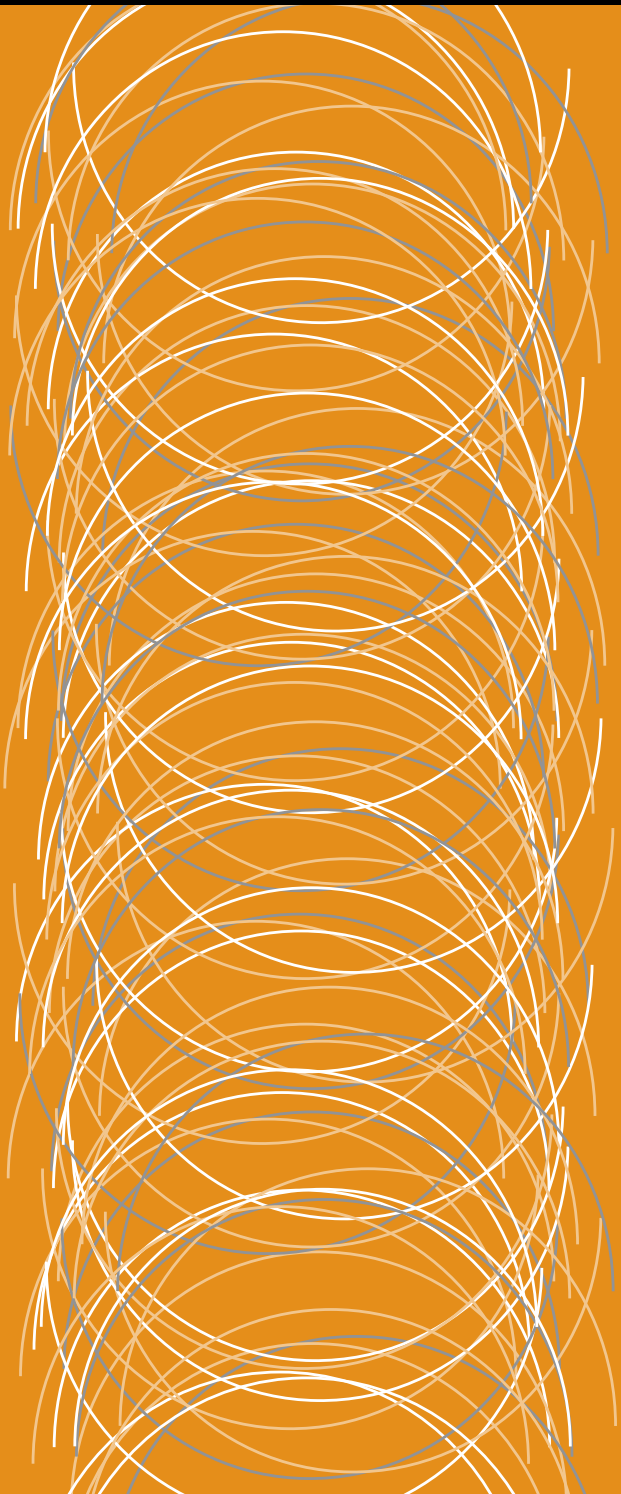


Australian Medical Council Limited

Accreditation of
University of Newcastle and
University of New England's
Joint Medical Program

AMC



Medical School Accreditation Committee
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Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the original Australians, and the Māori People as the original Peoples of New Zealand.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of all the lands on which we live, and their ongoing connection to the land, water and sky.

We recognise the Elders of all these Nations both past, present and emerging, and honour them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands.

1 Introduction

1.1 The process for comprehensive report for extension of accreditation

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) document, *Procedures for Assessment and Accreditation of Medical Schools by the Australian Medical Council 2022*, describes AMC requirements for accrediting primary medical programs and their education providers.

In the last year of an accreditation period based on an assessment visit, the AMC can consider a request for an extension of accreditation via an extension submission. In submitting an extension submission, the education provider is expected to provide evidence it continues to meet the accreditation standards and has maintained its standard of education and of resources.

Extension submissions require self-reflection, analysis of performance against the accreditation standards, and an outline of the challenges facing the school over the period of the possible extension of the accreditation. Without this assessment, the AMC does not have the evidence to determine if the school will meet the standards for the next period.

The AMC considers the submissions from the medical students' societies along with education provider's extension submission.

