

Adelaide Medical Students' Society Minutes of Committee Meeting

Date: Monday 14 May 2018 | **Location:** Joe Verco Lecture Theatre G033, Adelaide Health and Medical Sciences Building (AHMS)

Members in Attendance:

Kavindra Abeyratne (KA), Teham Ahmad (TA), Catrin Bannister (CB), Adriano Barilla (AB), Ksenia Bogatyreva (KB), Malcolm Borg (MB) (Chair), Joel Chan (JC), Scott Chandvasiri (SC), Jennifer Chataway (JCh), Luke Ciallini (LC), Henry Colovic (HC), Mithma Ekanayake (ME), Shenani Gunasekera (SG), Emily Hammond (EH), Albert Hung (AH), Joe Hewitt (JH), Patrick Kennewell (PK), Fergus Lynch (FL), Andreas Makestas (AM), Henry Marshall (HM), Oliver Marshall (OM), Florencia Moraga (FM), Abby Moore (AM), Tri Nguyen (TN), Ella Obst (EO), Ayra Perakath (AP), Sachini Perera (SP), Huy-dat Pham (HuP), Hamish Phillips (HP), Jade Pisaniello (JP), Michael Riceman (MR), Simone Richards (SR), Ricky Stocker-Johns (RSJ), Letti Sweet (LS), Luzern Tan (LT), Fiona Thoi (FT), Aithne Tobin (AT), Toby Zerner (TZ) via Skype.

Apologies:

Chloe Borgas, Monica Chen, Eliza Colley, James Kimber, Amanthi Mendis, Georgia Smithson-Thomas

MB opened committee meeting at 1736

1. Q&A with Professor Burt & Professor Symonds

1738

Professor Alastair Burt Executive Dean, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences (AB) and Professor Ian Symonds Dean of Medicine, Acting MBBS Program Coordinator (IS) attended a Q&A section of the May meeting of the AMSS Committee. A number of questions had been raised by members in advance of the session which fell within the following areas:

- Bachelor of Medical Studies and Doctor of Medicine (BMD)
- Sexual Respect | Safer Campus Community and SA Health
- Additional Questions

Following the response to the above areas, IS and AB answered questions from the audience present. The remaining questions which were not discussed at the Q&A will be raised with IS at a meeting with AMSS Executive (MB in attendance) and these answers will then be made available to members.

Bachelor of Medical Studies and Doctor of Medicine (BMD)

The Q&A began with a presentation by IS on the Bachelor of Medical Studies and Doctor of Medicine (BMD). IS stated that the Adelaide Medical School is working on the development of the BMD program with the aim to replace the current MBBS degree. The proposal of the BMD will need to go through University and AMC approvals.

The proposal is being developed at present with a view to submit to university internal approval processes later this year. It is unlikely that this program will commence before 2021. Dr Jo Thomas has been seconded from the MBBS program Coordinator role to lead the program development of the BMD. IS will act as MBBS Program Coordinator with support from Ms Alex Sabharwal (Manager Student and Learning Services).

Q: Student participation in the development of the BMD

A: Ample opportunities for staff, students and wider community to inform the development. More information will be provided over the coming months.

Q: Expected introduction date and the year levels likely to be involved by the transition and to graduate with an MD

A: The expected timeline is 2021 at latest. We are anticipating that students enrolled in years 1-3 will certainly be given the option to transfer. However, we are working on details of transition to allow students in later years to do same but cannot yet confirm the outcome. This is a key area required for University and AMC approval.

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Q: Duration of the BMD

A: The proposal is for six years.

Q: The rationale behind the change to an MD

A: Multiple reasons for rationale for change. To bring the University of Adelaide into alignment with what is occurring across the Australian Higher Education sector and to offer Adelaide graduates the same opportunities as interstate students. The MD is a Masters level qualification which may better reflect the length of study and depth of knowledge required to complete a medical degree. The MD is a globally recognised qualification, particularly in America and Asia.

Q: Whether postgraduate entry or entry for students >2 years of study will be permitted

A: The MD program will remain as a 6-year degree with a predominantly school leaver demographic. There are no plans to make the MD a graduate entry program. A small number of Higher Education (tertiary transfer) places will be available, as has been the case with the current MBBS model.

Q: Whether it is expected to be graded or non-graded and whether a graded system will infer merit-based internship selection

A: The BMD development will include a move to [Mark Scheme 10](#). Acknowledgement that this has divided student opinion but IS assured those present that this will be a long-term benefit to graduates.

