

Attendance Guidelines for students at the UoW's Graduate School of Medicine

Overview of the Degree

The UOW MBBS programme has been developed to address the educational requirements of learning to practice medicine in Australia. The academic content and learning methods employed in the curriculum have been informed by the best evidence available about which strategies foster mastery of the complex demands of a career in medicine. Completing the degree requires commitment and discipline to maintain the high level of performance required of GSM students. Because the curriculum contains both a wide variety of teaching methods and clinical relevance to all material taught, most aspects of the degree are compulsory. In general, attendance for all small-group teaching sessions is compulsory and 100% attendance is expected. These may include:

- clinical placements
- clinical skills sessions
- CBL tutorials
- CBL Case presentations
- Rotation specific tutorials
- anatomy laboratory sessions
- arranged specialist sessions
- ward teaching rounds

In addition, full attendance at all large group teaching sessions is expected.

Given the varied nature of the delivery of the degree and the variety of locations that the degree is offered, such a policy is designed to:

- deliver the content of the degree in the time available thereby ensuring that the integrity of the degree is maintained and that the GSM is producing high quality medical students.
- fulfil our contractual obligations to our workplace partners and ensure our insurance responsibilities are in place to cover such changes to the degree programme brought about by absence.

Applications for Student Academic Consideration are made online through SOLS using the University's central system. Applications are made when students are unable to meet course requirements as a result of medical grounds, compassionate grounds or extenuating circumstances. Academic consideration is only granted in serious or extenuating circumstances, most of which are beyond a student's control and which significantly impair a student's ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the Subject Outline or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study.

Academic consideration is not intended to excuse students from meeting their responsibilities as outlined in the [Student Charter](#), or to accommodate those common occurrences which interfere with daily life. This should be done in advance of due date (unless exceptional, eg. in hospital) through SOLS with the addition of supporting documentation (processed either through UOW or Shoalhaven campus).

For planned absences that do not fit in with the criteria above such as conferences or professional development opportunities, a separate application is made to the Sub Dean. In these cases, when approved, time missed **MUST** be made up.

Phase I

Curriculum premise: Phase I (MEDI601) of the MBBS covers the first 18 months of the four year course and is organised into 8 individual teaching blocks. These blocks are mostly organised around body systems. Within each Block, the Phase I timetable is organised around fortnightly cases. On the first Monday and last Friday of the fortnightly cycle, all students (including those enrolled at Shoalhaven campus), will attend the Wollongong campus. For the remainder of the fortnight, students will attend classes (lectures, small group tutorial sessions and clinical skills sessions) at their “home campus” and clinical placements in that locality.

All “make up” time **MUST** be completed before the end of the relevant Block/Phase and done in consultation with the appropriate nominated person.

Compulsory activities include: *Clinical Placements (GP or Hospital placements, Integrated Clinical Experience (ICE)); clinical skills sessions; CBL tutorials; CBL case presentations, anatomy laboratory sessions.*

Phase I	Unplanned	<p>With AC: By its nature, usually covered by AC - Medical, Compassionate, Extenuating circumstances (illness, carers, religious, bereavement, accidents, elite sporting). This is usually for short periods of time.</p>	<p>No requirement to make up time that is not deemed compulsory.</p> <p>For Compulsory activities, limited days are available (up to 20% of the teaching activities with approved AC), with extensions of time and ability to do tasks at another time negotiated if approved. Compulsory tasks MUST be completed.</p> <p>For absences of 2 or more days due to illness, etc and there are no compulsory activities, a Doctor’s certificate/stat dec. still needs to be provided for those dates and Academic Consideration application lodged.</p> <p>Should the absence be lengthy (ie. more than 20% of the Block is to be missed) consideration will be given to the student taking Leave of Absence LOA.</p>
	Planned	<p>With AC</p> <p>Eg medical procedure</p>	<p>No requirement to make up time that is not deemed compulsory.</p> <p>With regard to Compulsory activities, limited days are available (up to 20% of the teaching activities with approved AC), with extensions of time and ability to do tasks at another time negotiated if approved. Compulsory tasks MUST be completed.</p> <p>For absences of 2 or more days due to illness, etc and there are no compulsory activities, a Doctor’s certificate/stat dec. still needs to be provided for those dates and Academic Consideration application lodged.</p>

