

THE *very*
HANDY *guide*
to **FIRST YEAR**
medicine

WRITTEN FOR THE INCOMING CLASS OF 2026



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

2023

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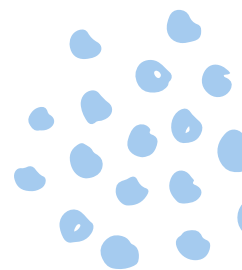
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Welcome

Hello and congratulations on getting into Medicine at The University of Queensland! This is the start of an exciting four-year journey filled with challenges, friendships, and the beginning of your future as doctors! This is an especially exciting time as the UQ MD program is undergoing a complete redesign to have a greater clinical focus and more hands-on time in the hospital. As such, The University of Queensland Medical Society (UQMS) has collated "The Very Handy Guide to First Year Medicine" to ease you into medical school, provide you with valuable resources, and make navigating the official UQ website a little less daunting. This is in no way an official document nor is it exhaustive but it's our student-lead attempt to make the transition slightly smoother.

quick resources

[UQ MD Academic Calendar by Faculty of Medicine](#)

[UQ MD Get Started](#)

[UQMS 2023 Events Calendar](#)

We will also be releasing a "Clubs and Affiliates Guide" in January to exhibit the societies that fall under or are affiliated with UQMS and showcase the breadth of opportunities available to you.

You'll get an opportunity to meet us in-person during your first week of med school and we have some fantastic start-of-year events and programs lined up for you! Until then, we hope this guide gives you a sliver of the med-school experience, and puts you in good stead for the start of the medicine.

THIS WILL BE YOU!



UQ MEDICAL SOCIETY

The University of Queensland Medical Society (UQMS) is the largest medical society in Australia, comprising over 1800 students. As a student-built community, we support our members and enrich the UQ medical school experience through diverse opportunities to inspire and develop well-rounded medical students.

facts about UQMS

- Founded in 1936, UQMS has a strong history of advocacy and equity.
- In 1960, UQMS established the national Australian Medical Students Association (AMSA) and in 2004, the Ashintosh Foundation alongside their Teddy Bear Hospital program and Queensland Medical Orchestra.
- As an independent and non-profit incorporated association, UQMS has an extensive organisational structure that many of you will become a part of:
 - 5 executive members
 - 13 management committee members
 - 130+ convenors and representatives overseeing the vast amount of activities and events we coordinate throughout the year.
- UQMS has further subdivisions called "Arms" - a word you will hear a LOT. These are sub-societies that fall directly under the UQMS:
 - UQMind - mental health and wellbeing
 - The Ashintosh Foundation - charity
 - Rainbow Med - LGBTQIASB+ advocacy
 - Incision UQ - surgical arm
- We are also associated with 13 "Affiliates". These are sub-societies independent of the UQMS but we still promote them because many of you will be interested in what they have to offer. You will read more about the Arms and Affiliates in the separate guide.

save these dates

Fri, 3 Feb UQMS Arms and Affiliates Trade Show.

An opportunity in o-week for you to sign up to UQMS and all our arms and affiliates as well as win some amazing prizes from our sponsors!

Mon, 6 Feb How to Ace First Year. An afternoon hosted by the Phase 1 Academic Coordinator and student speakers to give you the top tips for tackling med school.

Sat, 11 Feb Sports Day 2023. Our largest annual event where all four years gather for a day-long celebration (and games) in our scrubs.

Fri 17 Feb - Sun 19 Feb Med Camp. That's right year ones, we're taking you away for a weekend of activities to get you primed for the year ahead. Get around this one, because it will only happen ONCE in your med school life!

how to get involved?

You'll hear a lot more about UQMS in O-week and will get the chance to purchase our membership then! From there, join in on as many UQMS events and initiatives as you can throughout the year. You will also get a chance to apply for many First-Year representative positions at the UQMS OGM in March and even more roles at the end of the year!

don't miss any updates

UQMS has so much happening, you really don't want to miss out! Here's how to stay updated:



Follow the [UQMS Facebook Page](#).
Join the Facebook group - [UQ MD Class of 2026](#)
Join the Facebook group - [UQMS Students All Years](#)



Follow us on Instagram [@uqmedsoc](#)



Bookmark our website www.uqms.org_

reasons to get involved

UQMS membership may seem like an expensive investment, especially during your first week. But remember that it's a one-off payment for your entire med degree and will EASILY pay for itself due to the sheer amount of discounts and benefits you will receive throughout the year:

- Discounted access to very popular social events including:
 - 1st-year Med-Camp
 - Sports Day
 - Keg I and Keg II
 - May Ball
 - End of year events
 - And much more!
- Free membership to the four UQMS arms and discounted ticket prices to their events and activities.
- Discounted academic events:
 - Mock OSCEs
 - Networking nights
 - And much more!
- Access to academic resources such as the Year 1 Drive (contains student notes, past exam papers, textbooks, videos etc.)
- Discounted UQMS merchandise
- FREE Trepine (yearbook) at the end of Year 2 (valued at \$20)
- M Card discounts (more about this in O-week)

Even more things UQMS does:

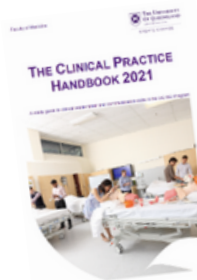
- MED REVUE!!!!!!
- Peer Tutorials (weekly tutoring sessions held by Year 2 students to sum up the most important concepts for Year 1).
- Volunteering and networking opportunities

How else can you benefit?