If, on the basis of the report, the Medical School Accreditation Committee decides the education provider and the program of study continue to satisfy the accreditation standards it may recommend to the AMC Directors to extend the accreditation of the education provider and its program.

The extension of accreditation is usually for a period of three or four years, taking education providers to the full period of accreditation of ten years granted by the AMC between reaccreditation assessments. Following this extension, the provider and its programs undergo a reaccreditation assessment.

The AMC and the Medical Council of New Zealand work collaboratively to streamline the assessment of education providers which provide primary medical programs in Australia and New Zealand, and both have endorsed the accreditation standards. The two Councils have agreed to a range of measures to align the accreditation processes, resulting in joint accreditation assessments, joint progress and comprehensive reporting, and aligned accreditation periods. The AMC will continue to lead the accreditation process.

1.2 Decision on accreditation

Under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, the AMC can accredit a program of study if it is reasonably satisfied that:

- (a) the program of study, and the education provider that provides the program of study, meet the accreditation standard; or
- (b) the program of study, and the education provider that provides the program of study, substantially meet the accreditation standard and the imposition of conditions will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time.

Having made a decision, the AMC reports its accreditation decision to the Medical Board of Australia to enable the Board to make a decision on the approval of the program of study for registration purposes.

The AMC Directors at their 27 July 2022 meeting resolved:

- (i) that the University of Newcastle/University of New England, Joint Medical Program and its medical programs continue to meet the accreditation standards; and
- (ii) to extend the accreditation of the University of Newcastle/University of New England, Joint Medical Program's five-year Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine (BMedSc and MD), on the basis of the accreditation report to the full period of accreditation to 31 March 2027; and
- (iii) to extend the accreditation of the University of Newcastle/University of New England, Joint Medical Program's Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) medical program until 31 March 2025, to accommodate the teach-out.

2 University of Newcastle/ University of New England, Joint Medical Program

2.1 Accreditation history

The Joint Medical Program's Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) medical program was first accredited by the AMC in 1992 and the Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine (BMedSc and MD) medical program was first accredited by the AMC in 2016.

An overview of the Program's accreditation and monitoring history is provided below:

BMed

Assessment Type	Findings against Standards	Outcome
1992: Accreditation	-	BMed - Newcastle - Granted accreditation of the 31 December 2002
2003: Accreditation	-	BMed - Newcastle - Granted accreditation to 31 July 2009
2007: Major change accreditation	-	Assessment of the Joint Medical Program. Granted accreditation to 31 December 2014
2009: Follow-Up	-	Confirmed the 2007 accreditation decision.
2014: Accreditation extension submission	SUBSTANTIALLY MET	Accepted granted an extension to 31 March 2019
2015-2018: Monitoring Submission	MET	Accepted
2018: extension of accreditation	MET	Granted a short extension of accreditation to accommodate the teach-out of the program to 31 March 2023
2019: Monitoring Submission	MET	<i>Combined with the MD moving forward as the MBBS teaches out</i>

MD

Assessment Type	Findings against Standards	Outcome
2016: Accreditation	SUBSTANTIALLY MET	Granted accreditation for six years to 31 March 2023 pending a follow up in 2018
2016-2017: Monitoring submission	SUBSTANTIALLY MET	Accepted

Assessment Type	Findings against Standards	Outcome
2018: Follow-up assessment	MET	AMC Directors confirmed the 2016 accreditation decision. AMC Directors approved the short extension of BMed to 31 March 2023 to accommodate the teach out.
2019-2021: Year 3 monitoring submission	MET	Accepted
2022: Accreditation extension submission	MET	Accepted

A copy of the Program's 2018 accreditation report can be found [here](#).

2.2 Accreditation extension submission

In its 2022 extension submission the Program was asked to provide a report against the standards and its remaining accreditation condition.

The following was to be addressed for each standard:

1 Analysis of strengths and challenges, and significant developments undertaken or planned. This includes any activity against accreditation recommendations for improvement.

- identification and assessment of factors that could influence the achievement of the school's goals over the next five years
- a short summary of major developments since the last accreditation assessment
- description of the school's development plans for the next five years, and significant milestones for their implementation
- any matters that may affect the accreditation status of the programs, such as a change to capacity to meet the accreditation standards, or any change that may meet the definition of a major change to the program.

2 Activity against AMC conditions (as required).

2.3 Executive summary

This report below presents the AMC's findings against the Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Programs by the Australian Medical Council.

