

# Northern Clinical School elective placements

## Frequently asked questions

### How does the application process work?

It is recommended that you first read the information and conditions on the [website](#). Once you have done this, submit your application to the Electives Coordinator.

No places will be held for you until a completed application is received, including the initial elective application package, letter of good standing and proof of medical indemnity and public liability insurance.

Once the above is received, places will be held on your behalf as per your preferences and a conditional offer email will then be sent to you, requesting further documents and payment of your non-refundable application fee.

You should then submit the Secondary Application Package, evidence of vaccinations and begin organising your Criminal Record Check (CRC) and National Police Certificate (NPC).

Once your vaccinations are confirmed as compliant, you will be requested to pay the elective fee and finalise submission of your NPC and CRC.

When we have received your elective fee payment, CRC and NPC (originals or copies), a confirmation letter will be emailed to you.

You will then receive information about when and where to start, one week prior to commencement.

### What is a certified copy?

A certified copy is a copy of a document that has been endorsed and signed by an authority figure – a solicitor, lawyer, Justice of the Peace or a Notary Public – as being a true copy of the original document.

The endorsement must be in the following form: "I certify that this is a true copy of the original document" along with the name and signature of the person who certified it and the date.

A family member cannot certify documents.

Senior members of your medical school can certify documents. Any document certified by a senior medical school member must include the name and position of that medical school member, and carry the university stamp or seal.

If sending more than one page, each page must be certified.

This must be done on the front of the document, not on the back of it.

Be sure your copy is certified correctly or it will be rejected.

### Who can translate a document?

All translations must be certified translations. This means that the person who does the translation must be suitably qualified to do so. This depends on the country you are from so you will need to check with the appropriate authorities.

### What kind of visa will I need?

The type of visa required is subject to the country of your passport. For information on visas and how to apply please see the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship website:

[www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)

Please note, the elective program does NOT qualify you to apply for a student visa.

We recommend that you apply for your visa promptly as approval can take time. Any stay longer than 3 months may require a special type of visa, so please be aware of this possibility.

Please note that the Clinical School is no longer able to nominate any student for a 402 Sponsored Visa.

All visas are issued at the discretion of the Australian Immigration Department.

## Same rights and duties statements

We are unable to sign off on "same rights and duties" for a number of reasons, these include:

- Our students have access to the Graduate Medical Program website which contains a lot of their learning materials. Elective students do not have access to this site as the content is very specific to our program so is not necessary for elective students.
- Our medical program is a 4 year graduate program so does not always correspond to that of an elective student from another university. Clinically, elective students are granted the same rights and duties as our own students and while welcome to attend large group lectures, are not included in the smaller group learning sessions.
- Our students are covered by the University of Sydney's insurance policies whereas Elective students are not.

For German students in particular, the following statements on your forms will be amended as follows:

"The student was not enrolled in the university above, but had the same **clinical** rights and responsibilities as students from our university."

"\_\_\_\_\_ has been on a par **clinically** with the medical students concerned during his/her stay at the....."

"She/He has had the same **clinical** rights, duties and responsibilities as medical students of the....."

## If I already have my elective confirmed, can I change my dates or specialties?

We will always try to accommodate changes providing enough notice is given and all changes are subject to availability. Once you have started your placement, changes can only be made in exceptional circumstances.

## My University states that I must do a 30-day elective. If I do 4 weeks, is this enough?

No. You need to check with your university how flexible they are on this ruling. Electives are measured in weeks so you could do 4 weeks (28 days) or 5 weeks (35 days). Should you decide to do only 4 weeks, we will not, under any circumstances, sign your elective off as 30 days.

## What if I am sick and have to have time off?

If you are away sick for 2 or more days, you will be required to show a Doctor's certificate.

German students who are not allowed any absent days by their own authorities must get a doctor's certificate even if it's only one day.

## Where should I report on my first day?

All students will be contacted the week prior to the start of the elective period and given commencing instructions for the first day.

Please do not be late. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the Electives Coordinator, late starters may be turned away and their electives may be cancelled all together.

## Can I get student concession on public transport?

No. The NSW State Government policy states that only students who are registered full-time in NSW are eligible for a concession on public transport. Inspectors do regular ticket checks and will give on-the-spot fines. Purchase and use of concession tickets may result in a heavy fine.

An International student ID card will give you access to a network of specialist student travel offices around the world and valuable savings on accommodation, tours and transportation (such as a 40% discount on full adult ordinary fares on Countrylink train or coach services). Application forms for the ISIC are available at STA travel agent or the SRC offices in the Wentworth building on main campus.

Your student ID from home may not be accepted everywhere.

## What should I wear during my elective?

As a medical student you represent your home university, Sydney Medical School and also the medical profession, in day-to-day interactions with patients, members of the public and staff. It is important that, while attending any Northern Clinical School or University of Sydney teaching site your dress, general appearance and behaviour is appropriate.

As an overall guideline:

- You should appear well groomed and professional.
- Your official hospital ID badge should be displayed prominently at all times so that your status as a student is clear to all.
- For males, a collared shirt is strongly recommended. Ties have been discouraged in some areas because of infection control issues. Be guided by the senior male doctors on your team.
- Females should avoid wearing tops that are low-cut or bare the midriff.
- Shoes should be closed in. Sandals or open-toed shoes are inappropriate for ward areas as sharp objects such as dropped needles may pierce the foot. Stilettos and high platform shoes are also inappropriate for ward areas. This is an OH&S issue.
- Trainers, jeans shorts and mini-skirts are not acceptable items of clothing while on ward attachment.
- Theatre gowns/clothing can only be worn within designated areas. Wearing of jewellery in theatres is not allowed.
- This dress code applies even when attending only for structured teaching sessions or library study as you are on a university/ hospital site and will still come in contact with members of the public.
- For students doing an emergency attachment, scrubs are not provided and students are advised to dress as per the above guidelines or bring their own scrubs. For all other attachments, students should dress as per the usual guidelines.