		Should the absence be lengthy (ie more than 20% of the Block is to be missed) consideration will be given to the student taking Leave of Absence LOA.
	<p>Approved Leave Without AC</p> <p>Conferences/Professional development activities / Exceptional circumstances</p>	<p>For planned absences that do not fit in with the criteria above such as conferences or organised professional development opportunities, a separate application is made to the Sub Dean. In these cases time missed MUST be made up. Students where possible are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.</p> <p>Limited days are available for activities in this category. If days are unable to be made up or there are examinations (Clinical competencies/Examinations), leave will NOT be granted.</p>
	<p>Unexplained Absences</p> <p>(A record of attendance is kept for all compulsory activities)</p>	Where compulsory activities such as those listed above are missed without explanation and there is a consistent pattern of unexplained absences emerging, students may be awarded the grade of Unsatisfactory by the Board of Examiners.
<p>NOTES: Students are entitled to take Leave of Absence (LOA) after 6 months of study. However, under UoW General Course Rule. 33, LOA can only be taken for the whole subject. As Phase I is an 18 month subject, students may be required to re-commence their study at the start of Phase I. Students may make application to the Sub Dean to vary such requirements and where possible are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.</p>		

Phase 2

Curriculum premise

Most of student time is spent engaged in clinical experiences while attached to clinical teams in rotations that encompass medicine (including emergency medicine), surgery (including anaesthetics and intensive care), women's and maternal health, child and adolescent health, and mental health. Phase 2 is an integrated spiral curriculum focusing on four themes in an integrated process of delivery: Medical Sciences, Clinical Competency, Research and Critical Analysis and Personal and Professional Development, building on the content delivered in Phase 1 of the MBBS course (MEDI601).

Clinical experience is an essential component of the MBBS and 100% attendance is required and expected in all clinical placements. In **Phase 2**, students will be required to make up days/ hours should they miss more than 5% of any rotation with **approved** Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day/ ie.7 hours). Students will be required to make up days should their combined absence at ALL rotations be greater than 5% of the total Phase 2 clinical placement requirements. (With approved Academic Consideration, 5% = 5 days for the entire Phase 2).

All "make up" time **MUST** be completed before the end of the relevant Rotation and done in consultation with the appropriate nominated person- Phase Chair/Sub Dean. *(For further information, refer to GSM policy on Student Academic Consideration and Student Absence)*

Phase 2	Unplanned	<p>With AC: By its nature would be usually covered by AC (Medical, Compassionate, Extenuating circumstances (carers, religious, legal, accidents, elite sporting))</p>	<p>Students will be required to make up days/ hours should they miss more than 5% of any rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% is 1 day/ 7 hours).</p> <p>Students will be required to make up days/ hours should their combined absence at all rotations be greater then 5% of the total Phase 2 clinical placement requirements. With approved Academic Consideration, 5% is 35 hours for the entire Phase 2.</p> <p>For Compulsory activities (eg. Clinical skills), limited days are available (up to 20% of the teaching activities with approved AC), with extensions of time and ability to do tasks at another time negotiated if approved. Compulsory tasks MUST be completed.</p>
	Planned	<p>With AC</p> <p>Eg medical procedure, elite sporting event</p>	<p>Students will be required to make up days/ hours should they miss more than 5% of any rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. 5% is 1 day/ 7 hours.</p> <p>Students will be required to "make up" days/ hours should their combined absence at all rotations be greater then 5% of the total Phase 2 clinical placement requirements. With approved Academic Consideration, 5% is 35 hours for the entire Phase 2.</p> <p>For Compulsory activities (eg. Clinical Skills), limited days are available (up to 20% of</p>

			the teaching activities with approved AC), with extensions of time and ability to do tasks at another time negotiated if approved. Compulsory tasks MUST be completed.
		Without AC Conferences/Professional development activities / Exceptional circumstances	Students where possible is advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation. Limited days are available for activities in this category. If days are unable to be made up or there are examinations (Clinical competencies/Examinations), leave will NOT be granted. All days must be made up

NOTES: The implication for Phase 2 students is that unless time can be made up under the supervision of a recognised preceptor and based on the specific Rotation curriculum, then students will not be able to complete Phase 2. The Phase 2 curriculum is delivered during those weeks that have been allocated in the Subject Outline. This ensures our contractual obligations to our workplace partners as well as our insurance responsibilities are in place to cover such changes to the degree programme brought about by absence.

