United in our quest to make a global difference in health outcomes.
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Welcome to the Observership Handbook!

This handbook and the associated website contain a wealth of information to assist you with the organisation of your Year 1 Observership placement.

The Year 1 Observership is designed to expose you to the practice of medicine in a clinical healthcare, research or community setting.

Whether you complete your placement locally, intrastate, interstate, or overseas, I’m sure you will find it a memorable and valuable experience.

If, after reading the material provided, you still have questions, our highly experienced Placements Team is here to assist you with your enquiries. They can be contacted on med.placements@uq.edu.au.

Happy planning!

Dr Tammy Smith
Academic Lead: Phase One
Office of Medical Education
Faculty of Medicine
The University of Queensland
OVERVIEW

The Observership offers you the opportunity to further your personal and professional development and provides insight into health service provision, participate in research activities, access leading researchers and/or medical specialists from both health and community agencies, and develop lasting friendships, mentorships and networks.

The Observership is predominantly an observational experience, but students may be expected to participate in adequately supervised activities such as interview and examination of patients and assisting in minor medical procedures.

You are responsible for finding your own placement. Domestic and on-shore international students may undertake this placement within Australia or overseas. Due to the accreditation requirements of the Australian Medical Council, Ochsner students are required to complete their Observership within Australia.

The Year 1 Observership is a compulsory requirement of the MD program. Failure to complete the elective placement will prevent successful graduation from the MD Program.

Students must successfully complete #8 units, including Clinical Science 1 and Clinical Practice 1, before commencing an Observership. Students who have not completed Clinical Science 2 and Clinical Practice 2 are advised to delay their Observership until they have successfully completed these courses.
OBJECTIVES

The Year 1 Observership is designed to allow students to gain a wider perspective on medicine. Depending on the Observership, students may:

• develop a knowledge of health systems
• develop an understanding of the professional roles of a range of health care professionals
• develop an understanding of health care team dynamics, team management, and patient roles
• gain an insight into ‘the life of a doctor’
• experience the practice of medicine in other environments
• experience clinical and non-clinical research
• develop appropriate communication skills with patients and colleague

ARRANGING THE PLACEMENT

Students are responsible for organising their placement and all other necessary arrangements (e.g. travel, accommodation).

Application Submission – External to UQ Clinical Units

Applications for external Observership placements are to be submitted through the Placement Management System, Placements. Applications submitted through Placements are to include placement details, and written confirmation of your placement or they will not be processed by the Faculty.

Students must be supervised by a qualified clinician, scientist, or allied health professional who has agreed to act as a preceptor, and all placements must be approved by the Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland.

Application Submission – UQ Clinical Unit Opportunities

Students will have the opportunity to nominate their preferences for limited places at UQ Clinical Units. They will preference their Observership placement through the Placement Management System, Placements.

The Faculty of Medicine does not guarantee allocation to a placement within UQ Clinical Units.

More information can be found on the Year 1 Observership site under the ‘Location Options’ tab. This includes opportunities with overseas partnership universities, James Cook University and the TROHPIQ program.
TIMEFRAME

The Observership Period

The Year 1 Observership period begins at the conclusion of the main exam period in November 2019. All students must complete their Observership prior to the start of Year 2 classes in 2020.

Duration

The duration of the Observership depends on the cohort to which they belong.

- **Domestic and Onshore International Students:**
  4 weeks (a minimum of 4 hours per day, 5 days per week*)

- **UQ-Ochsner Students:**
  8 weeks (a minimum of 4 hours per day, 5 days per week*)

*This cannot be shortened by completing additional hours per day

Splitting Placements

Students can split their Observership placement. Domestic and Onshore International students can split their 4 weeks into 2 + 2 weeks and Ochsner students may split their placements into either 2 + 6 week blocks or 4 + 4 week blocks.

RESEARCH PLACEMENTS

- Both cohorts may undertake research-based electives.

- A maximum of 4 weeks research can be credited toward the Observership. Ochsner students will be required to complete the remaining 4 weeks in a clinical setting.

- If clinicians wish for a student to remain involved in the research project that is perfectly appropriate, however, students will only be credited for 4 weeks in total.

- Students are unable to use the 'Summer Research Program' as credit towards their Observership placement.