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) Directors, at their July 2022 meeting, endorsed the University of Newcastle/University of New England, Joint Medical Program accreditation report stating that its medical programs continue to meet the accreditation standards.

We are pleased that accreditation of the Joint Medical Program's (The JMP®) five-year Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine (BMedSc MD), has been extended to 31 March 2027; and the Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) program has been extended until 31 March 2025 to accommodate the teach-out, which is expected to have five (5) final year students in 2023.

The AMC have asked the JMP to continue to report on the BMed teach-out program (Condition 18) and to continue to report on the annual transfer of 30 University of Newcastle enrolled JMP students to the new Central Coast Clinical School at Gosford Hospital (Condition 2). The JMP must

also implement actions to improve access to support for Indigenous medical students in Armidale (Condition 22).

The Joint Medical Program Governance Committee (representing both partner universities) has thanked all the dedicated professional, academic, conjoint, and other staff associated with the JMP. Their hard work in operationalising and enhancing the curriculum since the BMedSc MD commenced with its first intake in 2017 is acknowledged as critical to realising the first cohort of BMedSc MD graduands in December 2021.

The Joint Medical Program is driven by a clear set of values, and our vision to build regional, national, and global communities of medical graduates who lead beneficial outcomes in health-related care is underpinned by JMP strategic objectives and plans. We will be continuing to provide monitoring submissions to the AMC and reporting on our medical education goals and achievements.

3 AMC Findings

3.1 Summary of findings against the standards

The findings against the eight accreditation standards are summarised in the table below.

Standard	Finding in 2016 (including any requirements substantially met or not met)	Finding in 2022 (including any requirements substantially met or not met)
1 Context of the Medical Program	Met (Standards 1.4, 1.6 and 1.8 substantially met)	Met (Standard 1.8 substantially met)
2 Outcomes of the Medical Program	Met (Standard 2.2.3 substantially met)	Met
3 The Medical Curriculum	Met (Standards 3.2 and 3.4 substantially met)	Met
4 Learning and Teaching	Met	Met
5 Assessment of Student Learning	Substantially met (Standard 5.4.2 substantially met)	Met
6 Monitoring and Evaluation	Met	Met
7 Students	Met (Standard 7.3 substantially met)	Substantially met (Standard 7.3 substantially met)
8 The Learning Environment	Met	Met

3.2 Detailed findings against the standards

Providers must satisfy conditions on accreditation in order to meet the relevant accreditation standard. The AMC provides feedback on the conditions using the following:

Unsatisfactory	<i>The education provider may not meet the related accreditation standard and AMC should investigate further.</i>
Not Progressing	<i>No progress or overly slow progress.</i>
Progressing	<i>Indicates satisfactory progress against the recommendation, with further reporting necessary.</i>
Satisfied and Closed	<i>The education provider has satisfied all requirements and can cease reporting against the Condition. Condition is marked as closed.</i>

Standard 1 The Context of the Medical Program

Standards cover: governance, leadership and autonomy, medical program management, educational expertise, educational budget and resource allocation, interaction with health sector and society, research and scholarship, staff resources and staff appointment, promotion and development

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 1

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The Committee noted that the collaboration agreement between the two universities was renewed in December 2021 until December 2026. The partnership and relationship appear mature and remains strong with no changes in the Joint Medical Program Governance structures, delegations for academic matters or approval processes for program variations. There was evidence in the submission of both swift change in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and continuous improvement of the program.</p> <p>Program governance has not changed significantly since the last assessment. The Curriculum Development Committee which was established to drive and assess the design and content of the new BMedSc MD degree is no longer relied on since program implementation. The Phase Committees along with the JMP Teaching and Learning Committee continue to provide oversight and manage continual renewal of the program.</p> <p>The BMed teach out continues with 13 students across Years 4 and 5 and the program continues to provide dedicated a BMed Program Convener and a Course Coordinator to support student progress and completion.</p> <p>Since the last assessment, the Program has developed a network model known as the Medical Education Research Innovation and Teaching Network (MERITnet) to support the development of educational expertise across the program. MERITnet is the collaboration network of the medical and other health profession educators.</p> <p>The JMP Teaching and Learning Committee and associated committees, including Monitoring and Evaluation, and Assessment and Admissions, provide direction to ensure alignment to strategy and required needs, with MERITnet also enabling, facilitating and supporting the work of these groups. The Program detailed several review and improvement activities that had resulted from or were being worked on through the network.</p> <p>There has been significant leadership change across both university partners and there are some key unfilled positions at the time of reporting (Chair of General Practice; Prof of Medical Education, University New England Head of School, University New England Lecturer in Indigenous Health). The Program reported the appointment of a new Dean of the Joint Medical Program and Head of School of Medicine and Public Health, Newcastle University of New England and recruitment for the University New England School of Medicine, Head of School.</p> <p>Detailed information was provided on staffing and vacancies, resulting from programs of redundancies and early retirement across both universities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, the University of New England School of Rural Medicine had not recruited the Head of</p>

