

Years 3 and 4 Placement Allocation Guidelines – Ochsner 2024



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1. Definitions

Academic Year: The period starting on the first Monday of the first semester and ending with the Sunday before the corresponding Monday of the following year.

Clinical Courses: The 10 core courses in Year 3 & 4 that include a clinical placement block - Medicine, Surgery, Medicine in Society (MiS)/Rural & Remote Medicine (RRM), General Practice (GP), Mental Health, Medical Specialties, Surgical Specialties, Critical Care, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Paediatrics.

Clinical Location: The clinical setting where a Student undertakes their learning. Clinical Locations include general practices and other clinical care facilities.

Clinical Placements: The 10 individual Clinical Placement blocks of 6-9 weeks, undertaken by Students as part of Year 3 and 4 Clinical Courses, with 5 placements in Year 3 and 5 placements in Year 4.

Clinical School: A formal organisational unit within the Medical School, comprising of teaching hospitals and other relevant medical teaching sites within a geographical region (Greater Brisbane Clinical School, Rural Clinical School, Ochsner Clinical School).

Clinical Unit: A designated organisational subunit of the Rural Clinical School or Greater Brisbane Clinical School, including hospitals or other relevant medical teaching sites. Clinical Units can include both major and peripheral teaching hospitals, which are listed below:

Clinical Units	Hospitals
Greater Brisbane Clinical School	
Northside	The Prince Charles Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Redcliffe Hospital, St Vincent's Private Hospital, Northside
PA-Southside	Princess Alexandra Hospital, Redlands Hospital and Queen Elizabeth II Hospital
RBWH	Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Toowong Private Hospital, Ramsay Clinic New Farm
Mater	Mater Hospital
Greenslopes	Greenslopes Private Hospital, The Park Centre for Mental Health
Ipswich	Ipswich Hospital
General Practice	Various general practices throughout South-East Queensland
Children's Health Queensland	Queensland Children's Hospital
Rural Clinical School	
Bundaberg	Bundaberg Hospital
Hervey Bay	Hervey Bay Hospital
Toowoomba	Toowoomba Hospital
Rockhampton	Rockhampton Hospital
Rural and Remote Medicine	Various hospital, general practice and/or community-based settings in rural and remote communities in Queensland.
Ochsner Clinical School	
Ochsner Health, New Orleans, USA, including: Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge, Ochsner Medical Center – Kenner, Ochsner Medical Center – New Orleans, Ochsner Medical Center – North Shore, Ochsner Medical Center – West Bank, Ochsner Baptist, Ochsner St. Anne	

Elective: The Elective, or Personalised Learning Course (MEDI7413), which has a “placement” block of six weeks, that is not considered a Clinical Placement block for the purpose of these guidelines.

GBCS: Greater Brisbane Clinical School.

Good Academic Standing: A Student who has achieved a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 4.5 or higher within the Medical Program and has no recorded findings of student misconduct at the University. For UQ-Ochsner MD Students, this includes a passing score on the USMLE Step 1 exam.

MD: Doctor of Medicine program at The University of Queensland.

OCS: Ochsner Clinical School.

Placement: Includes 6-week Clinical Placements and the Elective course 6-week placement.

RCS: Rural Clinical School.

Return Placement: A placement in which a UQ-Ochsner MD Student returns to Australia, to meet the requirements of the AMC in relation to experience of clinical practice in an Australian context.

Student: A student enrolled in or undertaking courses in the MD program.

UQ-Ochsner MD: Doctor of Medicine program at The University of Queensland in which Students are required to undertake Years 3 and 4 at the Ochsner Clinical School operating in New Orleans, USA.

UQ-Ochsner MD Student: A Student enrolled in or undertaking courses in the UQ-Ochsner MD program.

2. Purpose of the Guidelines

- 2.1 The Medical School has established the Year 3 and 4 Allocation Process to manage and support the clinical training for Students in the clinical years of their program.
- 2.2 The Year 3 & 4 Allocation Process is designed to facilitate the equitable distribution of Students in clinical placements throughout the Academic Year whilst optimising the range of clinical experiences.
- 2.3 The Dean, Medical School (or nominee) is responsible for decisions related to the Clinical Location(s) in which a Student will undertake their learning during Years 3 and 4 of their program. While all reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate Student requirements and preferences, this may not always be possible due to operational requirements.
- 2.4 Decisions related to clinical allocations are administrative in nature. In accordance with the University policy on [Student Grievance Resolution](#), it is only possible to appeal in circumstances where a Student can demonstrate that the decision did not comply with University's policies, rules or procedures. Personal dissatisfaction is not grounds for an appeal.
- 2.5 The UQ-Ochsner MD allocation process is administered by the Ochsner Clinical School (OCS) Student Administration Team. Key dates for 2024 and further information about the Ochsner process (including timelines) can be found [here](#).

