

JUCMSA HANDBOOK:

TIPS FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

COMPILED BY THE JCUMSA
ACADEMIC SUBCOMMITTEE
AND EXECUTIVE
2011 - 2017



Contents:

Welcome	3
JCUMSA Executive	4
JCUMSA Team 2017	5
Before you start	6-7
The STAR Project	8
Tips	
For studying	9-12
For emailing	13-15
For social media	16
For clinical dressing	17-18
For textbooks	19-23
For subjects	24-35
On placement	36
On work/life balance	37-39
On assignments	40-41
Contributors	42-44

Welcome

Hi everyone,

On behalf of the JCU Medical Students Association (JCUMSA), we would like to offer you all a warm tropical welcome to Medicine at JCU! Congratulations on getting this far and I hope you are looking forward to the fun and excitement of meeting new friends, sharing new experiences and learning incredible things.

This handbook has been designed to help you get the best start to studying medicine at JCU and should answer some of the questions you might have. There are tips about all different aspects of the course and it can help you in all years of medicine. It has been written and compiled BY students FOR students so the tips are real and practical.

A brand new edition has been published in 2017 so the information is up to date and relevant for you. I hope that this handbook can help ease your transition into studying medicine whether you are starting at university for the first time, studying a second degree or haven't studied in awhile!

JCUMSA is always here to help and you can find us at www.jcumsa.org.au or on Facebook/Instagram/Snapchat (add us!). We are happy to answer any questions you might have!

Good luck and enjoy the journey! If I can ever be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to ask. All the best!

*Satyen Hargovan (5th Yr)
JCUMSA President 2017*

PS. I also would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to this handbook over the years.

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Year 6 - Diane Quach (T), Sarah Adamson (C), Georgi Spalding (M), Syahira Johan (D)

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Junior Liaison Officer - Isabelle Nehme

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International Students Rep - Harmanjit Dev

Indigenous Students Rep - Racquel Ball

Interfaculty Sports Reps - Matilda Richardson, Aashay Nobre

Before you start..

1. Make sure you know where you are going

You will be spending the vast majority of your time this year at the College of Medicine area of the Douglas Campus.

Google 'JCU Campus Maps' to find an interactive map of the Townsville campus.

When it comes to finding rooms, asking other students can help - but there is logic behind the building codes. For example, 46-104A refers to Building 46, a room on the first floor (not ground floor), in quad room 4, which is subdivided into room A. The most important one to know is 45-002, this is the big lecture theatre with the red seats where most of your lectures are - you can't miss it!

2. Know how you are going to get there

Find out your bus routes, your walking path or how to drive there, and most importantly where to park. There is nothing like being late to your first lecture because you can't find a park! A note on parking - it can be quite difficult to find a park in the morning, so get there early and make sure you have your parking permit (which you can buy from the Co-op book store), as there is very limited free parking near the med school.

3. Know what your JCU login details are

Your login name/number is 6 digits and starts with 'jc' eg. jc123456

It is not your student number which is 8 digits: 12345678

Your JCU login is your all-access pass to LearnJCU, StudentsOnline and eStudent.

Your email will be: firstname.lastname@myjcu.edu.au

4. Make yourself familiar with the computer facilities

LearnJCU? StudentsOnline? eStudent?

No idea what these are and what they do? Hop onto the JCU website and take a look to see where they can be accessed. LearnJCU is where you will find all of your lecture notes, important forms and updates - make sure you know how to navigate your way through it. eStudent is for enrolment, paying fees and requesting an academic record. StudentsOnline is used mainly for exam timetables.

Equally important is checking your emails - but more on that later.

Before you start..

5. Ensure you complete the required forms on time

There are some things that need to be completed in order to finish the year. You will not be allowed on placement or to move onto your next year until these are done. All of the following information can be found at <https://www.jcu.edu.au/professional-experience-placement/preparation-checklists/medicine>.

- Professional Placement Unit Student Declaration
- JCU Medicine Student Code of Conduct
- Blue Card
- Australian Federal Police Check

Before you start..JCU Confidentiality Acknowledgement

First Aid Certificate

Immunisation Checklist

Clinical Identification

If you will have placement at a Queensland Health facility make sure you have the following as well:

- QH Student Orientation Checklist and eLearning Modules
- QH Student Deed Poll

Some of these documents you need signed by a witness, then you have to scan them and email to dthmplacements@jcu.edu.au, the office of which is at those sliding windows on the ground floor of the Pharmacy Building (47-001). If you have any questions just ask - they're super nice people!

6. Stay updated by following JCUMSA on social media

JCUMSA hosts a number of social, academic and community events throughout the year. These are not to miss!

Follow us @jcumsa on



THE STAR PROJECT

WHAT IS THE STAR PROJECT?

The STAR Project is about health students and staff Standing Together Against Racism in health care. The STAR Project supports Australia's new Anti-Racism Strategy -

Racism: It Stops With Me, by taking on racism inside health.

STAR was begun by students and staff at the School of Medicine and Dentistry at James Cook University, Queensland. They had come across many fellow students and colleagues who wanted to show their opposition to racism. So they initiated the STAR Project as a way that students and staff could show that they Stand Together Against Racism.

Racism in health care affects our most vulnerable people. It remains common in Australian health studies and health care. Many health students and staff have reported that they would like to respond more positively to racism.

The STAR Project does not ask much of the participant - but many people feel they can make a quiet and dignified statement.

You can be a little, twinkly STAR by wearing a badge or putting up a sticker and getting others to join you. STAR can also help you to become a big, bright STAR by doing something active about racism when you come across it.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.starproject.me/>

THE STAR SYMBOL

The golden STAR represents hope. The stethoscope is a universal health tool used by many health professions. Most importantly, it is a meaningful symbol of anti-racism, that will become more potent the more health students and staff who wear it. It does not hurt the anti-racism cause in that it is also a discrete and elegant little badge! Visit SEPU to get your badge now!



Tips for Studying

TIPS ON INTRODUCTORY LECTURES

- Attend them! Even if you don't think it's worth it and that you could use your time productively, you will never know what you missed unless you go
- Prepare for lectures - print out the materials and read over them. 5 - 10 minutes of pre-reading is enough. It makes it easier to listen and learn when you have an idea about what is being taught
- Take notes and pay attention. Lectures are a way of the lecturer communicating exactly what they want from you, who wouldn't want to hear that?