School position at the time of reporting and outlines challenges in attracting candidates to the new role of Lecturer in Indigenous Health. While there is a reduction in total academic and professional staff by approximately 10% to meet University level budgetary constraints, the restructure includes directing support to the following areas: Pathways program within the MD, Medical Education Research, Innovation and Teaching Network (MERIT), the Indigenous Health Unit and increased clinical academic support at Maitland Clinical School in Medicine and Surgery, to support the expansion of clinical teaching at the New Maitland Hospital.

The transfer to the new Central Coast Clinical School (CCCS) was delayed due to COVID-19 lockdown imposed within days of staff moving into the building leading to students not commencing use of the building until November 2021. Two full cohorts of BMedSci MD students (Year 1 and 2) are now accommodated in the new school.

The student report documents meaningful inclusion of students in key JMP committees and provides examples of how the JMP is receptive, responsive and welcoming of feedback particularly in the context of COVID-19 and the final rollout of the new program. The students note that whilst redundancies and early retirement have occurred it does not seem to have affected the level of administrative support they are able to access.

The JMP reports an increased workload for current JMP staff as a consequence of COVID-19 related funding impacts with associated redundancies and retirements. The program is asked to provide an update on recruitment of academic and management roles and confirmation of staffing profile in its next report.

Activity against Conditions from the 2016 and 2018 accreditation reports

Condition:	Due:	Status:
1 Following the review of the clinical training budget across the program, confirm the resources available for clinical training. (Standard 1.5)	2017	Satisfied
2 As plans for the proposed transfer of 30 University of Newcastle JMP students to the redeveloped Gosford Hospital site progress, submit details of the proposal to the AMC. (Standard 1.6)	2017	Progressing
3 Monitor and report on the Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) students being taught out after the main cohort of BMed students have progressed through the program, including resources available, support and the well-being of students. (Standards 1.8 and 7.3)	2020	Merged with condition 18
18 Provide progress reports on the Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) annually and as required until the program has concluded. (Including) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the JMP has the staff necessary to deliver the BMed and allow for both BMed improvements and the development of the BMedSc/MD. (Standard 1.8.1) • Monitor and report on the Bachelor of Medicine (BMed) 	Annually (until the BMed concludes)	Progressing

Condition:	Due:	Status:
<p>students being taught out after the main cohort of BMed students have progressed through the program, including resources available, support and the well-being of students. (Standards 1.8 and 7.3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and report on the crossover period between the BMed and the MD, specifically addressing the issue of student access to patient care. (Standards 4.4 and 8.3) 		
<p>19 Implement strategies to increase the level of dedicated staffing of the Discipline of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health to meet current and future program needs. (Standards 1.4 and 1.8) <i>from the 2018 follow-up assessment</i></p>	2019	Satisfied

Standard 2 The Outcomes of the Medical Program

Standards cover: purpose and medical program outcomes

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 2

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The 2020-2025 JMP Strategic Plan is a development since accreditation which consolidates previous statements of a similar nature, expanding upon the JMP mission. The implementation of this strategic plan will require focused input.</p> <p>Staff workloads continue to remain a challenge following recent COVID-19 related impacts. This has required changes to the management approach for the MD-JMP themes. Phase Committees are working to ensure content is reviewed and managed to ensure program quality is assured.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
4 Provide evidence of approval of the additional MD Program graduate outcomes that address the health and health care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. (Standard 2.2.1)	2017	Satisfied

Standard 3 The Medical Curriculum

Standards cover: duration of the medical program, the content of the curriculum, curriculum design, curriculum description, Indigenous health and opportunities for choice to promote breadth and diversity

