

## Research Electives: MBChB IV and MBChB V

If you have an interest in doing research at some point in your degree or career, now is the time to start. The table below shows how, by doing research electives in your fourth and fifth years, you can arrive at your final year already well on the way to completing your skripsie – which leaves you more time to develop it into a publication ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal before you graduate.

This is intended as a guideline for how you might use all or part of your electives in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year to do research. Students have chosen to structure this in different ways depending in their goals and interests.

	4 <sup>th</sup> year elective 4 weeks	5 <sup>th</sup> year elective* 4 weeks	Skripsie 1 year
<b>Register elective / topic</b>	July	April	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> semester
<b>Identify internal &amp; external supervisors</b>	September	May	August (research supervisor only)
<b>Start date</b>	October	July	August
<b>Submission deadline</b>	January following year	August	August following year
<b>Potential starting point</b>	Interest in research	Ethical approval obtained	Data ready for analysis
<b>Suggested activities</b>	Week 1: Contact time and workshops coordinated by Undergraduate Research Office <sup>†</sup>  Protocol development	Data collection in field	Analysing data and writing up skripsie Preparing paper for publication
<b>Suggested assessment outcome/s</b>	Draft protocol for full research project and associated outcomes  Reflective summary on experience	Demonstration that empirical work has been conducted (i.e. data collected) and associated outcomes  Reflective summary on experience	Skripsie – ready for publication

### \* Workshops & contact time

Can include:

- Introduction to research: key concepts & overview of process;
- Developing a research protocol;
- Applying for ethics approval;
- Site visit to research organisation (e.g. Medical Research Council);
- Attend Health Research Ethics Committee meeting to observe discussion of ethical issues in protocols (subject to approval by HREC and confidentiality agreements).

### Undergraduate Research Office support

- Annually identifies potential research projects (on-site) or off-site facilities willing to accommodate undergraduate students.
- Liaises with MBChB programme coordinator and secundus chair of elective modules regarding conceptual and logistical acceptability of proposed research elective activities.
- Coordinates workshops and contact time components.
- Provides on-site support / supervision to students.
- Acts as internal supervisor for interested students.
- Provides assistance with obtaining ethical approval between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year elective periods.
- Contact Debbie Marais at the Undergraduate Research Office with any questions ([debbiem@sun.ac.za](mailto:debbiem@sun.ac.za) / 021 938 9181).

\* If you have not previously chosen to do a research elective in 4<sup>th</sup> year, your 5<sup>th</sup> year research elective will cover the same contact time and research protocol development as in the 4<sup>th</sup> year elective outline. By the start of your final year, you could have a protocol to submit for ethics approval so you can begin your skripsie data collection early in your final year.