3. Clinical Placements

Conditions for placement at the Rural Clinical School

- 3.1 UQ-Ochsner MD Students are not eligible to undertake Clinical Placements at a Clinical Unit of the Rural Clinical School (RCS), with the exception of the Year 4 return placement which may be undertaken at a Rural and Remote Medicine (RRM) site.

Conditions for placement at the Ochsner Clinical School

- 3.2 UQ-Ochsner MD Students must undertake their Clinical Placements in Medicine, Surgery, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Mental Health and General Practice (GP) at the OCS.
- 3.3 UQ-Ochsner MD Students will have the opportunity to preference their clinical placement order and Medical Specialties sub-discipline.
- 3.4 In accordance with AMC requirements and other constraints on Year 3 placements (as per paragraph 3.2 above), UQ-Ochsner MD Students are required to undertake a 6-week clinical placement in Australia during Year 4. This placement may include:
 - * Emergency Department and Orthopaedics (ED/O)
 - * Medical Specialties (MS)
 - * Rural and Remote Medicine (RRM)
 - * Intensive Care, Ophthalmology and Anaesthetics (ICU/Op/An)
 - * Elective (clinically based placement only)

Year 4 – Rural and Remote Medicine or Medicine in Society

- 3.5 UQ-Ochsner MD Students are required to undertake the MiS course at the Ochsner Clinical School, unless completing RRM as their Year 4 Australia Return Placement.
- 3.6 If a student is allocated to a MiS Clinical Placement, this placement will be undertaken in a vulnerable and/or disadvantaged community.
- 3.7 If a student is allocated to an RRM Clinical Placement, this placement will be undertaken in a rural or remote location.

4. Years 3 and 4 Allocation Process

- 4.1 As outlined in Section 6, Students who can demonstrate extenuating circumstances may be afforded special consideration during the Year 3 and 4 Allocation Process.
- 4.2 The Medical School will publish the timeframe for each stage of the Year 3 and 4 Allocation Process. It is the Student's responsibility to be aware of this schedule and submit applications within the required timeframe. Students who fail to submit preferences and applications by the relevant deadlines will have their placements allocated automatically.
- 4.3 The Year 3 and 4 Allocation Process may include a mechanism for students to request an even swap with another Student in the UQ-Ochsner MD program, where both Students have agreed to that swap, and both Students are eligible and intending to progress to the following year of the MD program. If such mechanisms are developed, Students must meet all relevant requirements and deadlines. The Medical School cannot guarantee fulfilment of swap requests.
- 4.4 While every attempt will be made to minimise changes to the finalised allocations, it may be necessary for the Medical School to do so to meet operational requirements.
- 4.5 Despite all other provisions in these guidelines, the Executive Dean or Dean, Medical School (or nominee) may allocate Students to any Clinical Placement at any Clinical School/Unit/Location and may alter a Student's allocations after publication if required.
- 4.6 Students are responsible for ensuring that their enrolment in mySI-net matches their allocated Clinical Placements.
- 4.7 After allocations have been published, Students will be notified in writing of any changes to their Clinical Placement/s, and it will be the Student's responsibility to make any subsequent enrolment changes in mySI-net.

