Independent Learning Projects (ILP’s) are offered at all Rural Clinical School (RCS) campuses which include Albury-Wodonga, Coffs Harbour, Griffith, Port Macquarie, Sydney and Wagga Wagga. Students can contact the School's Head of Research, A/Prof Craig McLachlan, who is based at the Sydney campus for advice about project selection - cmac@unsw.edu.au.

Students interested in undertaking an ILP at a RCS should negotiate a project with the prospective supervisor. A/Prof McLachlan must be contacted to confirm project suitability and students are also encouraged to discuss projects with the Head of Campus. Please note that intervention studies or clinical trials are not be permitted, for clarification please contact A/Prof McLachlan.

ILP Supervisors can have their details listed on the relevant campus link on the RCS website http://rcs.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-projects-ilp. If you are a supervisor with a potential project please contact the Head of Campus and A/Prof McLachlan to discuss suitability.

Supervisor Eligibility

ILP supervisors must have a Medical Degree and/or a PhD and have research and supervision experience. Research supervisor experience can be obtained from supervising or co-supervising previous ILP/Honours/Master/PhD research students. All ILP projects require a co-supervisor who must have a medical degree and/or a PhD and be a UNSW staff member or have a conjoint appointment with UNSW.

UNSW Medicine affiliated staff members (either academic or conjoint staff members) who are interested in taking ILP students may like to update their staff profile at the Faculty website. For more information on this, please contact Ms Erin Webster (ILP@unsw.edu.au).

Projects Requiring Ethics Approval

In most cases ILPs will require ethics approval. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to ensure that appropriate ethics approval is sought. Students should work with supervisors on ethics applications where required to ensure approval is received prior to the ILP commencement date in February. Please note that at UNSW researchers cannot apply for retrospective ethics, researchers must ensure that ethics approval is received prior to the commencement of the research project. In the past, some ILPs have been held up significantly due to delays or issues
receiving ethics approval. The Faculty will not grant special consideration to any student whose final report is late due to delays in gaining ethics approval. The RCS suggests that the supervisor have a back-up project plan in the event that ethics is unable to be approved in time for the student.

There are some situations where a project will not require ethics approval. If a supervisor requires assistance they can contact the Head of Campus or A/Prof McLachlan.

**Confirming a Negotiated Project**

Once a student has negotiated an ILP, the ILP application form must be completed by the supervisor (not the student.) The application form is available within eMed (under the ILP tab). Please see the following link for more details including this year’s deadline (2019 applications are now open and close in June) [https://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-project-ilp](https://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-project-ilp). Those that have access to eMed can fill out the form online and press the ‘submit’ button. It is suggested that supervisors first complete the fields in a word document and cut and paste into the online form to ensure that information is not lost if the system faults. For more information on this, please contact Ms Khanh Vo email: ILP@unsw.edu.au.

The RCS recommends projects should only be placed on eMed once they have been negotiated by a student. Students will then confirm their ILP project details online (generally this will occur in August).

**The Role and Responsibilities of the ILP Supervisor – Faculty Guidelines**

The day-to-day supervision, assessment and running of individual ILPs is a responsibility that is shared by students and project supervisors. Responsibilities of the supervisor are;

1. To ensure that ethics requirements have been complied with and a copy of the ethics approval numbers are included in the ILP contract prior to commencement of the ILP.
2. To maintain regular contact with the student in order to provide ongoing support, resolve any problems and meet deadlines.
3. To devise a time-line detailing steps that will facilitate the successful completion of an ILP project including regular meeting times. This time-line should be documented, agreed to and signed by the supervisor and student and the Head of School / Campus. Amendments should be accompanied by explanatory notes that are initialled and dated. Students will be expected to provide a monthly report tracking progress against this time line.
4. To nominate an independent examiner for the Final Report. The examiner must not have had significant involvement with the project or any conflicts of interest that would comprise the integrity of the examination process. The examiner must have academic/medical qualifications relevant to the project and have a PhD and/or medical degree.
5. To provide an assessment of an assigned student’s completed literature review.
6. To determine that the student has / has-not made satisfactory progress in their projects as the student completes their ILP enrolments.
7. To provide reasonable access to any specific tools, reagents, equipment, databases, software, computing or other such facilities necessary for the successful completion of the project.
8. To provide, or ensure that the student has reasonable access to the level of training necessary for the successful completion of the project.
9. To provide a safe research environment for the student that complies with Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) regulations.
10. Ensure that the student is informed of the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) regulations relating to their environment and work practices.
11. To notify the ILP coordinator as soon as practicable of any accident, serious illness, emergency situation or similar circumstance affecting any of the students.
12. To notify the ILP coordinator of any unexplained extended absence by a student and/or lack of participation or unsatisfactory progress.
13. To ensure that the student has the opportunity to participate in the collegial and scholarly activities particular to their environment. Such activities may include: research meetings, journal clubs and school seminars.
14. To submit a report at the end of ILP commenting on the student’s overall performance, and award a mark out of 100 using the grading criteria.

Key Dates

Listed below are the key ILP dates. Those dates marked * are particularly relevant to supervisors and/or require supervisor involvement.

Please note these are approximate dates only, for a list of finalised dates please see the following link – [https://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-project-ilp](https://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-project-ilp).

March 2018
The ILP application form is available within eMed* (contact A/Prof McLachlan prior to submitting application)

June 2018
Deadline for ILP applications to be submitted by supervisor*

August 2018
Due date for ILP Student form (student to complete in eMed)

End of year 2018
Submit ethics application*

Mid-February 2019
ILP Commencement Date and Induction for students* (ethics approval should be obtained by this time)

March 2019
Peer Mentoring Group Session #1

March 2019
ILP Contract Due*

April 2019
Mid-Semester Break (1 week)

April 2019
ILP Literature Review Report Due (submitted on eMed)*

May 2019
Supervisor Assessment Report Due*

May 2019
Peer Mentoring Group Session #2

June 2019
Quantitative & Qualitative Research Method Lecture

June/July 2019
Mid-Year Recess (3 weeks)

August/September 2019
Mid-Semester Break

September 2019
Peer Mentoring Group Session #3

September 2019
3MT Competition

October 2019
Final Report Due (submitted on eMed)*

October 2019
Clinical Transition Commencement Date

November 2019
Supervisor and Examiner Report Due*
For More Information

For more information on the ILP please go to: http://rcs.med.unsw.edu.au/independent-learning-projects-ilp

The Medicine Faculty’s ILP & Honours Coordinator is Dr Barbara Adelstein, email b.adelstein@unsw.edu.au

The Medicine Faculty’s ILP & Honours Administrator is Khanh Vo, email: ILP@unsw.edu.au.

Students undertaking an ILP with the RCS with concerns during the ILP year can contact the Head of Campus, A/Prof McLachlan or Yashin Lu.