TIPS ON GUIDED LEARNING SESSIONS

- Prepare for the sessions. Look over them to see where you might have trouble, this will save time if you already know what you need to discuss with the tutors
- Use the GLS time to your advantage - ask questions and take your time to understand the concepts. These sessions are a good indication of the depth of study you should do
- Unsure how much to study? Cover the weekly objectives, they're a great guide
- Make the most of the tutors there, they have a good idea of what is expected and can help you head in the right direction
- Don't try and be a GLS hero and have all of the questions done just to impress everyone else. GLS sessions are about everyone understanding - not just you

TIPS ON GETTING ORGANISED

- Try drawing up a timetable each week so you know where your spare time is
- Set deadlines for what you would like to have done, and when
- Start assignments when you get them - don't do them the night before!
- Create weekly summaries and try to complete them as each week passes
- Make notes - good easy to read notes are worth their weight in gold before exams.
- Don't use other people's notes as your only resource - people make mistakes, and no-one knows what you should know better than you do. Plus everyone studies and makes notes differently!

Tips for Studying

TIPS ON MAKING SUMMARIES AND STUDY NOTES

- At the end of each week make a summary no more than two pages with all of the important information from the introductory lecture, GLS and SS
- Ensure it is just a summary with key points - use the learning objectives as a guide
- Use the learning objectives as questions to quiz yourself
- Re-read your notes every so often to keep it fresh in your mind
- Writing summaries by hand or typed is a personal choice, see what works for you!
- Written summaries don't work for everyone - try answering questions, using a whiteboard, or drawing a memory map on paper. Maybe printing the lecture slides and annotating them is what works best for you!
- Students are constantly changing their learning style to see what suits them best, don't feel pressure to follow a certain style.

TIPS ON SWOTVAC

- DO NOT leave all study and summary making to SWOTVAC
- Different study techniques work for everyone - using your summaries, mind mapping, putting diagrams and charts around your room, flash cards - find out what works for you!
- Try weekly study sessions with some friends to go over material and things you don't understand. Try explaining concepts to each other - 'he who teaches learns twice'!
- Use your textbooks, summaries and learning objectives to focus: anything that is nice to know or not particularly relevant - forget it
- Before revising a particular week, try and write down or whiteboard what you remember. This will allow you to focus your study towards concepts you can't remember or don't know
- Break up your study with quizzes - there are plenty on the internet!
- Have a structured study plan to make sure you get through every week, make sure you set realistic goals (and don't forget to schedule in some study breaks!)
- Don't forget about integrative session, cross cultural workshop and clinical skills

Tips for Studying

TIPS ON EXAMS

- Check and double check when and where your exam is! They are not always held in 46 so it can be handy to check out the room beforehand so you have one less thing to worry about!
- Gather all the stationery you need for an exam the night before so you can feel extra prepared and make sure to have your ID!
- Before an exam, remember to take some deep breaths. Don't get psyched out by other students - it can be difficult but it's important to realise that you do know a lot
- Use your reading time! Take the time to suss out the difficult/easy questions and either start answering them or making a plan of attack!
- Consider how you will approach exams - whether you will start from the beginning, or start with a question you feel confident with
- After each exam take a break and get some fresh air - be confident in yourself and the hard work that you have put in throughout the semester!

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Tips for Studying

A FEW EXTRA TIPS

- Time management skills throughout your degree are imperative. Keep a diary and set a timetable, you will be amazed with what you get done
- Work hard all year - you are not studying for a test, you are learning how to be a doctor. Turn up to your sessions - even the ones that seem like a tremendous waste of time
- Don't cram. There will always be a lot to learn, so work at it throughout the year. SWOTVAC should primarily be used for revision, not learning new material
Quizzes can be great checkpoints leading up to exams - study for them and use them to your advantage
- Keep hobbies other than uni. You are in it for the long haul, and it is important to stay well rounded and down to earth - this can be hard if you always surround yourself with everything medicine!
- Exercise. It is an amazing stress reduction tool and a great way to clear your head during those long study sessions
- Try different study techniques to get that knowledge in your brain - study styles are as unique as you are!
- Whiteboarding is a great visual way to picture things rather than just looking at notes
- Do a little bit every day. This makes things much more achievable, and allows you to set more realistic goals
- When reading from textbooks, have a goal: know what you want to learn from it
- Try not to compare yourself with others in your year
- Look for associations between what you already know and new material
- Make a nice study space for yourself - keep it clean, organised and completely directed towards study. This will get your body in the habit of knowing that this space is your 'OK it's work time now' space
- Ensure you get good night's sleep. Studies have shown that less information is retained when people have less sleep, or poorer quality sleep - so really, those nice sleep ins are helping you with your study!
- Look after yourself - mentally (mental wellbeing is hugely important), physically (do some exercise every day, even if it is just a walk around the block), emotionally (debrief with friends and family). We all love some delicious naughty study snacks, but don't forget that food is fuel - fill up your tank with fruits and veggies too!

Tips for Emails

LOGGING IN

The easiest way to log in is via the JCU website.

Head to: www.jcu.edu.au

At the top left under the 'Students' tab click on 'Student email'

Your log in will be `firstname.lastname@my.jcu.edu.au`

Sometimes you may not be the only person with that awesome name, in which case your email may be something like: `firstname.lastname3@my.jcu.edu.au`.

Have a look into downloading the App too, instant notifications make life a lot easier

CHECK YOUR EMAILS REGULARLY

We can't stress this enough! It's a known fact that we receive a lot of emails, many of which can contain important information about room changes or cancellations/additions to the timetable.

Consequently, it is really important that we check our emails regularly - which means at least 4 - 5 times a week. A super easy way to stay up to date is to add your JCU email account to your smart phone.

Be sure to check your spam/clutter once in a while too, important emails often slip away to this folder.

