Student Quality Improvement and Development Funds (SQUID)
Guidance for Students

Introduction

Improving the quality of education for UCL medical students and ensuring high standards within teaching and learning processes is a core objective of the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Unit (QAEU).

The QAEU administers a funding scheme, the Student Quality Improvement and Development fund (SQUID), which aims to improve and develop the quality of medical education for UCL students.

SQUID aims to:

1. Address educational priorities, as identified by student surveys and feedback, external monitoring and other quality review procedures.
2. Encourage students to gain valuable experience in research and/or ownership of their own project that is intended to improve their peers' (and/or their own) educational experience.
3. Encourage students to innovate and enhance their learning experience while at UCL medical school.

Who can apply?

Any student currently enrolled on the MBBS programme can apply for SQUID funding.

The role of the supervisor

Prior to making an application, students should ensure that an academic within the Medical School will **act as supervisor** and help facilitate the project, although the project **must be student-led**. The QAEU will be happy to advise students on potential academic supervisors for their project. If ethical approval/clearance is necessary, students must apply for it prior to submitting their application and the supervisor is expected to advise/guide them on this.

There is a guidance document for supervisors on the QAEU website.

Project application

Students must write a project proposal, using the application form available to download from the QAEU website. The proposal must address at least one of the educational 'priorities', which have been identified from previous feedback as areas that need addressing. This **priority list** is available below.

Within the application, students must outline a budget proposal with a breakdown of costs and suggest a timeline for the expected completion of each stage of the project.

How much is available?

A **maximum of £500** is available for each project and the funds will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis. If the total funds for an academic year are exhausted, students will need to delay their application until the following year when the SQUID fund will re-open.

Commissioning and selection

The QAEU will assess each project proposal, against the priority list, for its suitability for SQUID funding. All, or part, of the project may be funded and successful applicants will be asked to complete a 'BACs form' so funds can be transferred directly into their bank account.

Timetable

Applications can be submitted at anytime during the year. They will be considered on a rolling process until the allocated funds for the academic year are exhausted.

Report

Successful applicants are expected to produce **a written report within 12 months** of obtaining the funds. The report should outline the outcome(s) of the project and include a breakdown of how the funds were used.

Applications must address one or more of the priority list below:

	Priority	Summary	Reason for Priority	Phases of MBBS
1	Feedback to students on their performance	Improve quality and quantity of feedback across all aspects of the course: • On written work • On clinical attachments • On taught modules Qualitative data from students needed to clarify where problems lie.	• UCL key educational priority • Student feedback & focus groups • National Student Survey • Student exit data • GMC	All
2	Addressing the "hidden curriculum"[1]	Monitoring and staff development strategies are needed to examine and address discrimination and bullying.	• Research undertaken at UCL by Woolf et al[2] • Student feedback • GMC Promoting Excellence	All
3	The student experience	Activities to evaluate and disseminate medical students' experiences at UCLMS.	• UCL key educational priority • Tuition fees	All
4	Maximising the value of work-based assessments	Need to achieve greater standardisation of grading and high quality feedback for students through	• Student feedback & focus groups • National Student Survey	All

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[1] The hidden curriculum is defined as: The norms, values and social expectations indirectly conveyed to students by the attitudes and styles of teachers, unarticulated assumptions in teaching materials and the organizational characteristics. The influence of the hidden curriculum on educational outcomes can be equal to, or greater than, the overt or intended curriculum.

[2] Katherine Woolf, Judith Cave, Trisha Greenhalgh, Jane Dacre**.** *Ethnic stereotypes and the underachievement of UK medical students from ethnic minorities: qualitative study.* BMJ 2008;337:a1220. http://www.bmj.com/cgi/reprint/337/aug18_1/a1220

		targeted training materials and staff development.	• Student exit data • External examiners reports	
5.	Improving students' experience of 'Belonging' as part of UCLMS	Activities to help deliver a sense of community among students and/or methods to improve students' sense of affiliation to UCLMS.	• National Student Survey • To help improve motivation and academic performance	All
6.	Improving and innovating methods of preparation/revision for assessments	Innovative methods for improving assessment to MBBS students throughout any aspect of the curriculum.	• Feedback from student survey • SEQs • National student survey • Feedback & Assessment working group	All