A Grade Point Average (GPA) is not calculated on a normative distribution, meaning that one students' marks are not impacted by the marks of others'. IS does not believe this will breakdown the collegiate atmosphere of medical learning as it currently stands. IS informed those present that the Medical School receives a significant number of requests for letters outlining student academic performance for postgraduate and training program applications. The current MBBS academic transcript can only outline the NGP result. The Banding system has been an internal program concept.

There are no immediate plans for SA to implement merit-based internship system. It is important to note that this is not a decision undertaken by the University. For more information:

<https://www.samet.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Intern-Job-Pack.pdf>

Q (LS): Any plans to expand the number of places in the program.

A: No, the number of places are determined by the government. We are unlikely to see an expansion in the number of places for International or Domestic students.

Q: What are the expected changes regarding end-of-year assessments in the MD

A: In terms of assessment within the BMD development, the initial design will see the removal of the current barrier examination courses. A key principle is for assessment activity to be semesterised.

Q (FM): Will the barrier year occur in 5th or 6th year

The BMD is not expected to involve a "barrier examination," in contrast to the Year 5 examinations in the current MBBS program.

Q: What are the expected changes regarding the course's research components

Research within the MD program will require students to undertake a scholarly project. The current model being looked at is retaining the Year 3 research methods course and for students to undertake a full research project in Year 4. It will continue to involve critical appraisal and group work as well as presentation skills.

Q: Whether the expected switch to MD is expected to impact the career competitiveness of the MBBS degree for internship and beyond

MBBS graduates will continue to have a registerable qualification and this will have no impact on internship places or prospects into the future. It is not possible for previous MBBS graduates to convert their degree to a BMD. In terms of the transition/overlap period, the university will look to maximise the opportunity for as many students as possible to graduate with an MD. It is unlikely that students in all year levels will be able to graduate with the BMD after 2021 but those in earlier years should be able to. Students completing the MBBS will be taught out with sufficient support to meet the requirements for completion.

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Q (LT): whether anything is being done to ensure the new program is recognised in countries other than Australia.

A: The BMD Development team is looking at this and the current MBBS degree is already recognised internationally by a number of Medical Councils.

Q (LS): Will there be a focus on indigenous health in the MD?

A: The same opportunities offered in the MBBS will be rolled out for the BMD. He said that the BMD program will have a new vertical domain called 'health and society' which will have a focus on healthcare in different communities. Currently, the indigenous health curriculum is being reformed by Dr A McKivett who was appointed in 2017. Prof Burt stated that from a Faculty point of view, we are keen to see embedded indigenous teaching in all of our programs and that there will be some common teaching (i.e. between dentistry and medicine) in earlier years of the BMD program.

Sexual Respect | Safer Campus Community and SA Health

MB spoke to bullying and harassment on clinical placement and asked what efforts the Faculty are taking to minimise bullying and harassment in hospitals.

A: The Adelaide Medical School takes any complaints of Bullying and Harassment seriously, even in the situation where a student may be unwilling to make a formal complaint.

AB spoke to the Respect. Now. Always. Initiative that was initiated in 2017 and resulted in a task force within the university which reports to the SRC and other different channels. AB said that the university is tracking well with implementation that it set out to do. AB said it can be difficult to deal with some situations which occur in hospitals as often staff members are not affiliated with the university and are rather SA Health employees. He went on to say that SA Health is setting up its own task force which will look at the processes of reporting incidents that occur. He went on to describe that it is particularly hard for the university still as placements are not restricted to just public SA hospitals with some students undertaking placements at private hospitals, interstate hospitals and overseas centres.

Q: What supports are available to students experiencing bullying and harassment on clinical placement – who they should approach with these issues, whether there are anonymous means of reporting incidents

Students should approach their local supervisor first or the relevant course coordinator or year advisor. All formal complaints are escalated to the Program Coordinator and Dean of Medicine.

Additional Questions

Q (MB): Will the MLTU website (curriculum.adelaide.edu.au) return?

A: No, there are no plans to bring back a program specific website and that the BMD will work with services available in the University to utilise systems like MyUni and SONIA.

Q (LS): What implications exist for students doing the BMD who wish to do an honours year?

