed appeals will not be considered. Applications will be assessed by the DMSE and the Coordinator of Short Term Rural Placements, as per the guidelines for consideration of exceptional and unforeseen circumstances listed below.

Applications for exemptions are to be addressed and submitted to:

Clinical Training Placements Officer
Rural Clinical School
49 Graham Street
Shepparton 3630

Students may appeal against a decision made under the Doctor of Medicine Four Week Rural Placement policy in writing within ten (10) working days of the exemption / allocation notification.

- Appeals are to be addressed and submitted to:
Rural Placement Appeals Committee
Melbourne Medical School
Level 7, North Wing, Medical Building
The University of Melbourne VIC 3010

- The Appeals Committee comprises:
 - » Director of the Medical Education Unit (DMEU)
 - » Director of Medical Student Education (nominated by the DMEU)
 - » Academic Programs Manager
- An acknowledgement 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>

Guidelines for Consideration of Exceptional and Unforeseen Circumstances

Acceptable reasons for consideration of exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may include:

- 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.
- Personal (must relate to the student and must require that the student remain within a certain geographic region to fulfill the following on-going commitments).
- Illness requiring on-going specialist care that is not able to be accessed if the allocation is to a particular rural area.
- There 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 ongoing commitment such as team practice which cannot be undertaken if allocation is to a particular rural area. (see <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1072>);
- Membership with the Australia Defence Service, Victorian Special Emergency Services (SES), Country Fire Authority (CFA) or similar organisation (see: <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1070>)
- Other ongoing and serious circumstances deemed to be exceptional by the School, provided adequate documentation is supplied.

Non-acceptable reasons for consideration of exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may include:

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.

Personal

- Illness of a more general nature where appropriate treatment is readily available in the rural area
- Other studies (students are not permitted to undertake concurrent studies in the clinical semesters)
- Lack of a vehicle
- Part-time employment

Volunteer commitments (excluding those outlined in the Defence Reservists and Emergency Volunteers policy: <http://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1070>)

- Leases and mortgages
- Friendship groups