- Engage in advocacy and administration.
- Hold leadership roles and up-skill in organisational duties.
- Make heaps of friends (from all year levels)!
- Make your best memories from med school!

things to look out for

Grab your Year 1 scrubs during Week 1 (you will treasure them until year 4 and will wear them to the annual Sports Day)



Grab a printed copy of the clinical practice handbook in Week 1. You will be studying this for all your clinical practice exams!

med camp tickets :)



The UQMS keychain - comes free with your UQMS membership



Med Revue - get involved because there's room for everyone



Sports Day - biggest event of the year!



Med Camp - where you'll make your life-long friends



May Ball - biggest night of the year!

ADVOCACY & THE NEW MD PROGRAM

what is advocacy?

Unlike other medical schools, the Faculty of Medicine at UQ allows student representatives to sit in on a range of faculty meetings to discuss exam results, concerns at clinical sites, provide feedback, help with the AMC accreditation process, and even provide feedback for the design of the new MD. The Advocacy committee within UQMS sits under the External portfolio and consists of year level and site-level representatives that are elected by students.

resources






The best way to find out about the work we do is through our Advocacy updates which are posted regularly on year-level Facebook pages and the official [UQMS website](#).

The advocacy committee also runs the shared year level google drive for members with past exam questions, notes, ANKI decks, and other resources whose link is available via the UQMS website. Drive access will be provided in the UQMS Newsletter that you will be sent after obtaining your membership.

the new md program

The University of Queensland is a sandstone university within Australia (a designation given to the oldest universities within each state of Australia) and ranks as a top 50 University for Medicine in the world. Traditionally, the UQ MD has been taught in a 2-phase model with the 1st phase (year 1 & 2) focusing mainly on theoretical content (with seeing patients in hospital once a week in second year) and the 2nd phase (year 3 & 4) being full-time clinical rotations through various departments, hospitals, and clinics. The new UQ MD looks to change that and shift towards a 1+3 model with first year primarily focusing on theory, 2nd year having a 60/40 mix (3 days theory, 2 days clinical rotations), and increasing clinical exposure in progressive years.

The current program is still being refined and worked on by various groups alongside student representatives and if you're interested in reading more, you can do so at the [official UQ website](#).

| | | | | |
|---|---------------|---|----------------------|--|
|  | Year 1 | MEDI7100 Foundations of Medicine Year-long, 16-unit Course 4 days structured teaching 1 day clinically-focused teaching | Progression Decision | KEY  Structured Classroom Teaching ↓ Clinical Experience |
|  | Year 2 | MEDI7200 Developing Skills in Medicine Year-long, 16-unit Course 3 days structured teaching 2 days clinical longitudinal placement (Medicine, Surgery and GP) | Progression Decision | |
|  | Year 3 | MEDI7300 Clinical Immersion Year-long, 16-unit Course 1 day structured teaching 4 days clinical immersion | Progression Decision | |
|  | Year 4 | Advanced Practice and Transition to Internship Clinical Immersion → Elective → Pre-Internship 0.5 - 1 day structured teaching 4 - 4.5 days clinical experience | Graduation Decision | |

Source: [UQ Medicine New MD Design](#)

your advocacy contacts

Year 1 Representative (to be elected in March) - year1@ugms.org
 Advocacy Vice-Chair (Pre-Clinical) - advocacy.preclinical@ugms.org
 Advocacy Chair - advocacy@ugms.org



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ADVICE

Ahoy to everyone over the seas! We hope you're all excited to make the journey here and we can't wait to have you all on Australian soil. The following section will try to answer some of the burning questions you may have and give you some savvy advice on settling in.

before you arrive

✓ First Aid and CPR Requirements

First, look over the complete list of "Compulsory program Requirements" for Year 1 of the MD program ([Important Dates and Checklist here](#)).

First Aid is the focus on this section, since it is the one that tends to experience the most confusion. Usually, the faculty states which Australian First Aid courses will fulfil the requirement, but not which international courses are acceptable.

For Canadians, the following Canadian Red Cross certification definitely works: *Standard First Aid with CPR AED Level C Blended*.

For Americans, we have been told this course from the American Heart Association works: *Heartsaver® CPR/First Aid/AED Certification* (blended or classroom course options only).

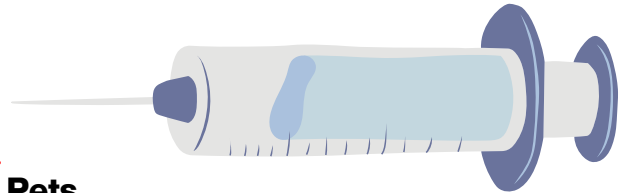
However, we recommend talking with the instructor running your program, who will usually be happy to go over the checklist of required topics to reassure you the course will be ok in meeting UQ guidelines!

NOTE

First aid companies won't guarantee you that their course will lead to you fulfilling UQ's requirement, and UQ may not verify for you that the course you are considering taking will be accepted (prior to you taking it). The best approach is to match up the content as closely as possible, look at the workbooks you will be using for the course, so you can show the content is definitely covered, and ask the instructor. Also, ask international students in upper years to see if anyone has used a specific course to fulfil the requirement. People are generally happy to help. We recommend having a thorough read of the following links for more information on relevant course-content and the official UQ advice: [First Aid](#) and [First Aid + CPR](#)

✓ Vaccines

These might be free in your home country or province so look into it before you leave. Alternatively, it might be cheaper to wait until you're in Australia.