A: There is no intention to do away with the opportunity to undertake an additional honours year. Prerequisites to complete an honours year will remain the same (i.e. have to have completed 3 years of equivalent Bachelor study).

Q PK: Any plans for dedicated quiet study spaces in the AHMS?

A: AB said that the University is undertaking a review of the building's functionality, incorporating the results of a 2017 survey filled in by students and staff, and following this will consider how the AHMS can be optimised for those who use the building.

Q (PK): The recent federal budget included an investment in rural health in the Murray Darling Basin Project, he asked whether there had been an oversight or any disappointment we did not receive the same funding?

A: AB responded by saying that the Murray Darling Basin was a strategic decision for the country and will bring together existing medical schools. In terms of opportunities for rural training, he stated SA is different to other states in terms of geography; he said SA does not have bigger towns outside of the main city as other states do so this outcome did not come as a surprise.

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Q (LS): stated that she has recently been experiencing problems with clinical placement as a 4th year student and that clinical placement coordinators have responded to her concerns with statements along the lines of "the MD is coming soon".

A: The BMD program does not postpone any optimisation of the current MBBS program and that the Adelaide Medical School will continue to make changes where possible to improve the MBBS. IS asked students to pass on feedback through their applicable year level EdReps as per usual.

Q: The availability of internship positions for graduating students in SA?

A: Internships are guaranteed for citizens and permanent residents but not for International students. So guarantee can be provided for International students for SA or Australia wide. However, based on the outcome achieved last year for International students they may be successful if they are willing to move interstate. Unable to commit to a number as this is out of our remit.

Evidence in Victoria that GPA is utilised so the move to M10 is future proofing if this was to occur in South Australia.

Meeting with MB and IS

Q: Is there the possibility for international students to transfer to domestic places in the current MBBS Program and future MBD program?

A: This is outlined in the MBBS Admissions Guide.

Change in immigration status during studies

If you are an international student and you obtain permanent residency (or another applicable immigration status that entitles you to the educational benefits of permanent residency) after you complete your first year of study, you will only be able to remain in the MBBS degree if there is a domestic place available at that time. With strict quotas across the breadth of the MBBS degree, availabilities of domestic places at any given time cannot be guaranteed. These are at the discretion of the Executive Dean and subject to availability.

If a domestic place is available, you must pay tuition fees for the remainder of your studies in the degree (i.e. you cannot be transferred to a Commonwealth supported place). If a domestic place is not available, you will not be able to remain in the MBBS degree.

For more information: <https://health.adelaide.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/2019-medicine-surgery-admissions-guide.pdf>

Q: Why are "letters of good standing" / "banding letters" no longer available to students for free through the faculty but must now be purchased through the University Online Shop, considering: they were offered to students for free in the past, they are usually a requirement to organise certain sixth year placements, and they are a student service which one would expect would be covered by the hundreds of dollars paid annually in student services and amenities fees (SSAF)?

A: Not available for free in other degrees and the MBBS program was brought in line with University standard practice for letter requests.

Q: Whether individual OSCE station feedback and recordings of stations will be made available

A: They have been able to review recordings like in Clinical Skills during teaching. Formative learning exercise only but not for summative assessment. No, recording will not be made available for students.

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Q: Whether the change from banding to percentages marks will occur this year

A: Yes, this in progress now.

- Students will receive a percentage in MyUni for the final course results.
- What appears on the formal academic transcript will be unchanged from current practice e.g. NGP
- No Bands will occur in future

Q: Whether any efforts are being made to prevent errors occurring within the clinical written examinations

A: A quality control process that includes the School, Faculty and Central University Services exists. The 2017 Adelaide Medical School report on exam report indicates a reduction in errors in comparison to previous years.

Process:

- Drawn from a bank questions
- Multiple reviewers: Academic, Faculty and Central Exam Team.
- We review the digital and printed copy of the exam before release.
- Performance of the exam questions. An aberrant performance will be looked and decisions have been made in the past to exclude the result of a question from the final exam outcome.
- Typo exam errors are still possible due to human error
- Learning and Quality Support audit our error rate.

Exam error process: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/learning/teaching/assessment/errors-guide.html>

Q: Whether any efforts are being made to improve image quality in the clinical written examinations

A: A printed copy of the exam will be reviewed by Academic and Professional Staff to view the printing quality. This was not captured in 2017 as the review only occurred for this specific exam on the digital version. One image that didn't print well – but performed well on screen. We now have a pixel minimum for images.