Allocation swaps

- 4.8 Following the publication of provisional placement allocations, Students are provided with the opportunity to submit even swap requests, with another Student in the UQ-Ochsner MD program, where both Students have agreed to that swap, and both Students are eligible and intending to progress to the following year of the MD program.
- 4.9 Students are responsible for finding their own swaps and may submit requests during the designated swap period only.
- 4.10 All applications for placement swaps will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and are subject to operational requirements. The Medical School cannot guarantee fulfilment of swap requests.
- 4.11 Students must meet all [relevant requirements and deadlines](#). In exceptional circumstances, Students may apply for late swaps, after the designated swap period. Late applications must meet one or more of the criteria below:
 - a) Students must demonstrate, with supporting documentation, that exceptional circumstances existed that made it not possible to submit their application for a placement swap during the designated period; or
 - b) Students must demonstrate, with supporting documentation, that there has been a significant and unexpected change to their personal circumstances following the designated swap period.
- 4.12 A lack of knowledge or awareness of the swap process and associated timelines is not considered a circumstance beyond their control and does not meet the criteria for a late application to be considered.
- 4.13 Approval of applications for late placement swaps will be made at the sole discretion of the Dean, Medical School (or nominee).

Exception based allocations – repeating Students

- 4.14 Students who are required to repeat a Clinical Placement(s) will be allocated to a site and placement order on the advice of the Dean, Medical School (or nominee).
- 4.15 Students must repeat the Clinical Placement(s) at a UQ Clinical School.
- 4.16 Students are not able to repeat a Clinical Placement outside of the published MD academic calendar, including during summer semester.

Exception based allocations – UQ-Ochsner MD Students undertaking return placements

- 4.17 UQ-Ochsner MD Students will be allocated to a Clinical Unit within the [Greater Brisbane Clinical School](#) (GBCS), or a Rural and Remote Medicine (RRM) site for their return placement. Allocations will be made based on availability and operational requirements. Students will not be allowed to change Clinical Units.
- 4.18 UQ-Ochsner MD Students who undertake their Medical Specialties placement as their return placement will have the opportunity to preference from the sub-disciplines available at the Clinical Unit to which they are allocated. Sub-disciplines cannot be guaranteed, and Students will not be permitted to change Clinical Units to seek alternative allocation.
- 4.19 If a UQ-Ochsner MD Student wishes to undertake the Elective placement in Australia (as per paragraph 3.4), it must be a clinically based placement. If a UQ-Ochsner MD Student completes ED/O, MS, ICU/Op/An, or RRM in Australia, they may be permitted to undertake their Elective in Australia with no restrictions on its focus (e.g., clinical vs research).

5. Elective (Personalised Learning) Course

- 5.1 Students are required to undertake the Elective course during Year 4 of their program.
- 5.2 The Elective course includes a placement period that is six (6) weeks in duration.
- 5.3 Applications for the Elective placement activity must be made in accordance with the published [guidelines and timeline](#).
- 5.4 The Elective placement can be undertaken at any approved location worldwide, including but not limited to Clinical Schools of the Medical School. Academic approval to undertake the Elective placement at an external site is at the discretion of the Director of OCS, or designee, and each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.5 Students are permitted to undertake 6-week Elective placements at OCS or an external provider. Students may undertake 4-week Elective placements at OCS or an external provider with the remaining two weeks in research or self-directed study. Students must provide a formal learning plan to justify self-directed study, and approval will be at the discretion of the OCS Assistant Director of Curriculum.
- 5.6 Self-arranged Elective placements may be split between one external provider and an Elective placement at OCS.
- 5.7 In exceptional circumstances, two different specialties may be approved as part of the Elective. Students must provide a formal learning plan to justify this, and approval will be at the discretion of the OCS Assistant Director of Curriculum.
- 5.8 Students wishing to undertake the elective placement external to a Clinical School are responsible for sourcing their own placement.
- 5.9 Students are not permitted to contact clinicians at Ochsner or UQ Clinical Units directly regarding clinically based elective opportunities and must follow the process as stated in paragraph 5.3.

