



Guidelines for staff collaboration on student-initiated research projects

The following guidelines have been developed to provide guidance to students wishing to undertake medical education research projects.

Students wishing to develop and undertake a Medical Education research project in addition to research activities undertaken as part of their coursework should follow the following process.

Student researchers should develop a short description (3–4 pages) of the proposed research comprising a research rationale (linked to existing research), a detailed methodology including proposed measures and the methods of data analysis, a plan and timeline for conducting the research (including details of who will complete specific tasks), and a plan for publication (including the form of the article and the journals to be targeted).

The student proposal will be reviewed by members of the Evaluation Committee who will consider the merits of the proposal against a set of criteria.

Proposed student projects are required to:

- Contribute to the field of medical education
- Be collaborative exercises between the Melbourne Medical School (MMS) and the students involved
- Provide broader benefits to the MMS by informing curriculum development
- Have a sound research design and methodology and a strong theoretical rationale for undertaking the research.
- Have a high likelihood of being published
- Be achievable within the time frame proposed and in view of students' course commitments
- Outline the skills required to complete the project and how students have, or will develop these skills during the course of the project
- Outline clearly the responsibilities of students and staff named on the project.

Feedback on the plan for the research will be provided to students with a decision on whether the committee believes that the research should proceed. In the event that the research plan is approved, students should approach a member of academic staff to act as the responsible researcher. Department of Medical Education (DME) staff members should be approached for projects focused on educational research; academic staff members from other areas may be suitable depending on the focus of the research.

Students should provide their plan (with any amendments suggested by the Evaluation Committee) to the staff member. Proceeding with the research is contingent on the availability of staff members with sufficient time to undertake the supervisory role. Prior to commencing the research, students and staff members should discuss in detail the expectations of the academic staff member so that an informed decision can be made about the commitment.

Submission of proposals

Initial proposals should be emailed to md-enquiries@unimelb.edu.au marked for the attention of the Secretary, MD Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee meets monthly. A schedule of meeting dates can be obtained from the UMSS Education Officer.