Accreditation Report: Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine

Medical School Accreditation Committee

October 2024



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the original Australians, and the Māori People as the original Peoples of Aotearoa 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

The purpose of this report is to publish the outcome of the AMC accreditation extension assessment of a medical education program under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (the National Law). Accreditation is awarded to a provider for a specific medical program, identified by its degree title. The AMC uses the terminology of the National Law in making accreditation decisions, determining if a program and provider has met, substantially met, or not met the standards.

When undertaking accreditations the AMC refers to the:

- Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Programs by the Australian Medical Council 2023 (the Standards)
- Procedures for Assessment and Accreditation of Medical Schools by the Australian Medical Council 2024 (the Procedures)

The goals of the report are to:

- Provide an assessment of the provider and program against the Standards, and the reasons behind the outcomes. This includes a description of the program's key developments, strengths and challenges since the last accreditation activity, outlining conditions placed to ensure the provider and program meet the Standards within a reasonable time, and offering recommendations to support ongoing quality improvement.
- Give a brief overview of the accreditation context, including key program data, previous accreditation activity and provisions for future monitoring and accreditation activity.

1.1 The process for accreditation extension submission for extension of accreditation

The AMC document, *Procedures for Assessment and Accreditation of Medical Schools by the Australian Medical Council 2024*, 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 accreditation extension submission. In submitting an accreditation 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.

Accreditation 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 accreditation extension submissions.

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 that provide primary medical programs in Australia and Aotearoa 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 accreditation extension submissions 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.

AMC Directors, at their 30 January 2025 meeting resolved:

- i. that the Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine and its four-year Doctor of Medicine (MD) medical program substantially meet the accreditation standards;
- ii. that accreditation of the program is subject to the conditions contained in the accreditation report and meeting the monitoring requirements of the AMC; and
- iii. to extend accreditation of the Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine and its four-year Doctor of Medicine (MD) medical program for four years to 31 March 2029.

2. Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine

2.1 Accreditation history

The Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine was first accredited by the AMC in 2007. An overview of the accreditation and monitoring history is provided below:

Assessment Type	Findings	Outcome
2007: Accreditation	NA	BMBS - Granted accreditation to 31 December 2013, subject to report on conditions and a follow up assessment
2009: Follow-up assessment	NA	BMBS - The AMC confirmed that 2007 accreditation decision
2013: Accreditation extension submission	NA	BMBS - Extension of accreditation to 31 December 2017
2016: Extension of accreditation	NA	MBBS – The AMC granted an extension of accreditation for 12 months to 31 March 2019 to accommodate the work program of the AMC.
2016: Monitoring	MEETS	Accepted - Continued to meet the accreditation standards - Moved to biennial reporting
2018: Reaccreditation	MEETS	MD – accreditation granted for a period of six years, that is until 31 March 2025;
		BMBS – accreditation granted for a period of four years, that is until 31 March 2021 (the BMBS program will conclude in 2019 and be replaced entirely by the MD).
2019: Monitoring	MEETS	Accepted
2020: Monitoring	MEETS	Accepted
2021: Monitoring	MEETS	BMBS – Extension of accreditation for two-years to 31 March 2023 to accommodate teach-out
2021: Extension of accreditation BMBS	MEETS	Accepted
2022: Monitoring	MEETS	Accepted
2023: Monitoring	MEETS	Accepted
2024: Accreditation extension submission	SUBSTANTIALLY MEETS	Granted an extension of accreditation of the Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine and its medical program, up to a maximum of four years, to 31 March 2029.

A copy of the School's 2018 accreditation report can be found here.

2.2 Accreditation extension submission

In its 2024 accreditation extension submission the education provider was asked to provide a submission against the revised standards and its remaining accreditation conditions (if any).

The following was to be addressed for each standard:

- 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.
- activity against AMC conditions (as required).

2.3 Deakin University, Faculty of Health, School of Medicine's Executive Summary

The Deakin Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program has been under the leadership of Dean, Professor Gary Rogers', since his appointment in 2020. The program is forming a cohesive leadership team with a diverse range of skills and experience to contribute to the MD program.