In the event of a possible long-term absence, under UoW General Course Rule 33, Leave can only be taken for the whole subject. As Phase 2 is a 12 months subject, if Leave of Absence is approved, students will be required to commence their study at the start of Phase 2. Students are entitled to 12 months Leave with the possibility of extension if approved by a delegated authority. Where possible, students are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.

Attendance at Clinical Skills

There is an attendance requirement for all students studying medicine at the GSM. Attendance for all clinical skills teaching sessions is compulsory and 100% attendance is expected. These sessions run with small numbers of students and there is a responsibility by each student towards the learning of all students in the group. Students also have a responsibility to the volunteers and external clinicians who may be participating in these teaching sessions. If students are absent then this has a direct impact on the clinical skills team and the learning of all.

Phase 3

Curriculum premise

This subject involves a 38 week long hospital and community integrated placement from a base in a general practice setting. The placement is arranged so that it is possible for students to have on-call responsibilities at the local community hospital and access to local and visiting specialists and community clinicians. The Phase 3 programme has been designed so that students are immersed in the community to which they have been allocated and live the life of a rural junior doctor, encountering all of the clinical and community activities that they would experience from day-to-day and week-to-week, over the 38-week period of Phase 3. A normal week in Phase 3 is made up of 2 days in GP, one RAD + Clinical Skills day-a day of organised sessions (a variety of activities) and one ED shift (weekday or weekend) ie. 5 days in total.

Students must attend all clinical and academic experiences, including the weekly Regional Academic Days that are compulsory for all students (unless otherwise advised). If unable to attend a Regional Academic Day or other scheduled academic activity, students must notify the Regional Placement Facilitator so that arrangements can be made to make up the missed academic activity.

Phase 3	Unplanned	<p>With AC</p> <p>By its nature would be usually covered by AC (Medical, Compassionate, Extenuating circumstances (carers, legal, accidents)</p>	<p>Students are entitled to be absent with approved AC up to 10 days for the entire Phase 3. Students will be required to “make up” days should their combined absence be greater than 10 days for the entire Phase 3.</p>
	Planned	<p>With AC</p> <p>eg medical procedure, elite sporting event, carer responsibilities, religious festival.</p>	<p>Students are entitled to be absent with approved AC up to 10 days for the entire Phase 3. Once students leave exceeds the time allowed then they will be required to “make up” days.</p> <p>In the case of an extended period of leave eg. 10 days the 10 days equates to 2 weeks x 5 days (a normal week in Phase 3 is made up of 2 days in GP, one RAD + Clinical Skills day-a day of organised sessions (a variety of activities) and one ED shift (weekday or weekend) ie. 5 days in total).</p> <p>Consideration may be given in specific circumstances to building up time ‘in lieu’ of an</p>

			expected absence (see below for guidelines).
		<p>Without AC</p> <p>Conferences/Professional development activities / Exceptional circumstances</p>	<p>Students where possible are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation. Applications for approval are submitted to the Sub Dean who will liaise with the RAL and Phase Chair.</p> <p>Limited days are available for activities in this category. If days are unable to be made up as per curriculum requirements or there are compulsory RAD, ED, specialist workshops, examinations (Clinical competencies/Examinations), leave will NOT be granted</p> <p>All days must be made up before going into the next Phase.</p>

Taking time in lieu:

- Time can only be made up under the supervision of a recognised GP, ED preceptor and based on the specific curriculum. The Phase 3 curriculum is delivered during those weeks that have been allocated in the Subject Outline. This ensures our contractual obligations to our workplace partners as well as our insurance responsibilities are in place to cover such changes to the degree programme brought about by absence.

Medical staff are entitled to time away from GSM commitments and to deliver the curriculum in a reasonable timeframe (i.e. not in a haphazard format). It is also reasonable that students are not engaged in curriculum activities when they are under medical or emotional stress.