✓ Pets

If you plan on importing or getting a furry companion during your studies, keep in mind that there are very strict import regulations for Australia (as a rabies-free country) which makes importing expensive and requiring a lot of planning and foresight. We recommend looking into this early and not leaving it to the last minute.

when you arrive

✓ Food

When first arriving, especially if you previously lived in a bigger city in North America (e.g., NYC, Toronto), shops close EARLY in Brisbane. Many will close ~5-6 pm, and some larger chains stay open until 9 pm (Woolworths) or 10 pm (Harris Farms) on most days. There are only a handful of 24-hour grocery stores in Brisbane and are mainly "convenience stores" with very limited options in South Brisbane. If you've arrived late and are desperate for some food, Uber Eats has some late-night options from restaurants open late with some dominos/pizza hut stores in more populated areas opening till 1/2am on Friday/Saturday.



✓ Banking

The four major banks in Australia are Commonwealth, Westpac, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ), National Australia Bank (NAB) with UQ having a Commonwealth branch on campus but you should check to see which is your closest branch. When transferring money, keep in mind (especially for Americans) that apps like Venmo are rarely used to send a friend money (e.g. if splitting a bill after a meal at a restaurant, etc.) and is often done using official bank apps. All you need to transfer someone money is their "BSB" number and "Account Number", which you can save under a contact name. You can also link your bank account to your phone number (aka. PayID) and transfer that way if it's easier but you will find that overwhelmingly people will give their Account name, BSB, and Account number for bank transfers (we recommend taking a screenshot to quickly send your details and not have to remember your details off by heart). For Canadians, the process is similar to e-transfer, except no email is sent, just direct deposit to the other person's account. This process is also relatively quick in most cases with people receiving their money within seconds to minutes.

Common international-related issues when renting (& how to quickly fix them):

After signing a rental agreement, you need to send the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) a rental bond as part of your rental agreement. At this stage of moving to Australia, you likely will not have enough Australian ID points to allow you to file the rental bond yourself. Do not panic! You can ask the "Agent" on your lease to perform a "manual lodge of the RTA bond" on your behalf.

Many internationals (especially Ochsner) get furnished units. If only few are available and you have to get an unfurnished unit, one tip here is to get Ikea furniture. Currently (as of Dec, 2022), Ikea has one year return policy in Australia: "You are allowed to return the goods within 365 days for a full refund of the price of the goods, regardless of the reason for the cancellation". So, maintain the quality of the purchase and you can get a full refund on your furniture if it is all from Ikea. Please double check this policy still exists when you make any purchases. Also, keep in mind when you get an "unfurnished apartment" this often means completely unfurnished (i.e. no fridge, no washer, no dryer, usually a dishwasher is included but sometimes not). If you're ever unsure, ask the real estate agent, sometimes leaving tenants may not want to take their large appliances and may be willing to sell/leave it for you.

✓ Driving

In the first 3 months after arriving, you can drive on a full overseas license (yes, you can still drive even if your license is from a country that drives on the opposite side of the road). After 3 months, you need to apply to transfer to a Queensland license. [More info here.](#)

Say you have no licence but want to get one for the future as an international who plans to stay long term, from prior experiences of students, it is VERY easy to get a learner's license/permit in Queensland. It just requires completing a self-paced online course with assessments throughout. However, as a learner, you must have someone with an unrestricted (aka. "full" or in Aussie slang, "being on your fulls") driver's licence in the car with you whenever you are driving. If you are 25 years old or over, the process for eventually getting a full license is substantially shorter compared to those under 25. If you want to do this, get it done after you get your CRN for the blue card as you won't need to go in person to take a picture, and the license is mailed to you.

✓ Health insurance

For those under the university health insurance (Allianz), just have your policy number noted and go to the [following website](#) to find a medical practice covered by the policy. Keep note of whether it says "no gap fee" – if there is no gap fee, it means there is NO required co-payment (i.e. out of pocket expense).

Prescriptions often need to be paid for out of pocket and you need to ask for a receipt from the pharmacist for your prescription (it will be signed by the pharmacist) which you can use to claim back money paid for medication from the health insurance provider.

after you settle in

transferring money to pay tuition

This part likely will not apply for Ochsner students since their tuition is in USD, but for other international students, tuition is paid for in AUD. There is plenty of time between the university issuing tuition invoices and the payment deadline. We highly recommend monitoring the exchange rate during this time so you can get some nice savings.

Emergency/disaster response

If you are ever experiencing some kind of emergency situation (e.g., prolonged power outage), contact the [Medical Student Support Team \(MSST\)](#). The university understands international students have fewer domestic connections, and MSST may be able to arrange temporary accommodation via student housing.



transport to UQ

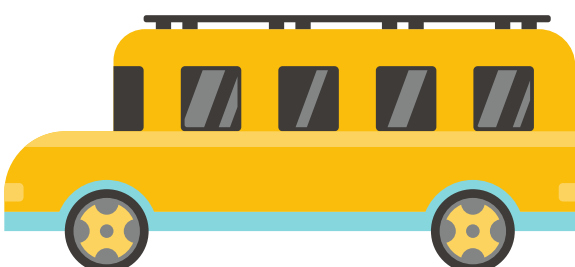
There are plenty of options to get to UQ, including buses, catching a ferry (esp. popular if you live in West End), biking, or driving. You'll need a [Go Card](#) to access for public transport in Brisbane and you should make sure to register your Go Card online after you get it to receive a 50% student discount on travel fare.

Bike

There are bike lockers, bike racks, and showers available at UQ as well as some facilities at the Herston and PA campus. You can apply for a locker with a \$20 deposit from [UQ facilities](#). Central hospitals (Mater, PA, RBWH/Herston) tend to have other facilities for staff and if you're starting rotations there, you should definitely enquire about them if you plan on biking.

Ferry

Catching the ferry is an option to get to UQ but is generally only feasible if you live in West End. It's not the most efficient mode of transport but can be depending on where you live. You can find more information at terminals and servicing [here](#).



