Considerations for suitable medical student research projects

Ideal projects are those that are:

- Small and achievable on a part-time basis but may have scope for extending into a longer/larger project such as an MPhil or PhD
- Flexible i.e. not time critical - with few specific time deadlines. Examples are: secondary data analysis, chart reviews, case reports, audits, literature reviews or systematic reviews
- Ready to begin – i.e. all necessary clearances are in place i.e. ethics, governance, PHA etc

**Note:** Wet lab or clinical projects that are time critical i.e. dependent on strict time frames or deadlines, are suitable only if these time critical components can be scheduled for a holiday period, summer, or after-hours and weekends. Most important to remember is that students must make their medical degree their priority. They do not get dedicated time out of their schedule to spend on a research project. Their research is considered as extracurricular, and during term time it must be done on a part-time basis.

Deciding on project outcomes:

- It is important that your input of time and expertise in supervising a student has benefit to you and your research group.
- Each project/activity you provide must have an agreed upon 'outcome' between you and your student which signifies 'completion'.
- Project outcomes can range from co-authorship on a journal article, or conference abstract; creating a database or protocol; and writing an ethics application or a systematic review.

Alternatives to a research project:

Students can help with a wide variety of research tasks and gain important experience. Examples of other mutually beneficial research work than can be undertaken by a student include:

- Helping prepare ethics applications
- Literature reviews and systematic reviews, literature searching
- Assisting with grants
- Secondary analysis of data, data analysis
- Database management
- Building a database, setting up protocols

Students must register their research:

Students will be required to register their research projects or activities so we can recognise their efforts and your supervisory time and expertise. Please remind any student with whom you work to register their project or activity so that we may recognise them appropriately.

Student insurance cover:

With the assistance of the UQ legal department, the School of Medicine has developed a form to be completed by the student and signed by the supervisor which, "covers the Student by holding public liability protection, travel and personal accident insurance for the duration of the volunteering experience (project or activities), which are authorised by UQ".

- The form is available to the student when they register their project with you.
- Please be sure that any medical student working with you on a ‘voluntary / extracurricular’ basis has presented this form for you to sign.