



# Year 4 Medicine

## COVID-19 Q & A

# Secretlab TITAN



# Support

- Weekly online convenor meetings (Friday 7-8 pm)
- Writing Skills Support (local and distance students)

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/writing>

- Research consultations (local and distance students)

<https://nucleus.unsw.edu.au/Help-and-support/research-consultation-and-support>

- How to Write a Literature Review (in Moodle)

# Additional support:

- **GP** – for assessment, ongoing management and referral as appropriate.  
Please refer student to [UNSW Health Service](#) or local Bulk Billing GP
- NB: Staff can make warm referrals to the below central services via email with the student's consent.
- [Student Support and Success](#) - **finance, housing, study skills** support, **time management** or personal issues such as **stress** and **anxiety**.
- [Equitable Learning Service](#) – practical **educational adjustments** to assist me to manage my studies and my **disability, medical condition** and / or **mental health condition**.
- [Counselling and Psychological Service](#) – **psychological** and **counselling** support to manage **mental health and wellbeing**
- [International Student Support](#) – **finance, visa, study skills** support, **time management** or personal issues such as **stress** and **anxiety**.

If you have any questions, please call me 0412546570 or email [g.smith@unsw.edu.au](mailto:g.smith@unsw.edu.au) .

If I have a clinical project and I am not able to attend because of a shut-down and I only have a few participants, do I have to change projects?

This is out of your control and if you have to write up your results with only a few participants that's fine. Your supervisors may change things a bit as well – we will need great flexibility in this situation. Best that at the start of the final manuscript we have a disclaimer section for the examiner so you can state the impact this had on your research

<b>Results:</b>  <b>Description</b>  <b>&amp; Content (x2)</b>	No description of the experimental results given. Lack of controls and replicates. Lack of appropriate data analysis (including statistics if appropriate) performed. Represents an inadequate body of work.	Description of the experimental results lacks required detail. Some conclusions or interpretation of results presented. Insufficient controls and replicates used. Major errors or omissions in data analysis. Represents an inadequate body of work.	Description of the experimental results lacks required detail and appropriate reference to figures and tables (if appropriate). Some conclusions or interpretation of results presented. Enough controls and replicates. Inappropriate data analysis (including statistics if appropriate) used in some parts. Represents an adequate body of work.	Clear description of the results with reference to tables and figures (if appropriate). No conclusions or interpretation of results presented. Enough controls and replicates with minor miscalculations in analysis (including statistics if appropriate). Represents a large body of work.	Logical and clear description of the results with reference to tables and figures (if appropriate). No conclusions or interpretation of results presented. Adequate sample size with appropriate data analysis (including statistics if appropriate) performed correctly. Represents an extensive body of work.
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If my project changes a bit from what was listed in the literature review is this ok?

This is absolutely fine. Lots of projects do change but write up the literature review as if you are doing that original project. Just means when you write your intro of the final manuscript you cant use section of your literature review.

Similarly to above - at what stage do we have to inform MedFac if we are making changes to our project because of COVID-19? For example, my project involves recruiting from a clinic that may be either cancelled, significantly scaled down, or moved to telehealth in coming weeks – the situation is evolving day-by-day. Does this mean that I should inform MedFac now that I might be making changes? Or can I wait to see how the situation unfolds?

Same, all elective theatre lists at my hospital have been cancelled indefinitely but this is being reassessed regularly

I would wait. We did send out a email to all supervisor to let us know of any major changes. We have until the 11/5 to make these changes while you are on break.

What happens if I have limited data? Can I still pass ILP?

Do we have to specifically inform MedFac if our patient numbers etc. might be impacted by COVID-19?

For lab projects, if we are unable to enter the lab to collect experimental data, how will this affect our project?

“During this 8-week period, we will need to re-evaluate the expectations of the projects based on the evolving situation. For example, some students might obtain limited data (which is acceptable as we examine the process rather than the data). Some projects might need to change to a systematic review (or even a review with intention to publish). I know this is not a great research outcome, but flexibility to allow progression is essential for 2020.”

No need to tell us – but put a disclaimer in your final manuscript about impact

Lab – good question. I have not seen a contingency plan.



What happens if it is a data-based project but there are difficulties accessing the data at all because it cannot be transferred say onto my own computer (ethical considerations)?

You will need to discuss with your supervisor. I have just done a letter of support with a similar situation.

Given the current situation, is there the option of accessing eMR from home? (my project involves developing a prospective database of eligible inpatients, if I don't go to hospital for 2 months, data about these patients is essentially lost)

Same as above. Hospitals will need some flexibility and I did a letter of support recently.

Can we also access hospital drives from home (not just eMR, but also word documents, excel files, etc.)?

Sorry your supervisor will need to sort this out with your local IT. It can be done.

