

Guide to preparing a Scholar Mentor Plan

Faced with preparing a RAMUS Scholar Mentor Plan for the first time? Here are some suggestions and examples to help you.

One of the RAMUS requirements is that scholars, with the help of their mentor, prepare an annual plan for rural activities. Your plan is documented on the Scholar Mentor Plan form.

The annual planning exercise provides structure and guidance for your relationship with your mentor and your exposure to rural practice. We hope it will help you in your long term decisions about your career in rural health.

Talk to your mentor

The key to preparing your plan each year is to talk to your mentor. Use your mentor's experiences, expertise and advice to plan activities and goals that will be satisfying, achievable, realistic and relevant to your stage of study and your career aspirations.

These are *your* activities and goals

Make sure the activities you plan are meaningful and interesting, as you will get the most out of the experience this way.

Relate your plan to your academic stage and university commitments

Rural opportunities and your interests will probably change over the period of your degree. Consider incorporating course requirements, such as rural clinical placements, in your RAMUS plan. In the pre-clinical years you could focus on experiencing the working life of a rural doctor. Once you are doing clinical placements you could focus more specifically on rural careers and provision of services.

Choose activities that *you* can manage

Don't be too ambitious, it may be better to focus on two or three goals you know you can achieve. Also, don't rely on other people's activities or availability to achieve your goals.

Share ideas and learn from others

Talk to fellow students and keep in touch with RAMUS programs through the RAMUS Newsletter and website. Find out what your rural health club has coming up and what opportunities will be available through your university or other rurally oriented programs.

Some examples

The following examples are of activities and their intended outcomes, drawn on from current scholars who are at different stages in their degree.

Examples

Year of Study	Activities	What will be gained
1 st year	Undertake my four-week clinical elective at the end of 1st year in a regional town.	I hope to gain experience of a medical practice in a regional area.
1 st year	Attend the rural health club's skills workshop.	Learning skills such as suturing, cannulation and plastering will be useful for my elective in a regional area and will give an opportunity for hands-on experiences.
2 nd year	Learn about a particular health issue in my rural mentor's community.	Develop an insight into the health issues of a particular rural community and find ways of prevention and health promotion.
3 rd year	Visit a remote Aboriginal community primary school and assist with a healthy eating and vegetable plot implementation program.	A wider understanding of the issues in Aboriginal communities for children and their carers and awareness of potential solutions within education to help improve health outcomes.
3 rd year	One-year hospital/GP placement from July in a rural town, including clinical placements at a nearby Aboriginal Health Service.	I hope to get involved in community activities and truly experience life as a 'rural GP' and to better understand the health issues facing Indigenous Australians.
4 th year	Research the services in paediatrics and emergency treatment and referrals of children available in the rural city of my clinical placement.	Learn more about paediatrics as a possible career path in medicine.
5 th year	Visit a rural high school to discuss transition to university and studying medicine.	Communicate what I have learnt about medical education and the benefits of studying and working in the country to the next generation of potential medical students.
5 th year	Promote the university rural health school and rural clinical placements to younger medical students.	Inform other medical students about the opportunities available through clinical studies in rural locations and encourage increased participation in rural placements.
6 th year	Discuss future career options with my mentor.	Seek my mentor's advice on options for internship next year and possible career paths.