The AMC's revised accreditation standards provided the opportunity for the Deakin MD Course Team to reflect and review the MD course to ensure that best practice teaching, learning and assessment is experienced by students and that the program is following a 'systems approach' to practice.

The program's purpose, aspiration and values recognise its unique regional and rural position in Victoria, which guides areas of focus for the leadership and course team: enhancing the communities served, addressing the workforce needs and advancing the health and wellbeing of rural, regional, Indigenous and marginalised communities, and fostering a culture of social accountability.

The MD program is embracing its mission through these initiatives:

- The commencement of rural end-to-end medical training by delivering Year 1 and 2 in the rural Victorian towns of Warrnambool and Ararat.
- The launch of the Damion Drapac Centre for Equity in Health Education
- A renewed focus on advancing students' of research principles and methods.

Highlights:

- The School Executive works together to steer the School of Medicine towards increased recognition as an integrated, innovative educational provider in rural and regional Victoria.
- The School's relationships and partnerships with health services, general practitioners, local community, patients and students deliver bidirectional benefits to all stakeholders, as they strive to address rural and regional workforce shortages.
 Within the context of the University, the program delivers a personalised system of support for students, both within the MD course, and by linking with University and community services.
- An Indigenous Health academic and professional team has been formed to support Indigenous medical students and advance the understanding of Indigenous perspectives for all MD students.

- MD graduates are valued for their work-readiness and communication skills as junior doctors. Alumni are returning as clinicians in local health services and as educators within the MD program.
- Educational and scientific research is thriving within the MD Course Team, as well as in the wider School of Medicine faculty.

Since the last accreditation, in addition to the above innovations, our strengths remain:

- Strong support from within the Deakin University Faculty of Health, the wider Deakin University community and health service partners.
- Strengthening and expanding collaborations with clinical partners.
- A team of enthusiastic and dedicated academic staff and clinical leaders who collaborate effectively to deliver an innovative medical program.
- An emphasis on student support and preparation for practice.

Challenges have shifted, in accordance with the growth of the School and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- The program team recognises the need to remain connected virtually and physically, supported by clear and timely communication across a network of sites.
- The program seeks to gradually evolve the focus of the medical education program to where most people seek and receive healthcare in community settings.
- Assessment needs to further develop, with the emergence of new technologies to manipulate information – the program recognise the need to reimagine a focus on what humans will contribute to providing health care into the future, as well as the appropriate and ethical use of technology to support health promotion and healthcare.

3. AMC Findings

3.1 Summary of findings against the standards

The AMC implemented the revised Medical School Standards as of 1 January 2024, it is expected that most schools will have further capacity for development to meet the revised standards and therefore most accreditation findings will this year be substantially met.

The findings against the six accreditation standards are summarised in the table below:

Previous Accreditation	2023 Accreditation	Revised Accreditation	2024 Accreditation
Standards	Status	Standards	Status
Standard 1 Context	Met	Standard 1	Substantially met
Standard 2 Outcomes	Met	Purpose, context & accountability	(1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.3.3, 1.3.6 substantially met)
Standard 3	Substantially met (3.3	Standard 2	Substantially met
Medical Curriculum	substantially met)	Curriculum	(2.2.2, 2.2.4, 2.3.7
Standard 4 Learning & Teaching	Met	_	substantially met)
Standard 5	Substantially met	Standard 3	Substantially met
Assessment of student	(5.2, 5.4 substantially	Assessment	(3.1.6 substantially
learning	met)		met)
Standard 7	Met	Standard 4	Substantially met
Students		Students	(4.1.3, 4.2.1, 4.2.4,
			4.2.5, 4.2.7
			substantially met)
Standard 8	Met	Standard 5	Substantially met
Learning Environment		Learning environment	(5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.3,
			5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.3.1,
			5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4,
			5.4.2, 5.5.3
			substantially met)
Standard 6	Met	Standard 6	Substantially met
Monitoring & Evaluation		Evaluation & continuous	(6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1,
		improvement	6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4
			substantially met)

A summary of developments since the last accreditation activity, strengths and challenges is available for each standard under section 3.2.