THE KNOW HOW

PART ONE: THE RECIPIENT

One of the most important parts of the email! Always double and even triple check who you are sending the email to - particularly with regards to 'Reply' vs 'Reply All'

PART TWO: THE SUBJECT

- Student email addresses will be '@my.jcu.edu.au' whereas staff emails will be '@jcu.edu.au'
- To add multiple recipients, separate email addresses with a semi-colon
- E.g. `john.smith@my.jcu.edu.au ; jane.citizen@my.jcu.edu.au`

Tips for Emails

THE KNOW HOW

PART THREE: THE ATTACHMENT

The most important part of attachments: ensure they are relevant, small in size, and in a format that your recipient can open. PDF documents can generally be opened on any computer, so it is often useful to send these. Also ensure that the title of your attachment is relatively comprehensive. For example, 'JCUMSA Med Ball Poster' rather than just 'Poster'

PART FOUR: THE BODY

All JCU Medical Students are aware of professionalism in the workplace, however this often is forgotten with emails. Emails are a form of professional communication with your colleagues, lecturers, administrators and other staff. As such, it is imperative to be mindful of a few key things:

- Until informed otherwise, it is always safest and most respectful to address all academic staff and health professionals by their official title, be it Dr John Smith, Professor Jane Citizen or Mr George Brown
- Start your email off with a polite greeting such as 'I hope this email finds you well', 'Thank you for your last email' Professional language is vital, as are basic manner and courtesy - too often are 'please' and 'thank you' left out!
- When emailing your lecturers to ask questions, they do appreciate if you have actually had a think about it. Don't email them with a question that you could easily have answered by opening your textbook..

Other important things to remember include: Correct grammar, spelling and sentence structure Avoid ALL CAPITAL LETTERS unless used for an appropriate name such as JCUMSA, GLS, CTL Politely sign off from your email, with a line such as 'Thank you for your assistance'

We know these things might seem straightforward, but trust us - they are commonly forgotten, and can make a huge difference!

Tips for Emails

THE KNOW HOW

PART FIVE: THE FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

Firstly, have patience! Lecturers are busy people and may not reply straight away. It's not recommended to send the same email multiple times to increase your chances of receiving a reply. If you haven't found your answer in the meantime, consider approaching your lecturer in a GLS or after a lecture. Lecturers often prefer to answer questions in person so that they can check your understanding, and explain the question to others rather than answer the same email multiple times.

PART SIX: THE REPLY

The Timely Reply

Not all emails require an urgent reply, or even a reply at all. However some emails are urgent and require a reply ASAP - take note of the priority of the email. In general, personalised emails from a staff member warrant a reply as soon as possible.

The Polite Reply

It can be easy enough to send a reply in the heat of the moment, without taking time to craft an eloquent response. Try drafting a reply in Microsoft Word to double check the flow and spelling, or leave it for a while to gather your thoughts. Never email anything that you wouldn't want everyone to read.

PART SEVEN: EMAIL SIGNATURE

Your email signature is the little blurb at the end of your email. It is a great way of identifying yourself and your position or role. Useful information you might want to have in your signature may include:

- Your name and year level
- University details
- Positions in clubs or committees
- Mobile number if you wish to be contacted in that way

While it is great to have a signature, make sure that it is not too long, and doesn't include any irrelevant information.

To set up an email signature, click on the Settings icon in the top right hand corner. Select 'Options', and then once the side menu appears, under 'Layout' will be 'Email Signature'.

Tips for Social Media

'Take this from someone who has made this mistake before you - don't write anything on the internet when you're angry. Never reply to a lecturer who you're annoyed at, don't post on Facebook when you're feeling upset and never write a sharp word to anyone under your own name. Published words have a habit of being copied, pasted and sent to Deans of Medicine!'

'Set up your Facebook profile to private settings and be wary with what you allow everyone to see. Don't add lecturers or accounts set up by the College of Medicine or JCU as your 'full' friends unless you are fully comfortable with any staff seeing what you post on Facebook. Remember: once they are your friend, they will be able to see photos of you having a few drinks 3 days before your end of year exams when you're applying for Supplementary Exams or Special Consideration!'

'No matter how cool the patient you saw today was - never, ever break patient confidentiality. If you must share it with the world, something vague like 'Just had a great day assisting in surgery' is ok, but not 'Am in rural town on placement and delivered my first baby girl this morning!'. Have a think about what the odds are: someone might know someone who knows the girl who had the baby, and she was only 16. Better safe than sorry!'

'The days are gone where our virtual presence is unnoticed in the world. In the future your medical school, scholarship committee and your employers will look at what you write, post, photograph and put on Facebook or send in emails. Be very careful with whom you share your most intimate thoughts. Don't share anything that you wouldn't be happy discussing at a job interview.'

'Professionalism isn't just about acting professional in the real world, it applies in the online world. You might be stoked you got to do CPR on someone in a small rural town, but making it your Facebook status is not necessary. You never know whether one of your friends might know the person and not appreciate you sharing their medical story online.'

'You are entitled to live your own life on Facebook - but always think about how you might be judged as a doctor. Would you like to see photos of your doctor on Facebook entering an all you can drink competition?'

Your cohort Facebook page is a forum for everyone - remember to be tactful when voicing your opinions on this page

Tips for Clinical Dressing

GENERAL ADVICE

The best clinical dress is that which is not noticed (neither 'wow, they're hot!' nor 'they look slack and unkempt'). Modesty is key (as well as a good iron). Invest in: black slacks, formal/dress shoes and a long sleeve button up shirt.

MALES

- Shave, unless you can actually support a full professional-looking beard (don't worry, not many men can...).
- Jeans are generally not considered clinical. Just because doctors dress a certain way doesn't mean it is acceptable.
- Suit pants and a buttoned shirt with formal shoes are a safe bet.

FEMALES

- High heels are generally a no go, as are: short skirts/dresses, see through blouses, singlets and low cut tops.
- Don't go overboard with makeup also - the hospital isn't a club.
- Take note of how older students dress. If you're unsure:
- Button up shirt with black slacks and shoes is always a safe bet.
- On placements, dress more formally at the start and then take cues from other staff about the local dress code.
- Don't hesitate to check with your supervisor.
- You should be comfortable and able to rush around if the situation requires. If you would feel uncomfortable wearing this in front of your grandma or constantly need to adjust - wear something else.

Tips for Clinical Dressing

DO:

- Dress like a professional - and you will be treated like a professional
- Consider purchasing JCU College of Medicine and Dentistry shirts - they are a handy back up when you're not sure what to wear, and are a great way of identifying your position and where you are from
- Wear something comfortable. Pockets often come in handy too!
- Consider the impression you give to others (patients, colleagues, superiors)
- Dress like a medical student should - just because your supervisor dresses in jeans and crocs does not mean it is ok for you to!