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 3

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>In the face of a changing learning environment, the JMP has demonstrated flexibility and efficiency in its responses to ensure students are able to learn, progress and graduate. Workload issues led to the decision to remove the Year 3 Community Placement Option and replace it with the Sustainable Health Care Module which has enhanced the focus on student wellbeing within the curriculum and enables students to have additional vacation time.</p> <p>The student report is very positive about the Indigenous Health pathway in Phase 3 and advocates for more students to be able to engage with it.</p> <p>The rapid review and response required in clinical focused years, resulted in further improvements to Year 3, 4 and 5 which have been maintained including a Sustainable Healthcare block, and moving to online assessments facilitating high stakes assessment being spread across the year.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 and 2018 accreditation reports

Condition:	Due:	Status:
5 Review the anatomy and pathology curriculum content from the BMed program for delivery in the MD program. (Standard 3.2)	2018	Satisfied
6 Complete the development of learning objectives for the clinical placements in Phase 2 of the MD program. (Standard 3.2)	2017	Satisfied
7 Complete the early clinical skills program for delivery in the MD program. (Standards 3.2 and 4.3)	2017	Satisfied
20 Provide evidence of the articulation and communication of specific learning points across the full range of subject areas in Phase 3. (Standard 3.2) <i>from the 2018 follow-up assessment</i>	2019	Satisfied
21 Confirm the outcome of the University proposal that multi-term sequencing is to be discontinued in favour of a year-long structure. (Standard 3.3) <i>from the 2018 follow-up assessment</i>	2019	Satisfied

Standard 4 Teaching and learning methods

Areas covered by this standard: teaching and learning approach and methods

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 4

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The JMP Teaching and Learning Committee, which includes two student members, has oversight of Phase Committees reviews and approves major changes. It also provides advice JMP Executive and the relevant PVCs.</p> <p>The JMP has demonstrated a flexible and responsive approach to curriculum change and implementation as a consequence of COVID-19 related impacts. This has led to a more student-centred and aligned curriculum, especially in Years 3, 4 and 5. The newly established JMP Clinical Placements Team, in partnership with the COVID-19 Leadership Team has enabled some targeted customisation of student placements in Year 5, in response to their experiences in Year 4, to ensure a complete preparation for graduation.</p> <p>To promote inquiry-oriented learning an Individual Learning Plan (assessment) has been designed for implementation in Year 5. This is now initiated via presentations in Year 4.</p> <p>The student report comments that Phase 2 University of New England (UNE) students are required to complete three Case Based Learning modules in two weeks compared with one a week for University of Newcastle (UON) students and the report considers that this places an additional learning load on UNE students. The Surgical Hospital Simulations (UNEphase 2) are greatly appreciated by the UNE students. In addition the student report notes that COVID-19 restrictions have led to variable face to face learning opportunities across the JMP clinical sites.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
8 Evaluate the effectiveness of new teaching and learning methods implemented in the MD program. (Standard 4.1)	2017	Satisfied
9 Monitor and report on the crossover period between the BMed and the MD, specifically addressing the issue of student access to patient care. (Standards 4.4 and 8.3)	2019	Merged with condition 18
10 Develop interprofessional activities and assessment in the later years of the program. (Standard 4.7)	2017	Satisfied

Standard 5 The Curriculum – Assessment of Student Learning

Standards cover: assessment approach, assessment methods, assessment feedback and assessment quality

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Substantially met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 5

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The JMP Assessment Committee (with 10 student members) has oversight of assessment. There has been increased academic engagement in assessment development, standard setting and OSCE development. Blueprinting has progressed and MCQ development has been assisted by the implementation of an e-form that captures learning points, themes and topics.</p> <p>There have been some changes to assessment in 2022 with the return to face-to-face OSCE (Year 1); the implementation of end of rotation MCQs in rural clinical sites for Year 4 students (50 questions, 25 per discipline) and end of year MCQ exam (100 questions, 25 per discipline); the introduction of an Individualised Learning Plan at the end of Year 4 to guide student learning in Year 5.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
11 Finalise and implement the MD assessment policy, in particular clarify whether students should demonstrate competence in all four themes in each year of the program in order to progress and graduate. (Standard 5.1)	2016	Satisfied
12 Finalise progression requirements for Phase 2 and 3 of the program. (Standard 5.1)	2017	Satisfied
13 Provide evidence of the development of an adequate number of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) in time for the scheduled commencement of the MD program. (Standard 5.2)	2016	Satisfied
14 Implement and provide evidence of assessment quality processes and outcomes. (Standard 5.4)	2017	Satisfied
15 Provide evidence of alignment between common learning objectives and assessment, particularly in the clinical years of the program. (Standards 5.4.2 and 2.2.3)	2020	Satisfied