Bus

The 66 bus route runs between UQ and the major hospitals (Mater, PA, RBWH) and is one of the busiest bus routes in Brisbane. Other popular buses that go to UQ are the 192 from West End, and 412 from Brisbane City. Living along these bus routes is great if you plan on commuting frequently to UQ. Use the Google Maps app or the Translink App on your phone and search up your destination using the public transport option and it will show you all the buses/schedules etc.

Car

UQ has quite cheap parking fees when compared to larger cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Toronto, etc.) and is a good option if you'd prefer to drive into university. Parking does fill up very early but you'll be able to park at a side street away from UQ if all the spots are taken (be prepared to walk 15+ minutes). At the time of writing, casual parking in the blue zone is \$5 for the whole day but tends to fill up quite quickly. Parking in the grey zone is \$7 for the whole day and is usually undercover and freely available. Parking is also free on the weekends and some students prefer to drive to UQ to study during the weekends (although there generally won't be any food options open on campus on the weekends).

LIVING IN BRISBANE

Some of you will have dreamed of going to UQ since high school but for others, Brisbane will sound like a rural town where people go on vacation, this section hopes to dispel some of the rumours for the latter group.

the weather

Brisbane has a humid subtropical climate so expect very hot and humid summers (often described as “unbearable” by people not from Queensland) and calm pleasant winters. You won’t be able to wear scarves (unless you don’t mind glares) but flip flops are a common sighting throughout Brisbane. There aren’t any beaches in Brisbane, but the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast are both a 1-2 hour drive north and south respectively if you’re an avid surfer or looking to take up the hobby. Australia also has a massive swimming culture so going for a swim at your local pool is a cheap and fun way of cooling down.



Summer (December - February).
Temperatures: 21 - 29.8°C (69.8 - 85.6°F)
Very humid so dress accordingly.



Winter (June - August).
Temperatures: 11 - 21°C (51.8 - 69.8°F)
Pleasantly cool, does not snow.

where to live?

Most of the teaching in year 1 of the new UQ MD will be at St Lucia with occasional visits to your respective clinical units. With the new MD, we’re yet to hear how teaching will be structured in year 2 as well as if you’ll be given one hospital for the duration of your degree or be rotating through the hospitals at your clinical unit site.

However, we can safely expect that most of your time in years 3 and 4 will be at your clinical units. Some students have historically lived close to the St. Lucia campus in year 1 and then moved in year 2/3 to whichever clinical unit they have been placed at for the year as more time is spent at hospital.

With the new MD, moving every year may be a thing of the past and you may choose to have a home close to your clinical unit from the get go. Regardless, we have some advice on where to live in Brisbane in the coming pages.

Location: The beautiful Brisbane city skyline from Kangaroo Point Cliffs.



helpful websites

- [Flatmates.com.au](https://flatmates.com.au) Good website to find other flatmates or find an apartment/house that already has 1 or more people living in it.
- [Realestate.com.au/](https://realestate.com.au/) Go-to website to find places to rent (as well as buy). Simply put in the suburb you're looking to stay at and add any filters (price, bedrooms, bathrooms, car space, etc.)
- Facebook (Marketplace or [UQMS marketplace](https://www.facebook.com/uqmsmarketplace))
- Find other MD students using the UQMS spreadsheet posted into the year level Facebook groups.
- [Gumtree.com.au](https://gumtree.com.au) Used less now compared to the aforementioned websites but useful to use to find a place to live
- [Official UQ information on accommodation](https://www.uq.edu.au/students/academic/official-uq-information-on-accommodation) Includes options to live on campus. UQRes is a popular choice. Other options include campus colleges but that's a very uncommon choice for postgraduate students in Aus (being 21+ in a residential college surrounded by 18 year olds can be difficult so we don't recommend this option unless rowdy teens interests you).
- [Off-campus student accommodations](#) are a great alternative to residential colleges if you're coming from interstate or overseas and you can get your own private room with a kitchenette and bathroom. This is a great alternative for older students but can be a lot more costly per week. Students often utilise these if they plan on returning back home/interstate for the holidays as leases can be whilst school is in session.
- Common options include:
 - [Scape](#) - South Brisbane being the more common option
 - [UniLodge](#) - South Brisbane and Buranda are both common options.

suburbs to live

South Brisbane

Cultural hub of Brisbane with museums, exhibition centres, etc. Lots of café's with a variety of food options as well as everything within walking distance of your apartment. Transportation is also a breeze with frequent bus/train/ferry services. A very popular location amongst the Ochsner cohort or those looking to stay at student accommodation. Apartment's tend to be high rise and nice with rent to match (expect to pay \$300-500/week depending on the apartment and if you're sharing with someone).

West End

The hipster suburb of Brisbane, lots of restaurants, café's and nightlife with many young adults choosing to live here. Rent is comparable to South Brisbane but can be cheaper if you're staying in a house with more roommates. Transport is fairly convenient but can be an extra bus from south Brisbane depending on where you're coming from. It's very easy to catch a ferry across the river to St. Lucia or to bike across with all options taking 10-25 minutes to the St. Lucia campus. Biking can be a bit challenging through the suburb of Highgate Hill (it's in the name) but very doable for your daily commute. West End is also home to lots of artsy cafes, gyms, and is great for the rock climbers and food bloggers.

Highgate hill

Essentially the next suburb to West End but cheaper and further away. See the section on West End for more information.

Dutton Park

Dutton Park is right across the river from St. Lucia. It's a cheaper alternative to Woolloongabba/Highgate Hill/West End but has more of a suburban feel. Getting to UQ is only a short walk across the green bridge (pedestrian/public transport only bridge to UQ) and you are also within walking distance of PA hospital.