DON'T

- Make it a fashion competition.
- Stylish is not necessarily the best - you are off to work, not the races
- Wear see through, figure hugging, short or revealing clothes
- Wear clothes that should be ironed, and aren't
- Wear overpowering perfume or cologne
- Wear anything that you are worried about getting dirty

Tips for Textbooks

GENERAL ADVICE

Everyone is different. Some people prefer studying with the book in front of them, in which case buying the paper format will be better than an electronic version. Second hand textbooks are a cheaper alternative and often not too different from the newer version. Most textbooks can be bought from various websites online, which are often a lot cheaper than buying them at a bookstore.

MED ONE

When first starting medicine it seems like a lot of textbooks and a lot of money. But fear not - many of these books are an investment that will last you many years to come. If strapped for cash, consider buying second hand books (keep an eye out for the JCUMSA Second Hand Textbook Sale held at the end of Week 1 as many of these are next to new!), borrowing from an older student or the library.

PRESCRIBED

Essential Cell Biology (Alberts)

- For CTL and MTC. This comes in handy for your GLS sessions, and most of the images from the lectures and workbooks will come from here. A great textbook to have, however older editions can be just as suitable!

Gray's Anatomy for Students (Drake, Vogl & Mitchell)

- Not only is it very cool to own a copy of 'Gray's Anatomy', it will be your staple anatomy text for the rest of your career. Consider it an investment!

Human Genetics: Concepts & Applications (Lewis)

- This text lays down the fundamentals of genetics and will teach you just about everything you need to know for your genetics subject. Again, a second hand copy will likely be sufficient

Functional Histology (Kerr)

- Highly recommended. This is a great book if you are struggling with histology and everything appearing like pink and purple blobs. This book will also come in handy for subjects in year 3 and 4

Mark's Basic Medical Biochemistry 4E (Liebermanm, Marks & Peet)

- This is a new recommendation so we don't have a lot of feedback at this stage

Tips for Textbooks

MED ONE

RECOMMENDED

Guyton and Hall Textbook of Medical Physiology 13E (Hall)

- This book is prescribed for your future years of medicine, so we definitely recommend purchasing it at some point! It is a very comprehensive text so be careful not to get too lost - but a key text to have in your collection

McMinn's Clinical Atlas of Human Anatomy (McMinn)

- Can be used in conjunction with Gray's, or as an alternative if you prefer a different approach and hence may not be essential.

Principles of Medical Biochemistry (Meisenberg & Simmons)

- This can also be used as an alternative in some ways to one of the other medical biochemistry books. They are all relatively similar, and it is a matter of personal preference with regards to which one you prefer. Some students have found that this text is too detailed for what is required for your learning and hence may not be essential.

Essential Reproduction (Martin Johnson)

- This text is a relatively new recommendation, so we don't have a lot of feedback at this stage

Clinical Examination Essentials (Talley & O'Connor)

- This book is prescribed for your future years of medicine. It is great reading for Clinical Skills and is an essential textbook for Clinical years

Tips for Textbooks

MED TWO

So you've passed first year! Congrats! As with first year you will not necessarily need all of the prescribed and recommended texts. Here is our feedback and advice on each of them.

PRESCRIBED

Hoffbrand's Essential Haematology (Hoffbrand).

- It is particularly useful for a few select weeks, but many students suggest that it may be ideally bought second hand if at all.

Guyton and Hall Textbook of Medical Physiology (Hall)

- If you don't already have this text from first year, we definitely recommend that you add it to your collection. This is a necessity for 2nd year medicine - it often provides the perfect level of detail and is essential for answering a myriad of question in GLS's.

Psychology for Medicine (Ayers & De Visser)

- A great text to add an additional level of understanding, especially if you are interested in the psychological aspect of medicine.

Clinical Examination: A Systematic Guide to Physical Diagnosis (Talley, O'Connor)

- Again, if you don't have this already - it is a must have. Although the JCU guides are fairly comprehensive, this is a text that you will use for the rest of medical school.

Rang & Dale's Pharmacology

- Provides a great overview of everything pharmacology, and can be a great reference if you want more detail, however some students have been able to get by without it. For those particularly keen to ace MP, Goodman and Gilman's The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics is arguably the superior text (and heavily used by the lecturer!)

Neuroscience (Purves)

- A superb reference text that perfectly aligns with the lecture material, but again some students have managed without purchasing this text.

Tips for Textbooks

MED TWO

RECOMMENDED

Pulmonary Pathophysiology Essentials (West)

- This book has some fantastic explanations, however some students have gotten by with just utilising Guyton and Hall

Ganong's Review of Medical Physiology (Barrett, Barman, Boitano)

- An alternative to Guyton and Hall, covering similar information

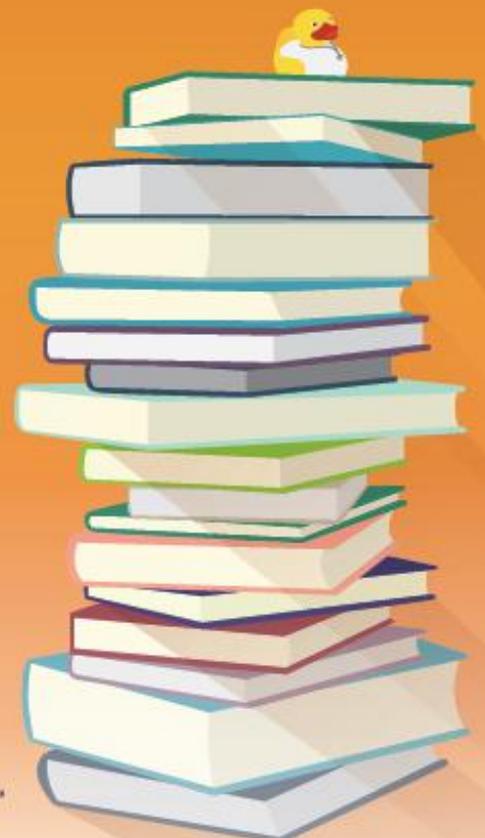
Pathophysiology of Heart Disease (Lilly)

- A good little guide on all things cardiovascular! Not necessary but a useful resource for anyone looking to add more depth to their CVS knowledge

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Tips for Textbooks

MED THREE

By now, you're probably feeling pretty weary about purchasing texts unless you absolutely have to. While some choose to collect them all (in a Pokemon like fashion), it is possible to get by with a few key texts and access to the JCU databases.