Standard 6 The Curriculum - Monitoring

Standards cover: monitoring, outcome evaluation and feedback and reporting

Areas covered by this standard: program monitoring; evaluation; feedback, reporting and action

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 6

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The JMP continue to provide students with feedback in each course outline in relation to the feedback provided by the preceding cohort and what changes have been implemented in response to that feedback.</p> <p>Since the last accreditation report, monitoring and evaluation of all teaching and learning activities in the JMP has changed from a 'in-house' process to align more closely to the UON-wide monitoring processes with the distribution and analysis of feedback surveys now managed by the centrally located Student & Staff Insights, part of the Strategy, Planning & Performance Resources Division.</p> <p>The recent adoption by UON of Question Pro as a new enterprise-wide survey tool could also be utilised as a useful mechanism for gathering more specific feedback from students on teaching and learning.</p> <p>Since the last accreditation report, a substantial amount of time has gone into developing a new Student Feedback on Clinical Teaching Survey (SFCTS). This survey is designed to allow students to provide feedback on individual clinical (hospital) teaching staff and supervisors, and for clinicians to do a self-evaluation of their teaching</p> <p>The JMP Monitoring and Evaluation Committee continues to monitor student feedback, both informal and formal (student wellbeing, student pathways, Medical School Outcome Database (MSOD), and clinical teaching feedback surveys plus focus groups.)</p> <p>The student report is positive about the efforts made by the JMP to keep students informed throughout the 2020/21 COVID-19 related changes. The students commend the school on the recently introduced Phase Monthly Bulletins which provide students with regular and timely feedback on how the school is responding to issues raised by the student cohort.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
16 Provide evidence of a systematic program of monitoring and review of the MD program, specifically to seek student and teacher feedback, and evidence that analysis of this feedback informs program development. (Standard 6.1.2)	2017	Satisfied

Standard 7 Implementing the Curriculum - Students

Standards cover: student intake, admission policy and selection, student support, professionalism and fitness to practise, student representation and student indemnification and insurance

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Substantially met
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Developments against Standard 7

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>The JMP continues to make a significant contribution to building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical workforce and currently there are 73 students enrolled across the program. Recruitment and support is mostly via the UON Thurrurru Indigenous Health Unit. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student numbers in Armidale have been increasing recently and they have not had consistent onsite support, hence the AMC's continuing interest in having this addressed. The Oorala Aboriginal Centre has recently increased its medical student support with weekly tutorials and a dedicated study space.</p> <p>The student report notes that Indigenous student retention may benefit from greater attention being paid to Indigenous student social, emotional, cultural and financial wellbeing.</p> <p>The JMP has been responsive to COVID-19 restrictions in relation to student selection shifting the Multiple Skills Assessments to online and dropping the Personal Qualities Assessment (PQA) component as it requires supervised invigilation. International students continue to enrol (16 commencing in 2022) with two dedicated staff providing ongoing support for this cohort.</p> <p>Both universities have increased their central student support offerings and availability.</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2018 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
22 Implement actions to improve access to support for Aboriginal medical students in Armidale. (Standards 1.8 and 7.3) <i>from the 2018 follow-up assessment</i>	2019	Progressing

Standard 8 Implementing the Curriculum – Learning Environment

Standards cover: physical facilities, information resources and library services, clinical learning environment and clinical supervision

Summary of accreditation status	2016: Met.	2022: Met
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Developments against Standard 8

Significant developments relevant to this standard
<p>Since accreditation the JMP has successfully implemented the significantly expanded Clinical Placement aspects of the new program. New clinical school infrastructure (Taree, Central Coast and Maitland) have significantly improved learning and teaching environments at those sites.</p> <p>The Discipline of General Practice, and GP Placement Officers, has organised a large increase in placements with strategic recruitment across Year 3 and 5.</p> <p>The School of Medicine and Public Health will relocate to the John Hunter Hospital later this year. This initiative will embed the School at the hospital, creating an environment that connects our staff and students with the health sector and the wider community</p>

Activity against conditions from the 2016 accreditation report

Condition:	Due:	Status:
17 Resolve the IT issues related to videoconferencing facilities, between the University of Newcastle and the University of New England campuses. (Standard 8.2)	2017	Satisfied