Location: Southbank



Woolloongabba

Very close to everything with highly frequent public transport. Getting to UQ is a short 5-10 minute bus ride (or you might have to change at the Woolloongabba bus station depending on which side of Woolloongabba you live). Lots of café's, trendy restaurants, as well as the Woolloongabba stadium (where AFL and Cricket games are a common occurrence) are all within walking distance. Can be comparable to West End in terms of cost but usually slightly cheaper than South Brisbane. If you enjoy biking, it's also possible to bike to UQ and both PA and Mater hospital are a very short bus/bike ride away (5-10 mins).

St Lucia

If you want to live close to uni, this is the way to go. Is essentially a suburb with lots of undergraduate students and getting to events/outings is difficult as public transport is not that frequent. However, having UQ at your doorstep is fantastic and you can fully utilise the facilities and sporting fields/etc. that are on offer. There also isn't a lot of café's or supermarkets. If you have a car or plan to get one, St. Lucia is a great place to live and is only a 30 minute drive to Ipswich hospital.

Toowong

Cheap place to live that is very close to St. Lucia (6-8 min bus ride) as well as having access to all modes of transport (bus/train/ferry). Lots of restaurants with many great Asian food options. There is also a big mall present with all manner of shops at your disposal and fast food chains open till late (by Brisbane standards, NOT major city standards).

Herston/Kelvin Grove

Very close to Royal Brisbane Women's and Children's Hospital but not that ideal for first year where most of your classes will be in St. Lucia. The 66 bus route will take you directly to UQ but you'll be travelling end to end and the bus trip can be 60 minutes during peak hours. A very convenient location to live for later years with access to RBWH but slightly pricey as healthcare staff/doctors prefer to live nearby the hospital. Both Herston and Kelvin Grove are convenient and great options that are slightly cheaper than South Brisbane/West End/etc. in later years and there are also some self-contained student accommodation apartments in Kelvin Grove as there is another university (Queensland University of Technology) based in Kelvin Grove.

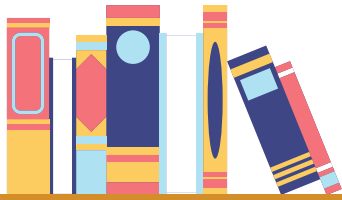
If you'd like alternatives that are slightly cheaper and don't mind driving 30+ minutes into UQ whenever you must go, Windsor, Nundah, Chermside are options to consider. These options become convenient cheaper alternatives if you're based at Northside hospitals (RBWH, Prince Charles Hospital, Redcliffe Hospital, Caboolture Hospital) in the later years so consider moving there later. Most students tend to live centrally and commute out as currently you're only at a clinical unit for a year (this will change with the new MD) so you may find more and more of your peers moving here in later years. Once again, getting to events/etc. will be difficult from these locations as public transport is quite poor.

Brisbane City/Fortitude Valley (aka. The Valley)

Generally not a great place to live as the city is very busy during the day and dead during the night whereas fortitude valley is where all the nightclubs are so getting some shut-eye on the weekend can be very difficult. If you'd like to live close to this area, we'd recommend checking out Bowen Hills, Newstead and if you'd like a bit more suburban feel and have a car, perhaps New Farm.

Location: West Village, West End





MED SCHOOL TIPS



Historically, first year has consisted of four subjects ("Ethics and Professional Practice", "Health Society and Research", "Clinical Sciences", "Clinical Practice"), of which Clinical Sciences would take up 90% of your time with occasional weekly classes/assessments for the other subjects. Now, all four subjects have been integrated into one year-long course to better integrate these interlinked topics and place emphasis on developing well-rounded medical graduates. Whilst we're yet to see the form assessments will take, we can confidently say that the focus in first semester will be on basic biomedical principles, cardiorespiratory, and principles of infection and immunity. We also expect second semester to focus on the gastrointestinal and musculoskeletal systems. Let's take a look at some popular study resources and techniques for solidifying your med knowledge.

summary notes

Note taking (paper or digital) is something many of you have done in undergrad and it's definitely feasible to continue in med but with a few changes. As tempting as it is, please refrain from writing down *all* the information that you come across – med has an overwhelming amount of content and you don't want to cramp your hand or tire yourself out with stacks of notes. Keep summaries concise with high yield info.

videos

YouTube channels and video resources are excellent for visually explaining concepts. Here are two that are widely used:

- Boards and Beyond - Dr. Jason Ryan, the saviour of medical students, has created 30 minute videos explaining every medical topic under the sun. Available for purchase (but very expensive). Check out the UQMS Year 1 drive first.
- Osmosis - Animated videos that summarise pathological processes very well! Also paid but does provide a free trial.
- Acland's Video Atlas of Human Anatomy - access through UQ. Very helpful video demonstrations of anatomy structures.

websites

- Amboss: A paid website that provides you with abundant medical notes and summaries.
- UpToDate: Accessible via UQ Library for free. Lists down the pathophysiology, clinical findings, treatment, etc for many diseases. An excellent resource for medically relevant information about diseases.
- Life in the Fast Lane - for all your cardiology needs.
- Histology Guide - to put sense to all the pink and purple blobs on the page.

study resources

anki

ANKI is a spaced-repetition software (put simply, a flash card app that shows flashcards based on how easy or hard they are for you) and you can choose to make your own flashcards or utilise flashcards made by others (flashcards are stored in a "deck"). We'd recommend watching a handful of videos on YouTube if you do know how it works or the variety of options available to make flashcards and getting acquainted with the software (download at <https://apps.ankiweb.net>) to prepare before med school as you're bound to try it at some point given how ubiquitous it is in medical schools throughout the world. It's especially helpful if you're studying for USMLE as there are a handful of decks that people use to prepare for the Step 1 exam (Zanki Step One, AnKing, etc.)

textbooks

Great for breaking down lecturer jargon into words that humans can understand. Some great medical textbooks include:

- First Aid for the USMLE Step 1 - The ultimate breakdown of anatomy, physiology, pathology and pharmacology into concise summaries.
- Talley and O'Connor Clinical Examination - a must-have guide to history taking and physical examination by systems.
- Marieb's Human Anatomy and Physiology - excellent for those who do not have a biomedical/medical background. Easy to understand system-to-system explanations and illustrations.