PRESCRIBED

Janeway's Immunobiology (Murphy)

- This text provides an amazing amount of detail about all things immunobiology, but sometimes its explanations of concepts can be a bit confusing. It may be best to use the lecture slides provided by the lecturers as a guide as to which sections to read.

Robbins Basic Pathology (Kumar)

- Provides a great explanation for all things pathology, with a relevant overview of relating medical conditions. This is also referred to as 'Baby Robbins', and it is a matter of personal preference whether you use this text or 'Daddy Robbins' for your studies

Mims' Medical Microbiology (Goering, Dockrell, Zuckerman)

- While it does provide some fantastic information, some students prefer to use different resources and have gotten by without this text. Other recommendations include hiring MIMS from the library or using journal articles based on the amount of time and depth you want to study in.

RECOMMENDED

Clinical Examination (Talley & O'Connor)

- And for the 3rd time, if you don't have this already - it is a must have. Although the JCU guides are fairly comprehensive, this is a text that you will use for the rest of medical school.

Management of Alcohol and Drug Problems (Hulse)

- This is a relatively new recommendation, and we don't have a lot of feedback at this stage

Emergency Medicine: Diagnosis and Management

- While this is a good text which goes through emergency presentations in a systematic manner, some students prefer to use online sources and have gotten by without purchasing this text

Tips for Subjects

MED ONE

SEMESTER ONE

Ecology of Health 1 (EH1)

- Do not ignore the seemingly 'easy' subjects - they are all weighted equally! (and is also an easy way to bring your GPA up if you do well)
- Special note: pay particular attention to the weeks covering Medicare, PBS and government funding, these topics make excellent exam questions!
- Turn up and be an active participant The content is not just common sense - although the concepts may not be difficult to grasp, they can be tricky to recall and explain in exams if you haven't spent some time on them. Some things may just require good old rote learning.
- Believe it or not, this topic is particularly relevant to medicine, and more likely to be experienced on placement than others! (You will realise this the more placements you do)

Cells to Life (CTL)

- There are a lot of different concepts to cover - stay up to date and make notes from lecture slides and the GLS material to determine what is relevant
- Know your processes - MAP kinase kinase kinase, different receptors and their jobs etc
- Practice setting up, using and identifying the different parts of the microscope - they will always come up!
- Also, don't ignore histology - know what the pink and purple blobs that you can see are and relate that back to how the cell functions
- If you are struggling to remember the names of all of the different things, focus on the latin derivatives: epi meaning around, myo meaning muscle etc. Also try to remember what each thing does - putting a name and job together can make it easier!
- Go to Ketheesen's lectures! But don't be late (and if it is a Kee-Pad session make sure you bring that with you too!!) He holds out on those who don't come by removing the learning objectives from his lecture slides -

Tips for Subjects

MED ONE

SEMESTER ONE

Molecules to Cells (MTC)

- Whiteboarding: draw, wipe, redraw the pathways. Even erase just the enzymes to see what you can remember! Start using flow charts early.
- Very important: regulation and inhibition points of biochemical pathways eg. the effect of high levels of ATP on isocitrate dehydrogenase, how arsenic is a poison. Questions like these often appear on quizzes but are overlooked during study
- Focus on the parts of the subject that are applicable to medicine (especially the weeks on chirality, pH, pKa).
- Understand how the concepts work and how to work out what they want you to work out - there is a lot of detailed chemistry which underpins much of this subject, and is unnecessary for us

Endocrinology (ENDO)

- Follow the learning objectives, and be able to answer them. Some students find it useful to draw mind maps and flowcharts to see how everything links together
- The synthesis sessions are often incredibly useful - key points of the week are highlighted and GLS answers often gone over
- Attend Naga's lectures and listen - what he says is important. You may struggle to understand at first, but pay attention and you will get used to it (and you won't miss any of his jokes!)
- Know your hormones inside and out.
- Handy things to know include: site of production, type of hormone, circulating in which form (bound or free), target site/s, mechanism of action, receptor location, actions, actions on metabolism, other actions, regulation of secretion, factors influencing secretion, hyper and hyposecretion, signs and symptoms in these states

Tips for Subjects

MED ONE

SEMESTER TWO

Ecology of Health 2 (EH2)

- Remember, it's weighted equally with your other subjects, so make an effort to learn the content. Think: What they could ask you that might be worth 5 marks?
- Many of the early weeks relating to health psychology may reappear in your PMHD subject in year 2, so take note

Musculoskeletal Systems (MSS)

- Start learning early and try different ways of learning and memorising - flashcards can be great! (Gray's and Netter's have flashcard boxes that can be purchased at Co-op Bookstore)
- Don't fall behind. Prepare before your lab sessions by going through Gray's so you have a rough idea of what you will be looking at, and really use your time in the lab productively
- There are usually additional sessions scheduled where you can go into the lab to revise things - they can be a fantastic way of refreshing your memory and clarifying things if you are not sure
- Use the lectures to guide what your key learning objectives are - you can go into an incredible amount of detail with anatomy, so it is easy to get lost

Genetics and Health (GH)

- A very interesting subject!
- Ensure you learn chi-squared/Hardy-Weinberg equation
- Focus on what your lecturer takes you through in the introductory lecture and GLS. The textbook will go into a much greater depth, which is great for developing a background understanding. Make sure you attend the sessions where there is a guest patient - it really makes it relevant and you can apply the clinical manifestations of the genetics you learn.
- Make sure you learn a little more about these conditions so that you can make the most out of the session
- Don't underestimate the importance of pedigrees!

Tips for Subjects

MED ONE

SEMESTER TWO

Reproduction (REPRO)

- Ensure you know your anatomy! Whiteboarding can be useful.
- Reproductive cycles - drawing these can also help to remember that and understand how it works. Ensure you know a little bit about each step
- Embryology - learn what happens on a day-by-day basis after conception. Eg. blastocyst adheres to the endometrium by day 6, invades by day 7 and finishes implantation by day 12
- Ensure you do some pre-reading prior to lectures and GLS' so you can use them productively
- Again with the microscopes - build your confidence

Tips for Subjects

MED TWO

SEMESTER ONE

Cardiovascular Medicine (CVM)

- Introductory lectures are a must.
- Drawing and illustrations can be particularly handy for learning cardiac electrophysiology and the cardiac cycle
- Youtube has some fantastic videos to help explain various concepts - this applies for all subjects
- General blanket rule: VEINS pump blood TOWARDS the heart, ARTERIES pump blood AWAY from the heart
- When trying to understand ischaemia, think of it as an issue between supply and demand - when oxygen demand is high and supply is low, it causes the cardiac tissue to become ischaemic
- Focus on common clinical conditions - myocardial infarctions, hypertension, heart failure
- Use your learning objectives, GLS questions and synthesising sessions to determine what they keypoints are for the week

Respiratory Medicine (RM)

- Suzy Munns explains key topics really well so ensure you attend every lecture! Consider drawing/white boarding airway and lung anatomy and physiology to better understand how it all works
- Know common respiratory conditions such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma inside out!
- Use your time with the lecturer wisely and clarify any issues you have - Suzy is great with this!