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:

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

Where a month is not specified in the deadline for the condition the school is expected to demonstrate that it has satisfied the condition within the monitoring submission scheduled for that year.

Standard 1: Purpose, Context and Accountability

Standards cover: Purpose; Partnerships with communities and engagement with stakeholders; Governance; Medical program leadership and management.

Developments against Standard 1

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key developments:

- Periodic reviews of organisational structures as the School and Program grows and matures over the next give five years.
- Significant changes to context include the commencement of rural end-to-end training by delivering Year 1 (and Year 1 and 2 in 2025) to 15 students each in Ararat and Warrnambool. This has required additional building works, resources and staff time in establishing this worthwhile program.
- Ensure that clear and wide communication of changes; operating under defined governance structures and committee structures.

Strengths:

- The School is innovating under significant changes in senior leadership since the last full AMC accreditation a new Dean, new Course Director, new Associate Heads of School and new School Manager these staff form a cohesive leadership team.
- The MD program team has to aligned areas of focus to the program, especially regarding student recruitment/selection and educational delivery.

Challenges:

- The MD Program is an expensive course to run, however, the Deakin medical school strives to operate on a very efficient budget and staffing complement.
- As a distributed medical school, communication and role clarity remain important.

Accreditation Summary

Conditions from the previous accreditation report are mapped to this section of the 2023 standards:

Conc	lition:	Due to be met by:	Status:
1	Develop the governance structures for the school to enhance communication and to support transition and integration of the curriculum between the preclinical and clinical years of the program. (2012 Standard 1.3, 3.3)	2019	Satisfied 2019

The following new condition is placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
8	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.3.3, 1.3.6 (New in 2024)	2027

Summary of education provider's performance against Standard 1:

Standard 2: Curriculum

Standards cover: Medical program outcomes and structure; Curriculum design; Learning and teaching.

Developments against Standard 2

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key development:

Major developments since last AMC submission:

- The Deakin MD Program was established in 2019, and reached maturity with the establishment of the Research Scholar Program in Years 3 and 4.
- An increased focus on achieving preparedness for practice via the delivery of two 5-week Pre-Internship (PRINT) rotations in Year 4.
- The program of Workplace-based Assessment in Years 3 and 4 ensures that student learning is monitored in real-time with the provision of rich feedback to drive learning.
- Student learning in rural learning campuses in Ararat and Warrnambool in Years 1 and 2, alongside students learning in the Waurn Ponds campus, commenced in 2024.
- An increased focus on rural and Indigenous health has been woven through the MD Program.

Strengths:

- A clear sense of vision and purpose underpins educational activities.
- A stable course structure, with a spiralled vertical curriculum and horizontally integrated curriculum provides students with the ideal learning opportunity to achieve the course outcomes

 with wide exposure to achieving Graduate Outcomes and practice readiness by course completion.

Challenges:

- With new academic staff members, new and more geographically diverse campuses (in Year 1 and 2) and staff members returning to ways of working on campus after the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of documenting and communicating processes and key information remains highly important.
- With an increasingly diverse student cohort, the MD Course Team are working on streamlining educational offerings to be of maximum impact and efficiency in promoting learning whilst also providing tailored support for students from diverse academic and personal backgrounds.

Accreditation Summary

Nil existing condition from the previous accreditation report.

The following new condition is placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
9	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 2.2.2, 2.2.4, 2.3.7 (New in 2024)	2027

Summary of education provider's performance against Standard 2:

Standard 3: Assessment

Standards cover: Assessment design; Assessment feedback; Assessment quality.

Developments against Standard 3

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key developments:

Since the 2018 accreditation, the Deakin medical course moved from a Bachelor's level degree to a Doctor of Medicine qualification. This required development of a research scholar teaching and assessment program, that was detailed in subsequent monitoring submissions.