Other helpful textbooks

- Netter's Atlas of Human Anatomy - a very detailed anatomy atlas (illustrations not photos).
- Rothen Color Atlas of Anatomy - excellent anatomy atlas of photos, great for if you're struggling to find structures in anatomy labs.
- Robbins Basic Pathology - a very comprehensive textbook on every pathological process you can think of. It's a very long tedious read but great if you're struggling.

study tips

- **There is not one correct way to study** and you will probably change your study technique many times before you find the one that works for you. This might mean scoring low on some assessments as you figure things out, but don't fret, it's all part of the process :)
- **Schedule in breaks and extracurriculars.** It's tempting to flood your calendar with class and study but we recommend scheduling in fun things to do and look forward too!
- **Don't compare yourself to other people!** This is a very hard habit to shake off in first year as many of you are high achievers and come from a competitive background. Trust us when we say, you will realise pretty quickly that med is not a race! There are inevitably going to be times where you feel very behind, but THAT'S 100% NORMAL AND EVERYONE WILL GO THROUGH IT (they just don't say!)
- When you are feeling overwhelmed:
 - **refocus and find the root of the problem.** Does your study technique need improving? Do you need to find other study resources? Are you not able to study alone? Is there something else happening in your life? Or perhaps you're actually fine and you're just getting stressed hearing other people talk.
 - **slowly and steadily get back on track.** Build a good schedule and cover small chunks of content at a time. Do not try and cram huge amounts of information at once to catch up! That'll worsen the problem and make you more stressed. It's also an excellent idea to reach out to Med Student Support and explore the options available to you if you need to take a break!
 - **ultimately take care of yourself.** Even at peak stress, give yourself breaks and take some time off medicine!
- **Know your resources.** Explore the different study resources and websites in advance so you are aware of everything at your disposal when class starts. Specifically for UQMS members, take a look through the Year 1 drive and check out all the resources already provided so you don't spend heaps of money buying things yourself. This also applies to well-being resources; the next section about Mental Health dives into all the support that's available to you. This is a huge degree and comes with a lot of stress. Get on top of your resources early so you know what to do when you need it most.
- **Go to peer tutoring sessions and other academic events** - Peer tutoring is a UQMS lead initiative where Year 2 med students teach Year 1s weekly content. This is an excellent way to learn as a group and gain pearls of wisdom from older year levels. Incision UQ also runs anatomy tutoring so keep an eye out on your year level Facebook group about sign ups for this!
- **Go to How To Ace First Year.** This is a student run info night on February 6th where you will hear from many older students about their first year experiences.

faqs

Do I have time to sleep and have a life in medical school?

Yes! Anyone who says otherwise probably needs to reconsider their choices. These four years are going to be some of the best years of your life and most med students sustain healthy relationships, have a great social life, and engage in extracurriculars all while studying and going to class! It's all about finding a good routine that works for you and building sustainable study habits that keep you from getting burnt out. That being said, it's inevitable to wade through some days feeling overwhelmed and stressed. When that happens, make sure to reach out to support systems and your friends so you don't have to fight it alone!

What do I wear to class?

Depends on the class. Classes that do not have practical components are generally relaxed and you can wear anything you'd like. Practical classes usually have specific dress codes (some require closed-in shoes, others require clinical clothes and others want full PPE). Any dress requirements will be specified on the class blackboard site. Any class requiring you to go to hospital or come into proximity with patients require clinical clothes. More information about UQ's clinical clothes guidelines [here](#).

Can I miss class?

UQ has an absence notification form that you are required to fill in if you are not able to make any of the scheduled class times. More information can be found [here](#).

Is it possible to hold a job during medicine?

This is a tricky one, because it depends. We suggest cutting back on work commitments during the first couple of months of first year because the transition into med can take you by surprise sometimes. There are heaps of medical students who have multiple jobs, however, so pick up jobs after you settle into the groove of med school.

I'm a parent/mature aged student, do you have any tips for me?

Glad you asked, keep scrolling to the next page :)



SECTION 6

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Med school is a lot of work, and no doubt harder with juggling kids and other commitments but definitely doable.

Be organised, there's a lot of assessment in med school and when juggling other commitments, it can be easy to fall behind or miss crucial dates. It's important to try and stay on top of your study and tackle assignments early.

Have a support system in place. This can include friends or family that you know you can call on when things get busy and you need help either at home or to look after kids while you finish off assignments or study for exams.

There are support groups available for mature age students and students with children. Joining the "[UQ MD Parents and Mature Age Students](#)" Facebook group will help you to connect with other mature age students across the UQ MD program. This can be a helpful source of advice as well as a place to ask questions from other students who may have had similar experiences.

Ask for help early if you are struggling or feeling behind in your studies reach out to [Med Student Support](#) and the relevant Academic Advisor for your year level. It's not uncommon to need to ask for extensions or deferrals due to special circumstances.



If you are planning to apply for Special Consideration for timetables, clinical unit location or placement ordering make sure you familiarise yourself with the criteria and the due dates as these can be before preferencing opens.