Tips for Subjects

MED TWO

SEMESTER ONE

Haematology & Renal Medicine (HRM)

- Attend Naga's lectures, do the GLS' and attend the SS - they will highlight the key points to know
- It can be hard to follow some of Shashi's lectures so jot down as many notes as possible, and consider re-listening to his recorded online resources
- Know your material from Prof Ketheesan's blood group week (blood groups, HDB, Rh, Coombs' tests)
- Use your different sources to make good summaries - Guyton, Robbin's, Essential Haematology, lecture slides
- Know your histology - do not ignore it
- Know the main histopathologies (eg. megaloblastic anaemia, sickle cell anaemias) and be able to identify the key features of each
- Know and understand the coagulation pathway - you may not be asked to draw it, but you do need to be able to answer questions about certain aspects of it
- Make sure you know the renal weeks well! It can be tricky stuff, so make sure you have your head wrapped around it

Rural, Remote, Indigenous and Tropical Health (RRITH)

- Do NOT ignore this subject - it is very content heavy and cannot be crammed in SWOTVAC (although this has not stopped some from trying)
- Guest speaker sessions are important and may also be examinable
- Tropical diseases may be best organised in a table format, or into flashcards
- Due to the heavy content, group discussion and study is often effective in helping to determine what is relevant and what is not
- As GLS workbooks are correlated with learning objectives, they often make good practice questions for SWOTVAC

Tips for Subjects

MED TWO

SEMESTER TWO

Neuroscience (NEURO)

- Again, use your resources wisely, and find resources that explain things in a way you understand
- Be prepared to take notes quickly in the anatomy sessions. These are important to know and helpful for many concepts
- Draw the blood vessels of the brain repeatedly until you can remember it off the top of your head (pun intended)
- Be as familiar as you can with the formation of all neurotransmitters and their pathways in the CNS
- It is highly recommended that you understand the Basal Ganglia Pathway and how a defect in dopamine leads to Parkinson's disease

Gastrointestinal Medicine and Nutrition (GIMN)

- Make sure you work through all of the GLS' - they are a comprehensive overview of what you need to know for each week
- Use the readings that your lecturer suggests, and focus on the concepts covered in each GLS
- If you are struggling with concepts, try drawing them out (eg. how hormones work in the stomach, which ones stimulate and inhibit one another)
- Know your anatomy - the gastrointestinal tract is relatively straight forward, and unlike some other things in the human body it makes a lot of sense!
- If still struggling - try and see what wonders Youtube has to offer

Psychological Medicine and Human Development (PMHD)

- Make summaries based off your learning objectives. Tables can also be helpful to organise topics and key ideas
- Focus on connecting topics and disorders in a chronological order of human development (eg. developmental disorders in childhood and onwards)
- Making a list of definitions can be quite helpful for understanding many of the disorders
- Youtube videos may also be useful in furthering your understanding

Tips for Subjects

MED TWO

SEMESTER TWO

Medical Pharmacology (MP)

- Making flashcards can be useful, but ensure you don't get too caught up in making them, instead of actually learning the drugs
- Don't leave it all to the last minute - there are simply too many drugs for you to remain sane in SWOTVAC if you attempt to learn it all in one week
- Understand the principles and basic mechanisms of drug classes (eg. hypercholesterolaemia is treated with statins that act as HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors)

Incorporate different learning aids such as drug tables, flashcards and whiteboarding to add variety to your study. Making and reviewing notes can be tedious and may cause you to lose focus - try to stay awake and alert!

- Again, don't leave all of your pharmacology to the last minute. Reviews, no matter how brief, throughout the semester will help you to understand and retain the information better (and can help to reduce the stress of learning or memorising what feels like a million different drug names and mechanisms of action!)

Tips for Subjects

MED THREE

SEMESTER ONE

Infection, Inflammation and Immunology (III)

- Be on time to class! There is nothing quite like being late to a lecture given by Prof Ketheesan!
- Beware of Janeways. It is a fantastic book (and can be quite useful in preparing the GLS answers or synthesis sessions) but contains a lot more depth than you generally need to know in this subject. Focus your reading on the broader concepts discussed in class, rather than the additional fine detail explained in Janeways
- To get a better understanding of III - link all concepts into one process, this makes it easier to learn and understand. Link pathophysiology/diseases where the process fails.
- Do not underestimate simple things like percentages in the differential for blood cell counts, conversions from L to mL etc. They are easy to learn, but also easy to make mistakes with, and are frequently seen in exams
- A few common and big topics that we would recommend knowing include titres, IgM and IgG graphs.
- Similar to other modules there is a lot of new vocabulary, so it might be beneficial to write up a list of definitions to avoid confusion!

Tissue Injury and Neoplasia (TIN)

- Know your cytokines and chemokines (it will also help you with III)
- Some of the GLS sessions will involve patients coming in to talk to you about their experiences with cancer. It is always worth attending these, as these patients have extremely valuable insight into the more human aspect of cancer
- CTL comes back to haunt us in TIN as histology is very important (visually recognising the signs of tissue injury and neoplasia) - and in saying that, TIN comes back to haunt you in Clinical years!
- Try to link the process of tissue injury to its histological representation to increase comprehension
- Baby Robbins is a very helpful book to use for TIN (take advantage of the easy to read diagrams and definitions)

Tips for Subjects

MED THREE

SEMESTER ONE

Preventative Medicine and Addiction Studies (PAS)