- Opportunities at affiliated research centres such as UQCCR, and QBI do not require a student placement agreement. If a student is unsure if a Student Placement Agreement is required please contact the Placements team.

It is a requirement for students to complete 5 days per week (min 4 hrs per day).

Placements cannot be shortened by completing additional additional hours per day.
STUDENT PLACEMENT AGREEMENTS

Placements at 'non-UQ locations' (i.e. other than a UQ Clinical Unit or UQ Research institute/centre) will not be approved without a Student Placement Agreement (SPA) in place (including Terms and Conditions).

These agreements can be found on the Observership webpage, under ‘Documentation’.

Institutions where an Overarching Student Placement Agreement has already been implemented, do not require a One-Off Student Placement Agreement. These institutions include Faculty International Partners, UQ Research institutes/centres, and some GP locations. If a student is unsure if a SPA is required please contact the Placements team.

TRAVEL

If the placement is in a country listed by the Australian Government with a travel advisory of Level 3, "Reconsider your need to travel", or Level 4, "Do not travel", it is considered 'Restricted' and will require additional approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor International (DVCI) or delegate. Further information on how to complete this process can be provided by the Placements team.

If successful in gaining this approval, please attach written confirmation of this to your Observership application in Placements. Please note, the Faculty of Medicine reserves the right to revoke approval of any Year 1 Observership application should the risk level and travel advisory change for the location.

If the placement is outside of Australia, students are required to complete the International Student Placement Form and register with International SOS. All students travelling outside of Brisbane will be required to complete the Insurance request form. Students who are travelling internationally will receive a personal insurance reference number prior to departure that should be kept with important documents such as passport and visa/s if required.
EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students should familiarise themselves with the UQ “Fitness to Practise” policy before commencing a placement.

Students should at all times be dressed in suitable attire that complies with the dress codes applicable to their placement. If no dress code is available, students should follow the Medical Student Dress Code.

Students must behave in a professional and appropriate manner at all times during their Observership. They must adhere to The University of Queensland Codes of Conduct as well as any Code of Conduct associated with the placement. Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the placement’s OH&S requirements and any other staff expectations.

Students must communicate appropriately and professionally at all times while on their placement.

Absentees

If students are to be absent from their Observership for any reason, they must notify the site/preceptor and the UQ Medicine Placements team. Any time missed must be made up in order to satisfy the requirements of the placement. If students are absent for ill health, they are required to supply a medical certificate and make up the time. Attendance is an AMC requirement by which students must strictly abide.

ASSESSMENT OF THE OBSERVERSHIP

Student Experience Report

Students are required to submit the online “Student Feedback Form” in week 3 (domestic and onshore international students) or week 7 (Ochsner students). This report includes questions about how they believe they have performed in this setting, experiences they have had and a chance to include any additional self-directed learning. This is designed to ensure students are able to perform in the clinical or research setting as required.

Preceptor Evaluation Form

All students are required to ensure a “Preceptor Evaluation Form” is completed on their behalf. Preceptors will be emailed an online link supplied through the faculty. Please ensure your preceptor completes the online form. If your host site does not have access to the internet, a PDF version is available under the Evaluations and Assessment tab. This is the responsibility of the student to provide a copy to the Placements team. This must be completed prior to the start of the second year of the MD program. Failure to successfully complete the Observership will prevent graduation from the MD program.
UNSATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF THE OBSERVERSHIP

The University acknowledges that students learn and progress at different stages and that their experiences will vary. Students who have not performed or do not demonstrate an accepted level of knowledge to advance in their studies may be marked by their preceptor as a “fail”. Unsatisfactory completion of the Observership could be due to poor attendance and/or attitude.

While this is unfortunate, this outcome will be discussed with the student by senior academic staff during a counselling session. Students can be granted the opportunity to undertake a remediation Observership that can be arranged by the Faculty of Medicine.

Students must seek permission to complete any remediation Observership after the beginning of Year 2.

PROBLEMS THAT ARISE DURING THE OBSERVERSHIP

During the course of the Observership, situations may arise that cause concern. Please contact the Placements team at the Faculty of Medicine as soon as practicably possible.

The Placements team
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