My project involves interacting and assessing patients who have Interstitial Lung Disease at the outpatient clinic of a hospital. What are the current guidelines on attending outpatient clinics for UNSW medicine students? If I can't attend, I cannot collect patient data. Moreover, if I were to have limited data because of COVID-19, how would this impact my ILP year? Would I have to switch projects?

Limited data is fine. Your supervisor will have to approve you attending outpatient clinics and you must have a risk management plan in place to protect you and your participants.

Similar to point 1, but with regards to students with lab-based projects and working with animals. In the event of lab shutdown, etc. And major delays in the project timeline as a result, what is the alternative offered to students who may not be able to continue any longer with planned projects even after lab reopening and how will this affect ILP grading?

Im in this situation with my students. Im moving all lab/animal work to take place in T2. Im hopping we will have limited access to our research labs because we are not in direct contact with people and to follow social distancing.

We might have all the data we planned but we will have data to write up. If you have no data at all your supervisor might move you to publishing your literature review.

If the whole uni is going to be shut down for weeks, or even months, do we have to repeat ILP year?

NO. worst case is we are all writing literature reviews for publication from home. Or writing up with limited data.

# Will the lit review deadline of early April be reviewed/pushed back for all students due to general closures/lockdowns, or do we have to formally apply for special consideration?

1. May I kindly suggest/request for the lit review deadline to be pushed back by a week or so. COVID-19 has contributed to physical, logistical, managerial and psychological disturbance, and it would be greatly appreciated if Med Fac would take that in consideration.
2. I agree with this – personally, my supervisors have been flat out and seeing drafts of lit review may not be the highest priority; COVID-19 has also been a massive disruption to normal workflow, with people trying to see family, battle personal issues, avoid using public transport and self-isolate as much as possible etc.
3. Me too, my supervisor is in isolation and communication has been difficult, with managing hospital duties whilst absent obviously the priority
4. Fourth this!! My supervisor cannot edit at the moment because they are flat out and I need more time for this – PLEASE do a blanket extension because this has impacted everyone in so many ways
5. Fifth this – and I know a lot of other students do too! Everything has been run off its feet which has been a complete obstruction to getting any work done to the standard we'd like.
6. Agreed, my supervisor has not had any time to review my literature review. This has slowed down my progress and quality of work. Please extend this deadline, I am quite **stressed!**
7. Agreed - being unable to have face to face meetings with supervisors is creating quite a lot of difficulty in the literature review write-up, especially in ensuring the technicalities of the methodology section are correctly described and understood by the students - **please extend the deadline**
8. My project may be altogether cancelled because of the COVID-19 situation disallowing patient recruitment. This is really stressing me out, and I'm still to process the way forward with my supervisor. Please extend the deadline for the lit review.
9. I agree too, I have no one to edit my draft nor give me guidance. Super stressed and made worse with COVID stress.
10. If we can't get an overall extension, if we apply for special consideration how long will it take until we will find out the outcome of the special consideration? Do we need to provide documents for this?

I don't think we need an extension for most students. E.g. SoMS honours only had 4 weeks to put together the same literature review with the same issues we are all facing. What I will do is allow submission on **10am Friday 10<sup>th</sup> of April (10am 13<sup>th</sup> of April max)**

Please allow for special consideration if needed. Should take 1-2 days to process.

Different projects will be impacted differently (e.g. retrospective data analysis vs. Prospective clinical studies), will Med fac take that into account when designing attendance recommendations, figuring out marking, etc.?

As stated – I think this year we will have a section at the start of the final manuscript called “disclaimer and you will state the impact so examiner is aware.

Are there non-clinical projects on standby for students who cannot collect data for their chosen project to ensure that they can meet requirements for their research year and not be held back?

Your supervisors might move you to a new project or a systematic review ( or review) both will be fine for 2020. please be flexible this year.

If we are required to switch (or significantly change) our projects because clinics have closed down, do we have to write up/submit another lit review for the new project (especially since I've already submitted a draft into my supervisor/put a lot of effort in)? Even if we don't have to write a totally new literature review, does our current one have to reflect that things might change?

Even if you know your project will change please continue writing your current literature review and the methodology you would have undertaken. This is totally fine and in fact similar to how we write grants. We write a literature review then what methods we will use. Most of the time we don't get funding and never to that project.

I have this concern too. My lit review is essentially finished apart from editing, and my supervisor is confident that I can switch to a back-up data analysis project in the same general topic area if necessary, but the research question possibly won't be identical. Everything is very up-in-the-air right now so I'm not sure whether I have to address this in lit review?

I have a similar problem – my supervisor isn't sure whether my original lab based project is feasible and I may have to switch to epidemiological data analysis, meaning I don't know what my aims, hypothesis, methods will be at this stage. Should I use my original ones?