- Do not dismiss PAS. It is a subject that has a significant amount of content that you will need to learn (and you can't just rely on common sense for), and it is a subject which will be extremely useful to you in your clinical years
- As some parts of PAS are steered towards clinical medicine, it can be beneficial to integrate PAS teachings with MP, TIN and III
- Motivational interviewing and brief interventions are essential life skills to have
- Take note of the different clinical tools (screening tests, Lifescrpts, decision-matrices) mentioned in this module. It is expected that you will know which screening tests are used for each particular addiction. In addition, this holds relevance to clinical practice
- Statistics (like PPV, sensitivity, specificity) can be tricky, but it is worth spending the time to understand them and doing the practice exercises. These terms get thrown around in clinical practice and knowing what they mean will make you that much more the competent doctor!
- Practice the clinical/hands-on aspects as many times as possible with your family/friends, using different pretend cases each time.
- Finally, ask Julie questions! She's a fantastic lecturer and you will end the year loving her dearly

Selective Subject

- This semester is the one time you get to feel like a normal uni student choosing your own subjects!
- Everyone approaches the Selective differently
Some take the opportunity to upskill and do College of Medicine provided subjects, while others branch out completely and do that subject they always wanted to, from Maths and Astronomy to French and Effective Writing. Then there are the strategic types who choose an easy subject or block subject that allows them more time for Med!
- Another option is to apply for an International course to complete in your holidays that can then be counted as your Selective
- Ask older students what they have done and then make a decision for yourself

Tips for Subjects

MED THREE

SEMESTER TWO

Infectious Disease (ID)

- Really obvious point - but make sure you understand Ill as it will help you understand the pathogens and their resulting infectious processes
- Categorise all the pathogens to make the differences between them clear. Link the pathogen and its virulence factors to the pathogenesis of the disease, which you should then link to the clinical presentation and laboratory tests.
- Be able to describe the bacteria based on description, features and location inside and outside the human body
- Do not neglect lab sessions - they are easy to forget, but contain really useful practical information which is examinable

Introduction to Emergency Medicine (EM)

- ABCDEFGI
- Go to lectures! Karl and Symmo have funny anecdotes and clever ways that will help you remember certain concepts and treatment
- Following a structure when considering every case and patient can be extremely helpful to guide your thoughts, and make sure you don't forget anything. For example: ABCDEFG, observations and examination, investigations
- Ensure you know your ECGs, especially common ones such as normal sinus rhythm, AF, VT, STEMI and their different locations. Books such as 'ECGs Made Easy' and many similar websites can help give you extra practice
- Have a systematic way of going over chest x-rays: it doesn't matter which one you use, pick one you are comfortable with.
- There are lots of different websites which have some great images to practice with
- There are many helpful textbooks around, but these are not necessarily essential to complete this subject

Tips for Subjects

MED THREE

SEMESTER TWO

Skin and Special Senses (SSS)

- Learn the online study guide and the topics that your lecturer recommends first - only expand your learning to other topics once you have covered the basics.
- Create a logical framework that you can use in almost every situation to identify and distinguish the diseases. Practise using this framework with every case that is presented, so you have a consistent way of thinking about the diseases and the differences between them - it makes it much easier to diagnose the conditions.
- Some of the guest lecturers will go into a lot more detail than you necessarily need to know
- Definitely attend the last two GLS sessions - these often cover Snellen, Rinne and Weber's tests which you need to know and are really useful for clinical years. Refer to clinical skills workbooks and online resources for clinical application of SSS
- Note: the answer is almost always "all of the above" except on the actual exam! Brennan's lectures don't have to be a waste of time if you've taken the time to go over the content beforehand - keep in mind that he's actually just a lad and likes to sneak in Dad jokes

Global Health (GH)

- Millennium Development Goals are essential knowledge! Do your wikis on time each week - it is much easier than having to do the makeup exercises
- Try to vary the types of questions you do for the wiki each week, and don't be tempted to only pick the easy questions. Come exam time, it is much better to have experience in answering different types of questions
- Practice causal chains each week - even if it isn't your turn for the wiki, at least think about what you would have written- the more you practice, the more confident you will be by exam time
- Engage in the practical teaching sessions and peer presentations by asking questions - it helps to keep you on-task during the presentations and helps you to consider connections between the content, which helps your learning and understanding and makes it easier to apply your knowledge to specific cases.

Tips on Placement

BEFORE YOU START

- You will inevitably feel nervous and uncomfortable arranging and organising placements. However, this is a skill that is best learned early in your career! Make your objectives clear with your supervisor. E.g. 'I would really like to improve my history taking skills' or 'I would really like to learn how to take blood'.
- Be on time, interested and polite. You do not have to be a brilliant HD student to do well and be liked on placement! You may feel like you are getting in the way - simply ask if there is anything that you can do to help, and you will soon find out. Have a small notepad and take notes - you will be amazed in future years looking back on the cases that you have previously seen.
- Thank everyone and show your appreciation! Chocolates or cake never go astray.

WHEN YOU GET THERE

- Be polite. Always introduce yourself when you meet someone new, and on phone calls. Ask what their name is and what they do - it will show you are interested.
- When asked 'have you XYZ before?' reply with 'No, but I would love to learn!' or 'Yes, a few times, but I would always love more practice!'.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions, but do this in conjunction with your own study and Googling outside of placement hours.
- Don't always follow the doctors - you can learn a lot from nursing staff and allied health. If you don't know something when asked, be honest - it is ok to not know.
- Ask if you can examine the patient while a supervisor watches. It is great to get feedback from someone experienced and you will improve your skills immeasurably.
- Always ask for feedback on your clinical skills and where you can improve.
- Don't skip things that may seem boring, like handover. You will learn useful tips about what makes a good patient presentation and what doesn't, which in turn will help you become a competent doctor as you progress through the clinical years.
- Ask and thou shalt receive - you may never know what you are allowed to do unless you ask! Just ensure that you receive informed consent from both patient and doctor.
- If you want to find out more about your placement site, head to the JCUMSA website (www.jcumsa.org.au) and check out our Electives Database, which is a compilation of information from previous students and their experiences. Find it under 'Academics' -> 'Electives Database'. (is this still current?)
- Then, after you've completed a placement, be sure to add to it for future students!

Tips on work/balance

ON STUDY EXPECTATIONS

- Don't expect to have the same balance as someone studying a different degree. You are starting a demanding but rewarding career. Work hard now, and you will thank yourself later.
- Get involved in student clubs, social sport and other fun things - don't forget to enjoy your university experience! Don't feel that you need to give up other commitments in order to study. You may need to compromise, but you don't have to completely cut yourself off from other activities.