<p>Weeks completed <i>in lieu</i> must be based on a normal GP's week i.e. not in haphazard way ie. a normal week in Phase 3 is made up of 2 days in GP, one RAD +Clinical Skills day, one day of organised sessions (a variety of activities) and one ED shift (weekday or weekend) ie. 5 days in total. This ensures the continuity of study, the least time as possible away from study and that students are engaging in a continuous experience in line with the normal life of a junior doctor in a rural practice.</p>	<p>Time must be "booked" up to ensure attendance requirements have been completed and there is no likelihood that students will fall short on their attendance requirements.</p>
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NB. It is not possible to obtain more leave than is possible to be made up i.e. during vacations (max. 6 weeks possible).

In the event of a possible long-term absence, under UoW General Course Rule 33, Leave can only be taken for the whole subject. As Phase 3 is a 12 months subject, if Leave of Absence is approved, students will be required to commence their study at the start of Phase 3. (Leave is only given for the whole subject). Students are entitled to 12 months Leave with the possibility of extension, if approved by a delegated authority. Where possible, students are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation. Where possible, students are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.

All “make up” time MUST be completed before the end of the relevant Phase.

Phase 4 (MEDI604)

Curriculum premise

The structure and content of this Phase are assembled in recognition of the need for clinical and professional experience to facilitate students move from the MBBS course into junior medical professional practice as interns in acute care hospitals and after that, into post-graduate training for general or specialty practice.

To achieve the learning outcomes of Phase 4, terms or rotations are particularly directed toward diversifying the student’s engagement with ‘real world’ clinical medicine across three very different terms. The intent is for skill acquisition around the managerial and organisational aspects of being an intern. It is the time management and prioritisation skills of being a ward-based intern primarily around the monitoring, assessment and management of the in-hospital ward patient. These are different to those in the Emergency Department. This is the reason for the insistence that the PRINT placement be on a Medical or Surgical ward.

All “make up” time MUST be completed before the end of the relevant Phase/ Subject and done in consultation and with the written approval of the appropriate nominated person.

Phase 4	Unplanned	<p>With AC By its nature would be usually covered by AC (Medical, Compassionate, Extenuating circumstances (carers, religious, legal, accidents, elite sporting)</p>	<p>PRINT: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the PRINT rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day).</p> <p>Elective: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the ELECTIVE rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day)</p> <p>Selective: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the SELECTIVE rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day).</p>
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			Given the nature of Electives and Selectives, it may be impossible to make up the time in the setting. Should this situation apply, you must contact the Phase Chair/Sub Dean who may organise your time to be made up in another setting.
Planned	With AC Eg medical procedure, elite sporting event		<p>PRINT: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the PRINT rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day).</p> <p>Elective: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the ELECTIVE rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day)</p> <p>Selective: Students will be required to make up days should they miss more than 5% of the SELECTIVE rotation with approved Student Academic Consideration. (5% = 1 day).</p> <p>Given the nature of Electives and Selectives, it may be impossible to make up the time in the setting. Should this situation apply, you must contact the Phase chair/Sub Dean who may organise your time to be made up in another setting.</p>
	Without AC Conferences/Professional development activities / Exceptional circumstances		<p>Students where possible are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.</p> <p>Limited days are available for activities in this category. If days are unable to be made up leave will NOT be granted.</p> <p>All days must be made up.</p>

The implication for Phase 4 students is that unless time can be made up under the supervision of a recognised preceptor and based on the specific Rotation curriculum, then students will not be able to complete Phase 4. The Phase 4 curriculum is delivered during those weeks that have been allocated in the Subject Outline and unless events are timed to coincide with holiday periods our contractual obligations to our workplace partners may lead to taking LOA for 6 months. This ensures our contractual obligations to our workplace partners as well as our insurance responsibilities are in place to cover such changes to the degree programme brought about by absence.

In the event of a long term unplanned absence, under UoW General Course Rule 33, leave can only be taken for the whole subject. As Phase 4 is a 6

months subject, if leave is approved, students will be required to commence their study at the start of Phase 4 in the following year. Where possible, students are advised to contact the Sub Dean to discuss their situation.