If you are pregnant or planning to have children during med school reach out to [Med Student Support](#) and the Academic Advisor for your year level to discuss possible options including the following:

Phase 1: Options could include an interruption of studies for up to 12 months or reduced course load subject to FOM approval.

Phase 2: Options could include a deferral of placements (either one or up to 12 months) through an interruption of studies subject to FOM approval.

Request a Parenting Information Pack from Med Student Support which includes details of childcare facilities either on or close to campus as well as breastfeeding facilities on campus and the clinical sites.

MENTAL HEALTH

Medical school can be a very daunting undertaking and prioritising your mental health is of the utmost importance as we often see the serious consequences poor mental health has on medical students at UQ. There are a range of support services that UQ runs and we also have a society dedicated to promoting preventative mental health strategies. Established in 2016, UQMind is passionate about promoting good mental health and wellbeing amongst students by providing events and resources.



Make sure to follow UQMind on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to keep up with our events and initiatives in 2023.

I'd like to find resources

UQ Resources

The University of Queensland maintains a [resource database](#) of support services targeted to medical students. They also have a list of resources that may be suitable for specific issues (bullying, harassment, discrimination, academic guidance) as well as information on broader preventative strategies such as resources for bulk-billing GP's and Psychiatrists whose focus/are willing to treat medical students.

UQ Student Services have a number of divisions that offer support for students. Note that the wait for UQ services can be lengthy at times but are worth checking out if you need something on-campus or UQ-specific. Below are some of the options offered.

Medical Student Support Team (MSST) is accessible to medical students only. MSST provides dedicated support to medical students for all wellbeing needs and refers to other specialist services as required. MSST functions as an excellent resource to find resources and as a starting point for understanding/implementing preventative mental health strategies. They are also an excellent resource for academic skills development, help adjusting to life in Qld and assisting students with disabilities. Reach them at med.mss@uq.edu.au.

UQ Counselling – all UQ students can access 10 free counselling sessions each year face-to-face, phone or Skype. They also offer group programs to support wellbeing.

Disability Services – consult a Student Advisor to discuss the support available for students with a disability, mental health or medical condition, illness, injury, carer responsibilities or exceptional circumstance. They can also help create a Student Access Plan for you to organise reasonable adjustments in your courses.

Resources outside of UQ

1300 MH CALL (1300 642 255), a confidential 24/7 phone service that provides information, advice, and support to people with questions or concerns about their own mental health or the mental health of a friend or family member.

DHQ Professional Support Services – for information about various support services. Under 'For all doctors and medical students', you will find links for immediate crisis support and a range of other services. 'Medical students' have links specific to you such as local GPs, psychologists, and psychiatrists that support medical students (created in 2020 – updated version coming from UQMS in 2023). Other useful sections include mindfulness, LGBTQI+ support, and relationship support.

I feel okay but need advice

DHQ Helpline (07 3833 4352)

Free, independent, confidential support service staffed by experienced volunteer GPs to assist doctors and medical students. Please note that this is not a crisis line. It is a point of contact to discuss concerns and receive advice in a non-judgemental, confidential space. In the past, people have called about study stress, help to find an appropriate GP, debriefing following incidents, and personal mental health matters.

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) is a confidential 24/7 phone service that provides evidenced-based healthcare information and referral.



I'm in crisis and I need help

For any emergency, call 000

Lifeline 13 11 14

BeyondBlue 1300 22 4636

Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467

Add these numbers to your contacts for quick access!



Finding a GP

It is key to find your own GP at the beginning of your medicine journey. This can be a tricky process with some trial-and-error required, especially if you're new to Brisbane.

Lists like this one may help. Under the Medicare Better Access Initiative, you're eligible for a GP Mental Health Care Plan that gives you access to 10 free sessions per year with a psychologist. It is worth persevering to find one that fits you. Here are some reasons med students need their own GP:

- Crisis care – Organise a regular GP while you are feeling healthy so when you feel like your mental and physical health starts to deteriorate, you have someone familiar to consult.
- We're a high-risk population – Medical students and trainees have an increased risk for stress, burnout, depression, anxiety and poor self-care which can lead to chronic health conditions. This is compounded by a tendency to self-diagnose and self-criticise.
- Tailored care and referral - A regular GP that knows you will be more likely to refer you to an appropriate specialist or psychologist that suits your need if ever required.
- Fostering a positive medical culture - By practicing self-care, seeing a regular GP and seeking help for health issues early, we can maximise our potential to be caring, compassionate doctors.

how to set up your own GP

"Hi, thanks for seeing me! My name is _ and I'm a _ year medical student at UQ. I'd love to have a regular GP during my degree so I have someone confidential to come to for support. Are you happy for me to see you?"

other sites to check out!

Smiling Mind – a mindfulness program focussing on pre-emptive mental health skills.

Black Dog Institute – resources, research, and support for various mental health conditions

This Way Up – self-paced online program that teach strategies to improve mental well-being.

BeyondBlue – a range of resources and links. Our favourites include the Mental health check-in quiz and Tips and strategies for maintaining well-being.

AMSA Mental Health (@amsa.mentalhealth)





UQMS INDIGENOUS



UQMS Indigenous is a committee within the External portfolio of UQMS. The UQMS Indigenous committee is a relatively new society within UQMS and we are working on creating this space to be a more collaborative space within the wider UQMS organisation. We have the aim to enhance the experience and create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students within UQMS. We also aim to work with the wider UQMS organisation to ensure Cultural Safety is aimed towards in all our internal and external endeavours. We engage in a variety of causes including advocacy, community building, creating opportunities for members, and organising events. If you identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and are enrolled into the MD program, please join us at our UQ MD Indigenous FB Private Group Page ([UQ Indigenous Medical Students | Facebook](#)).

events

Kahoot and Pizza Yarns

UQMS Indigenous hosts an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kahoot and Pizza Yarns throughout Semester 1 and Semester 2. The aim of this is to connect with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MD Students and to reiterate our strengths and culture.