- 5.10 Students are permitted to organise their own research-based Elective placement at sites associated with UQ Clinical Units. Students who wish to undertake a research-based Elective at a UQ Clinical Unit will need to gain approval from the supervising clinician, followed by approval from the relevant Head of that Clinical Unit before submitting an application to the Medical School. Approval will be at the discretion of the Clinical Unit Head and subject to approval of the Elective Course Coordinator.
- 5.11 Students undertaking a Research Higher Degree at UQ are not permitted to use their current research project and/or thesis write-up for their elective placement.
- 5.12 All self-arranged Clinical Placements will require a student placement agreement (SPA) to be signed with the placement provider, unless a current affiliation agreement exists between the away institution and Ochsner or UQ. Without a fully executed SPA, or current affiliation agreement, the placement will not be approved. If neither an SPA nor affiliation agreement can be secured, Students will be allocated to an available placement by the OCS Student Administration Team.
- 5.13 Self-sourced placements in low-middle income countries (LMIC), as defined by the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#), will require a risk assessment to be completed by the Student. These placements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and approval is at the discretion of the Dean, Medical School (or nominee).
- 5.14 As per the [UQ Student Travel Procedure](#), to ensure the health and safety of our Students and that UQ meets its duty of care obligations, authorised travel is not permitted to countries/regions rated by [DFAT Smart Traveller](#) as DFAT 3/4 or Not Rated (0) countries.
- 5.15 Students undertaking approved international placements must complete a Student International Travel Declaration before commencement of their travel, and also must register their travel with International SOS (ISOS) before departure.
- 5.16 Consideration may be given for time involved when travelling to and from an Elective placement and this will be included in the relevant attendance guidelines.
- 5.17 Students are responsible for all costs related to the Elective course.
- 5.18 Students who do not have an approved Elective placement six (6) weeks prior to the commencement of the placement block will be assigned to an available placement by the OCS Student Administration Team.

6. Special Consideration Process

- 6.1 In certain circumstances, UQ-Ochsner MD Students may seek to be assigned to a placement in a manner separate to the usual method of placement allocation that takes into account specific circumstances that may impact on the ability of the Student to undertake placements in a specific order. This is known as special consideration. All applications for special consideration must be supported by evidence and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Approval of applications for special consideration will be made at the sole discretion of the Dean, Medical School (or nominee).
- 6.2 Students who meet one or more of the categories outlined below may, upon application, be afforded special consideration during the allocation process:
 - a) Have a medical condition which:
 - i. Requires specialised treatment or care that is only available at a designated location. Students must provide evidence (for example, a medical certificate) to support their application.
 - ii. Amounts to a temporary disability, which cannot be properly supported at a specific site.

- b) Have an approved UQ [Student Access Plan](#) (SAP) that will impact on their ability to undertake one or more placements. Students should indicate that they have such a current SAP in place at the time of application and the existence of the SAP will be confirmed by the OCS Student Administration Team. No personal details or information will be disclosed or requested.
- c) Be undertaking a Research Higher Degree at UQ in accordance with the program rules relating to concurrent enrolment in a Research Higher Degree, which requires a specific placement location and/or placement order to facilitate the research program.
- d) Be commencing Year 3 in 2024, with a partner commencing Year 3 in Brisbane in 2024, and would like to request the same semester order, to align their intra-semester breaks.
- e) Be commencing Year 4 in 2024 and have applied for an Onshore-OCS Partner Swap or Advanced Hospital Practice (AHP) Semester Swap (as per the published [Guidelines](#)), where both Students have already obtained the required letter of support.

6.3 The following will not be considered grounds for special consideration:

- a) Private accommodation and/or transportation arrangements;
- b) Financial considerations (including current employment and/or business arrangements);
- c) Location of partner or family;
- d) Family celebrations or social events, such as weddings and birthdays (refer to [Medical Program Attendance and Participation Requirements](#));
- e) Religious grounds (refer to [Medical Program Attendance and Participation Requirements](#));
- f) Principal/primary carer responsibilities for pets or animals; and
- g) Residency/Internship interviews, either in the United States or overseas.

Late applications for special consideration

- 6.4 In exceptional circumstances, Students may apply for late special consideration after the Years 3 and 4 allocations have been finalised. Late applications must meet one or more of the categories outlined in paragraph 6.2 above. Students must demonstrate, with supporting documentation, that:
- a) exceptional circumstances existed that made it not possible to submit their application for special consideration during the designated timeframe; or
 - b) there has been a significant and unexpected change to their personal circumstances since the finalisation of the allocation of Years 3 and 4 placements.
- 6.5 A lack of knowledge or awareness of the procedure to seek special consideration and the associated timelines is not considered a circumstance beyond their control and does not meet the criteria for a late application to be considered.
- 6.6 All applications for late special consideration will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and are subject to operational requirements. Approval of applications for late special consideration will be made at the sole discretion of the Dean, Medical School (or nominee).
- 6.7 Acceptance of applications for Late Special Consideration will be considered in accordance with 'Part C - Formal Administrative Grievances/Appeals' of the [Student Grievance Resolution Procedure](#)