My project involves recruiting patients from the hospital wards, with a history and physical exam. As medical students, are we still allowed to interact with and recruit patients (especially since physical examinations involve being in close proximity with patients, and due to the limited availability of PPE, places both the patients and ourselves at risk)

You will need to discuss with your supervisor and raise these concerns. they will need to be following their local rules and in some places no students are allowed on site. You will need to be trained on how to use PPE and if nothing is their then no you will not be recruiting.

**Do we still have to complete a Phase 2 Portfolio? I noticed that there isn't a due date anymore on the timetable, and the old due date fell during our break**

Yes how does the break being pushed forward impact portfolio? If it's still due at the old time then we would be expected to do it in our break? Or is this going to be pushed back accordingly.

Unless notified, its still due 10am 6/5/2020. See Moodle for Key due dates:

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**Key Due Dates for 2020:**

<b>ILP</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>BSc (Med) Hons</b>	<b>Due</b>
Milestone and Expectation Report	14/02/2020	Milestone and Expectation Report	14/02/2020
Literature Review (25%)	06/04/2020	Literature Review (25%)	06/04/2020
Phase 2 Portfolio	06/05/2020	Phase 2 Portfolio	06/05/2020
Progress Report	12/06/2020	Progress Report	12/06/2020
Project Manuscript (50%)	06/10/2020	Project Manuscript (50%)	06/10/2020
3MT Slide Submission	12/10/2020	Final Seminar Abstract	12/10/2020
3MT (15%)	16-23 October	Final Seminar (15%)	16-23 October

Similar to above, is the submission date for the Project manuscript going to be pushed back?

At this state no. But lets look at this once we know the full impact of this virus following our first break. We have constituency to move it if needed.

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My project can be done at home but my seminars require me to go to hospital in the wards, are we allowed to ignore seminars?

Most seminars are cancelled. If some are on I will organise for an online link so you can watch from home. Ignore seminars.

Is there a specific date when changes in our project have to be finalised by? The email says to base our decisions on the situation on/around 11<sup>th</sup> May, but that's still a while away, and I'm not sure if we're meant to wait until then to reassess the situation (in which case we may not actually figure out changes in our project for another few weeks still) or have any changes finalised by then?

I think in 1-2 weeks we will see what's happening and could make more informed decisions.

Are we allowed to access labs to process remaining samples this week?

Case-case is fine, you will need approval from your supervisor and school. Let me know if you are so I can keep a record. But some supervisors might like you home as well.

If we do have to switch projects, I am concerned that process of applying for ethics for the new project will significantly cut into the time available to conduct the research project (it took my supervisor over 8 months to get ethics finalised for my current project). How will this be addressed?

If you do need to change it will be doing something not needing ethics. Ethics will be reducing capacity as well.

If we are in the middle of collecting data, does this “home lit review” mean that we aren’t allowed to continue collecting our data for the time being?

NO, but you will need your supervisors approval and to let me know as well. Make sure you have appropriate PPE and follow all guidelines.



Is it possible to still have the break period until 25/05? Those who started ILP later due to unforeseen circumstances would not have the similar break period if it is only until 11/05.

You can negotiate the time period with your supervisor not a problem.

## **Are international students allowed to fly home until 11/05?**

- *Our home countries have begun calling us back home, there might be possible nation-wide lock down.*

And what if they extend the travel ban to all visitors and we are unable to re-enter Aus

ILP / Honours – Students might be able to continue their research projects online, in a modified form. For example, if it is not possible to collect experimental data, students might negotiate with their supervisor and the ILP / Honours Convenor to conduct a systematic review.

I haven't been able to attend any research meetings as all of them are cancelled.  
Would this affect my performance?

Not at all.

If we have an increased workload due to ILP project changes, would we be able to remove the need to undertake general education courses?

This is a UNSW requirement. I can ask but I don't think we will get far. Good question.

Hi Greg. Hope you're well in this time. I was wondering how my ILP will be affected as it is a clinical based project, where I'd be in the hospital collecting data from patients face-to-face as well as getting patients to fill out questionnaires?

Good question. Discuss with your supervisor. At the moment hospitals etc are trying to reduce non-essential people on site to reduce the chance of moving this virus around.

In what capacity can we, as 4<sup>th</sup> year students, volunteer to help at hospitals with swabbing, triage, history taking etc.?

At this stage zero. Non-essential people have to stay away. If this changes I will post on Moodle for helpers.

Other than ILP, the general education course (photography 1: foundation) that I am currently taking is switching to online classes while we are on 'holiday'. Do we still need to proceed with the course? (As mentioned above, if international students are flying back to home country, the physical assessments that need to be handed in would not be viable.) Thanks Greg

Gen ed is still needed.

What do I do if I am able to complete the project from home, but my supervisor insists I should continue to attend clinics/meetings despite the university's requirements?

This would need to be approved by me. In these cases, I would need an email from the supervisor. I would contact student individually and make sure they are happy with this. If not I would not approve.