UQMS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Seminar

In 2022, UQMS had the opportunity to partner with the Faculty of Medicine to support them in the catering for the UQMS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Seminar 2022. This was a first-time event launched in 2022 that aimed to bring together both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous medical students for a common cause to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. The date of this event for 2023 is Wednesday 12th July 2023, 5:30pm-7:30pm and tickets are on sale at \$5 per ticket, with a maximum capacity of 60-70 Students and will be held at St Lucia, UQ Campus. More information coming soon!

scholarships

Ashintosh x UQMS Indigenous POCHE Research Scholarship

This program was developed as a collaboration between the Ashintosh Foundation and the Indigenous Board of UQMS. The Ashintosh-POCHE research project began in 2022 developing as a novel program to engage UQ medical students at UQ with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led research that tackles health issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For more information, please email us via the contact information found at the bottom of the page.

Funding Line

In 2022, the Faculty of Medicine and UQMS Indigenous collaborated to work on a Terms of Reference to provide funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students. This is to enhance the professional, personal, and cultural development of our medical students. For more information about this funding line please email us at UQMS Indigenous.

UQMS Indigenous guide

There is a more in-depth UQMS Indigenous Guide that has been developed that outlines financial support options, how to reach out for help, and national opportunities with other organisations. This is distributed to every incoming Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MD cohort, so if you haven't received it, please email us at UQMS Indigenous.

contacts

Chair: Kyle Ryan | MD3 | Yuggera Ugarapul | indigenous.chair@uqms.org
 Vice Chair: Luke Jackel-David | MD2 | Kulkalgal | indigenous.vicechair@uqms.org
 Phase 1 Rep: Kiris Reis | MD2 | Wagadagam | indigenous.phase1@uqms.org
 Phase 2 Rep: Jordyn Quonoey | MD3 | Darambul | indigenous.phase2@uqms.org

RAINBOW MED

Rainbow Med is a group by and for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Sistergirl, and Brotherboy (LGBTQIASB+) medical students and their allies within the External portfolio of UQMS. Our aim is to provide support, advocacy, collaboration, and a strong sense of community for the queer and gender diverse medical community at UQ. We host events centred on celebrating our community, expanding inclusivity/intersectionality, and educating allies. We aim to be a safe point of contact for any student concerns and liaise with the faculty regularly to promote a safe and inclusive curriculum. We also run a range of events such as the Welcome Picnic, Safe Care seminar, Sexual Health Symposium and community catch ups.

get involved

If you'd would like to get involved, contact Rainbow Med over Facebook or at rainbowmed@uqms.org. We have a hidden Facebook group for LGBTQIASB+ students and a general group for allies as well which you can ask to join by emailing rainbowmed.chair@uqms.org

tips for medical school

- Remind yourself daily that you deserve to be here, and are bringing something special and unique to medicine. The medical institution needs more people like you!
- Prioritise your physical, psychological and emotional safety as number one.
- Don't ever feel you need to put yourself in situations that make you feel unsafe, no matter who is telling you to be there. The hierarchy of medicine is a construct that can be challenged and changed!
- Don't feel pressure to be out in environments or situations where you feel at risk. On the flipside, don't be afraid to be out, draw on your lived experience or show allyship wherever you are comfortable!
- Medicine is never fully objective. Let yourself have passions, be emotional, connect with colleagues and patients in an appropriate manner, and speak to your own experience as a LGBTQIASB+ person.
- Build community both inside and outside the degree. Connect with other LGBTQIASB+ students and allies, we look out for each other.
- Take time out to do things that make you feel valid, loved and rested.
- Maintain friendships, supports and interests outside of med. Don't fall into the trap of thinking it has to become your whole world.
- Prepare for some interactions with faculty and institutions to be problematic, and know you can always seek support from the community when that happens.
- If you see, hear, read or experience something that feels unsafe for you or someone else, we are here to help you address it. While there is never any pressure to take on advocacy, the option is there if you have capacity! We have had a lot of success making our curricula and faculty environment safer and more inclusive.
- Reach out to Rainbow Med for anything you need, be it advocacy support, pronoun pins, events, idea sharing or community connections.



KEY CONTACTS

UQMS Executives

President | Prabasha Thilakaratne | president@uqms.org
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Vice President Internal | Soyi (Sally) Lee | vpi@uqms.org

UQMS Management

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Affiliates Council Chair | Brinda Gunashanhar | affiliates@uqms.org
AMSA Representative | Jonathon Bolton | amsa@uqms.org
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Social Officer | Lucas Hu | social@uqms.org
UQMind Chair | Sarah Gaukroger | uqmind.chair@uqms.org
Rainbow Med Chair | Sophia Nicolades | rainbowmed.chair@uqms.org

UQMS Advocacy Reps

Year 1 Representative | to be elected in March | year1@uqms.org
Advocacy Vice-Chair (Pre-Clinical) | Emma Fisher | advocacy.preclinical@uqms.org
Year 1 International Representative | to be elected in March | year1.international@uqms.org
Phase 1 International Representative | Pranav Khosla | phase1.international@uqms.org
Disability Representative | Lagshiga Shanmuhalingam | disabilityrep@uqms.org
Parents & Mature Student Representatives | Savita Devi Singh, Sai Teja Bondalapati | parentandmaturestudents@uqms.org

UQ Contacts

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