A white coat is not necessary.

## Can I get a refund or postpone my elective?

The application fee is non-refundable, however the elective fee is partially refundable, subject to the conditions on the fees and refund page.

Should you choose to cancel your elective, you must provide written proof of the reason for the cancellation. A decision will be made based on your reasons and the refund policy on the fees and refund page. Absolutely no refunds will be given for change of mind.

If you wish to defer your elective, this may be possible (depending on availability) as long as you provide at least 3-months notice and as long as the new commencement date is within 12 months of the previously confirmed commencement date. Any deferment is also subject to any increase in fees which may occur.

## How can I find accommodation?

Visit the [placement page](#) to download a PDF of accommodation options.

## Why do I need a Criminal Record Check?

All healthcare workers, including students who undertake clinical professional training or fieldwork in the NSW healthcare systems, are required to be subject to a Criminal Record Check (CRC) as a condition of gaining access to NSW Health Department facilities.

Depending on the nature of the offence for which a conviction has been recorded, the NSW Department of Health has the right not to accept a healthcare student or worker for placement in the NSW health care system.

Information about the NSW Department of Health's policy can be found at the NSW Department of Health Website [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

As students will be having regular contact with the underaged, vulnerable adults and the elderly, a disclosure which clears you for this is required.

Your CRC must:

- be dated within 3 years of the last day of your elective
- be at least a state-wide (or province etc) CRC - local county or shire etc. do not suffice
- must be from the state/country in which you've spent the majority of the last 3 years. This would usually mean the state/country in which you study
- if your CRC is not in English, it MUST be sent with a certified English translation
- originals or certified copies must be sent.

For students of the UK, this check is now called a DBS and you will need an enhanced disclosure. For more information, please go to:

[homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb](http://homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/crb)

Your CRC/DBS/CRB will be returned to you once you have commenced your placement.

## **What vaccinations do I need?**

[Visit the current student website for more information.](#)

## **What limitations do I have as an elective student?**

Elective students must always identify themselves as students and their status should be recorded on entries into patient records.

Elective students may not:

- make unsupervised treatment decisions
- prescribe medications
- authorise discharge and admission of patients
- complete forms such as death certificates
- arrange investigations such as X-rays or blood tests without confirmation by a registered medical practitioner
- sign off any documentation, request form or discharge letter unless counter-signed by a registered medical practitioner

## **Why do I need a National Police Check?**

All students entering into a NSW Health facility are required by the NSW Health Department to obtain a National Police Check (NPC). This must be obtained regardless of whether you have ever visited Australia.

The NPC is required in addition to your Criminal Record Check from your home country.

The application form and further information can be found on the Australian Federal Police (AFP) website.

[www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/police-checks/national-police-checks.aspx](http://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/police-checks/national-police-checks.aspx)

NOTE:

For Offline Applications:

Section 1 - Type of Check Required - tick "Name Check Only"

Section 8 - Purpose of Check - Choose code 37.

For Online Applications:

Part B - Purpose Type - choose "Commonwealth purpose / Employment"

Part B - Purpose of Check - choose "Care of children/Intellectually disabled/Aged Care staff/volunteers"

Part C - Type of Check Required - "Name Check Only"

You should allow a minimum of fifteen (15) working days for the NPC to be processed.

The NPC is due three (3) months after receipt of the conditional offer email.

You can elect to have the NPC sent to your home address or directly to Electives Coordinator, Sydney Medical School – Northern, L7 Kolling Building RNSH, Reserve Road, St Leonards, NSW 2065.

Please note that failure to obtain the NPC will result in you being unable to attend any hospital based placement.

Your NPC will be returned to you once you have commenced your placement.

### **Can I attend lectures while I'm doing my elective?**

All elective students are invited to attend the large group lectures of the Structured Teaching Program of the SMS Northern, which are held at Royal North Shore once a week on Fridays. These sessions run mid January – early September each year.

You are also welcome to attend the Grand Rounds presentations, which are also held once a week at 1pm on Tuesdays.

### **Can I take time off during my elective?**

If you take time off during your elective, this will be noted as an absence on your paperwork. We will only sign you off for the exact dates that you are actually here for. If you choose to leave your placement early, your paperwork will be filled out to reflect that. For example, if you are booked in for eight weeks and you leave after seven weeks, we will under no circumstances sign you off as being here for eight weeks.

### **When is the earliest I can book my return flight for?**

The earliest you could fly out after your elective is late Friday night or Saturday morning. Please do not book flights any earlier as we will only sign your paperwork for the exact dates you are here for.

Please ensure that you check your return flights are correct to avoid disappointment at the end of your placement.

### **Can I apply if English is not my first language?**

Yes, we welcome students from all over the world.

For student from non-English speaking backgrounds, it is assumed that you will have an advance level of English proficiency, both written and spoken, before commencing an elective placement. In order for students to benefit from their placements they should have a minimum English level of IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL 600 (100-iBT, 250-CBT).

You should include a statement in your letter of good standing indicating your English ability/level and that your university is happy that you will gain sufficient experience to satisfy their requirements, given your English ability. Alternatively, if the language of instruction is English, then this can be stated in the letter of good standing instead.