Strengths:

- The continued success of the Workplace Based Assessment system in driving learning and feedback in the clinical learning environment in a programmatic approach.
- Student benchmarking across shared assessment items provided by Australian Medical Schools Assessment Collaboration (AMSAC) and the Australasian Collaboration for Clinical Assessment in Medicine (ACCLAiM) collaborations signal that Deakin students are performing at or higher than comparable cohorts in other Australian medical schools.

Challenges:

- Detailed subgroup analysis of student performance for campus site and across equity groups are required annually, to drive supporting more diverse groups of students within the course.
- Balancing curriculum and assessment delivery and methodology, and providing student 'downtime' for wellbeing purposes, remains a challenge since COVID-19 requiring continuous review and iterative refinement to avoid over-teaching and over-assessing.
- The shift away from testing simple knowledge recall to higher level learning outcomes is required now more than ever, with Artificial Intelligence seriously threatening the integrity of written and online assessments.

Accreditation Summary

Conditions from the previous accreditation report are mapped to this section of the 2023 standards:

Condition:		Due to be met by:	Status:
4	Develop a framework to guide the delivery and assessment of inter- professional learning throughout the program. (2012 Standard 4.7)	2019	Satisfied 2019
5	Define the School's model for assessment blueprinting and standardise the approach across themes and years. (2012 Standard 5.2, 5.4)	2019	Satisfied 2019

The following new condition is placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
10	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 3.1.6 (New in 2024)	2027

Summary of education provider's performance against Standard 3:

This set of standards was found to be: SUBSTANTIALLY MET

Standard 4: Students

Areas covered by this standard: Student cohorts and selection policies; Student wellbeing; Professionalism and fitness to practise; Student indemnification and insurance.

Developments against Standard 4

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key developments:

Strengths:

- The University consistently rates as a top Victorian university for the quality of student experience.
- The School of Medicine's purpose and vision also include widening access to medical training. These factors drive the MD Course Team to provide a high-quality, supportive learning environment for Deakin students.
- Since the last accreditation, the program team have been working towards a 'systems approach' of support, including training key staff members to consider and respond to student concerns.
- The MD Course Team and senior School leaders share a very close working relationship with Deakin's medical student society, MeDUSA.
- The MD Course Team and senior School leaders work collaboratively, closely and proactively with key central University services especially the Disability Resource Centre, Academic Support Unit and Student Complaints in the Office of the Dean of Students.

Challenges:

 The MD Course Team is currently reviewing processes in relation to student professionalism, working towards a more defined system for notifying and managing lapses in relation to student behavioural expectations. The Course Team is guided in this work by Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand resources and the ProFESS program, developed by our colleagues at Monash University.

Accreditation Summary

Conditions from the previous accreditation report are mapped to this section of the 2023 standards:

Condition:		Due to be met by:	Status:
2	Implement actions to improve the student experience at the Eastern Health Clinical School, particularly at Box Hill Hospital. (2012 Standard 2.2, 8.3)	2019	Satisfied 2019
7	Provide the updated policies and procedures for identification and support of students whose professional behaviour is of concern, particularly with regard to the role of the Professional Standards Subcommittee. (2012 Standard 7.4)	2019	Satisfied 2019

The following new condition is placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
11	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 4.1.3, 4.2.1, 4.2.4, 4.2.5, 4.2.7 (New in 2024)	2027
Sum	mary of education provider's performance against Standard 4:	

Standard 5: Learning environment

Standards cover: Facilities; Staff resources; Staff appointment, promotion and development; Clinical learning environment; Clinical supervision.

Developments against Standard 5

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key developments:

Strengths:

- The MD Program has commenced rural end-to-end training at two new rural learning campuses, aligned with achieving the School's vision and purpose.
- Deakin's network of clinical sites has responsibility for training the next generation of medical practitioners to serve the local communities.
- The program team deliver education from high quality physical spaces, where students are supported by a dedicated support team – capable of providing academic advice as well as personalised support.