ON BALANCE

- Exercise is so very important. It is an important part of a healthy lifestyle, helps make up for all those not-so-healthy study snacks, and is a great way of pounding out stress.
- Utilise your free time productively - this can help free up some week nights and weekends. Give blood, if you can.
- You don't have to be a doctor to be able to save lives. You can still work during medicine, and many people do. Consider jobs which fit your university schedule better or jobs through the university such as tutoring.
- Make time for yourself to relax, go for a walk, spend time with friends, and enjoy life. Set times in your schedule where you will do something social, just as you would for study. However, make sure that your outside-uni activities do not take over your life! Set realistic goals. There is nothing worse than sitting down to do some study when you know you will never be able to achieve what you have set out to do.
- Please know that if anything terrible happens - a family emergency or situation - there is always support from the medical school and JCU student counselling.

Tips on work/balance

TIPS FROM OUR COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING OFFICER

- Eat well - there are three simple rules: avoid processed foods and simple sugars, eat a variety and throw in vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds wherever possible.
- Sleep well - The required amount varies between individuals, but most people need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep daily. Try shooting for an amount where you're operational for the whole day without subsisting on caffeine. These are some resources we have found beneficial.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz4G31LGyog> (clickbait title but very effective)
 - <http://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/blue-light-has-a-dark-side> (stimulate your pineal gland, friends)
- Build effective coping strategies for dealing with stress
 - Do something kind for someone else. You'd be surprised at how liberating this is.
 - Exercise when you come home every day
 - Tell someone you trust about your problems
 - Deep breathing
 - Meditation
 - Mindfulness
- Avoid maladaptive coping strategies. Some maladaptive coping strategies include:
 - Polishing off excessive amounts of tinnies
 - Withdrawing from your friends and becoming a strange recluse
 - Sticking your head in the sand hoping the problem will go away
- Look out for your friends. Some signs your friends are not coping include
 - Difficulty sleeping
 - Regular unhappiness and/or irritability
 - Loss of interest in usually enjoyed activities
 - Lack of attendance to class
 - Joking about suicide/depression
 - Loss of appetite/weight gain
 - Frequent worrying
 - Withdrawing from friends and family
 - Lowered performance at uni and other activities.

Tips on work/balance

TIPS FROM OUR COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING OFFICER

- If you're feeling stressed, reach out to your friends! They love you.
- Stay in contact with your parents if you're away from home. They love you too.
- If you get a spare moment (there will be plenty), read this pdf. AMSA consistently produces quality content for students, and this is no exception. It has some fascinating insights into medical school, and I have utilised many of the featured tips and tricks.
<http://mentalhealth.amsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/KYGGWebVersion.pdf>
- Find a good GP and get a check up every year/6 months. Several people I know in med have had easily diagnosed issues (such as iron deficiency anaemia) that affected them chronically and were not detected because they didn't consult a doctor. Doctors are usually very supportive of medical students, and understand exactly what you're going through.
- Do not be afraid to seek help. Your first point of call should be those in your immediate friendship group/ family that you feel comfortable talking to. If not, you can contact one of the below numbers.

On Campus Support Services:

Dr Teresa O'Connor
JCU Student Support Services
Email: teresa.oconnor@jcu.edu.au
<https://www.jcu.edu.au/students/support/student-support>

Off Campus Support Services:

Headspace Townsville: 07 4799 1799
Headspace Cairns: 07 4041 3780
Headspace Mackay: 07 4892 2200

- If you need tips to cope, contact me on wellbeing@jcumsa.org.au and I will be more than happy to assist you.
- Have fun! Otherwise what's the point?

Tips on Assignments

ON STARTING

- Get it done early. It's much easier to write an essay if you have something to work with. If you're struggling to start, jot down your ideas and key points that you need to have in the assignment.
- Do a skeleton of the order of your assignment, and then expand from there.
- Don't be fooled by starting with the intro - it is often the hardest part to write so it can be best to leave to last!
- Check your references' references - there may be other great articles you can use.
- Do a bit of background reading before starting to get a feel for the topic.

ON TECHNICALITIES

- Make sure you note down the URL or some other piece of information about each source you have used as you go along, otherwise you may not remember how to find it again when you go to reference it!
- Take note of the session you have about how to use the JCU databases and journals - JCU pays for our access to these journals, so don't just rely on Google Scholar!
- Always try and save the articles so you don't have to search for it each time you want to reference it.
- Save the links to journals for future assignments - future you will love you for it.
- If you're having trouble finding information on the internet then be sure to seek out Stephen Anderson - he's a librarian specifically there to help medical students so utilise him!

ON FORMAT AND REFERENCING

- It can be quite time consuming to become familiar with a program like Endnote to keep track of references, but it will be well worth your time in the long run. Say goodbye to the days of manually adjusting your references! The library will run workshops using Endnote (they go for about an hour) - sign your name up for one to make sure you're on the right track!
- If you are going to need a key reference textbook from the library to write an assignment (one that everyone else in your class is likely to want as well eg Principles of Biomedical Ethics for an ethics assignment), get on the waiting list early.
- Find the JCU CMD Referencing and Style Guide before you start. There's nothing worse than consulting it just before you hand in your assignment, only to realise that you have done it all wrong
- Not sure how many references to use? Aim for at least 10, but make sure they're relevant.

Tips on Assignments

ON SUBMISSION

- Don't forget your JCU CMD Assessment Cover Sheet - this can be found on LearnJCU - 'Medicine Course Site -> Assessment -> Assessment Forms'
- Be sure that you have submitted the assignment physically to the correct box at SEPU, as well as online (I have had friends submit to the incorrect dropbox and they were penalised even though the physical copy was submitted on time).
- Note the requirements for naming your assignment when you are submitting it to the online dropbox.

The logo for Therapeutic Guidelines, featuring the words "Therapeutic" and "Guidelines" stacked vertically. Above the word "Therapeutic" is a horizontal bar composed of several small colored squares in a rainbow-like sequence.

Therapeutic Guidelines Limited

Therapeutic Guidelines Limited (TGL) is an independent not-for-profit organisation. Its aim is to promote the quality use of medicines, and it does this through the writing, publication and sale of Therapeutic Guidelines. The Therapeutic Guidelines range of digital and print products is widely considered to be an unsurpassed source of best practice therapeutic information.

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