Challenges:

- The delivery of training and communicated can be challenging withing a distributed network model. Work is currently underway to establish an 'External Educator Website' to assist with sharing resources and training for clinical supervisors and educators who do not hold continuing academic fractional appointments within the Deakin MD Program.
- With the increased focus on integrating Indigenous Health teaching, learning and assessment content and activities throughout the School of Medicine; coupled with a plan for Committee representation to shape decision making. The program team continue to rely on a small Indigenous academic and professional team for guidance and support. The inherent risk with the current model is the Indigenous academic and professional team faces additional work demands. The School is actively working to support Indigenous staff members by re-allocating highly experienced non-Indigenous academic staff to assist the team with their work.

Accreditation Summary

Conditions from the previous accreditation report are mapped to this section of the 2023 standards:

Cond	lition:	Due to be met by:	Status:
3	Implement strategies to facilitate continuity between the clinical and pre- clinical years of the program. (2012 Standard 3.3)	2019	Satisfied 2019

The following new condition is placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
12	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.4.2, 5.5.3 (New in 2024)	2027

Summary of education provider's performance against Standard 5: This set of standards was found to be: **SUBSTANTIALLY MET**

Standard 6: Evaluation and continuous improvement

Standards cover: Continuous review, evaluation and improvement; Outcome evaluation; Feedback and reporting.

Developments against Standard 6

The School provided an overview of activities against the standards and reported on the following key developments:

Strengths:

- Existing University evaluation processes provide a regular, structured data collection method (external to the School of Medicine).
- Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) and Federation of Rural Australian Medical Educators (FRAME) surveys facilitate external referencing of outcome data at exit level.
- Collaboration with the Deakin medical student association (MeDUSA) allows for a variety of evaluation methods to be utilised, and for data triangulation between formal School evaluation processes and informal student-led processes.
- Using focus group methodology with Rural Training Stream (RTS) students in the first year of the RTS delivery at Rural Learning Campuses in Ararat and Warrnambool allows for data to be collected in real time, with the ability to clarify and further explore topics of great significance to the students.
- Participation in the Australian Medical Schools Assessment Collaboration (AMSAC); the Australasian Collaboration for Clinical Assessment in Medicine (ACCLAiM) benchmarking processes ensures comparability of outcome standards with other Australian medical programs.

Challenges:

- Authentic, comprehensive, bidirectional stakeholder engagement and provision of MD Program outcome measures has been challenging. The establishment of the Evaluations Group is intended to improve the cohesiveness of the output of Outcome Evaluation for sharing with these groups.
- Further development of the review of student experience, academic performance and outcomes of equity groups will be one of the main priorities of this Evaluations Group and the new assessment lead into the future.
- Deakin University's eVALUate surveys follow a fixed set of questions in Years 1 and 2 of the MD Course, consistent with evaluation questions across other courses within Deakin University. The eVALUate questions and process are under University review at present, and it is anticipated that faculties will be able to release additional question sets for schools to choose as extension questions.
- There have been no 'significant' changes to MD Program operations in this area since the last AMC accreditation submission, apart from the recent re-establishment of the Evaluations Group (formerly known as the Evaluations and Site Equivalence Group).

Accreditation Summary

Conditions from the previous accreditation report are mapped to this section of the 2023 standards:

Cond	lition:	Due to be met by:	Status:
6	Develop and implement a comprehensive program evaluation framework that is linked to the governance structure of the medical program. (2012 Standard 6.1).	2019	Satisfied 2021

The following new conditions are placed.

Condition:		Due to be met by:
13	By 2027 provide evidence that demonstrates attainment of the following standards of the <i>Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Primary Medical Program by the AMC (2023)</i> : 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3 (New in 2024)	2027
14	By 2025: Demonstrate the evaluation of program outcomes for different student cohorts, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Māori students is being undertaken and that the outcome evaluations for Indigenous students are informed and reviewed by the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Māori education experts. (Standard 6.2.4) (New in 2024)	2025
Sum	mary of education provider's performance against Standard 6:	

