

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Outline

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicines (Honours)

This introductory guide to your WIL requirements during the degree is supplemented by the course outline and handbook and the placement book. This document provides an overview of the requirements.

Why do I need to undertake WIL?

As a veterinary student in Australia, you are required to undertake Work Integrated Learning (WIL) placements as part of your training. These placements are essential because veterinary medicine is a hands-on profession that requires practical experience beyond classroom learning.

The Australian Veterinary Board Council (AVBC) provides a minimum requirement for undertaking placement. These are provided below. You will note that at SCU, to enable students to develop in advance of the minimum requirements.

- 6 weeks in extramural animal industry placements;
- 2 weeks in extramural preparatory clinical placements; and
- 12 weeks in extramural clinical extramural WIL of which up to 4 weeks may be in veterinary professional (non-clinical) sites
- 30 weeks clinical intramural WIL (the final year core rotational clinical studies)

WIL Types

Extramural WIL – placement at a site typically not used for teaching within the university.

Animal husbandry WIL- placements in an animal management business, e.g. farm, stud or animal shelter, to provide student exposure to and experience of production systems, facilities, animal handling and animal behaviours beyond those provided during university teaching.

Preclinical WIL- placements in veterinary practices, external to the university contracted practices, to provide student exposure to paraprofessional roles, nursing care, communities of practice and veterinary business operations.

Clinical WIL – clinical placements [typically] to provide student experience of a breadth of veterinary practice and veterinary professional work, conducted at sites external to university contracted practices. A summary of extramural requirements is provided in Table 1.

Intramural clinical WIL – University controlled and contracted practice WIL. This WIL forms the final year clinical studies program. Trained Veterinarians at these sites are responsible for teaching, learning and assessment of day one competencies and course learning outcomes.

Table 1: Summary of minimum extramural WIL requirements as provided by AVBC (2024) and SCU WIL requirements (2026)

	Preclinical years of program		Clinical years of program		TOTAL
	Animal husbandry	Pre-clinical	Clinical Extramural	Clinical Intramural	
MINIMUM EMS requirements (AVBC)	≥ 6 weeks	≥ 2 weeks	≥ 12 weeks	≥ 20 weeks	≥ 52 weeks
SCUVS EMS Requirements	10 weeks	4 weeks	12 weeks	30 weeks	56 weeks

Why is WIL so important in a veterinary degree?

1. Develop Practical Clinical Skills

During your placements, you will apply the theoretical knowledge you've gained in lectures to real-life veterinary practice. You will get hands-on experience performing physical examinations, diagnostic tests, surgical procedures, and treatment plans on a variety of animals, including pets, livestock, and wildlife.

2. Meet Accreditation & Registration Requirements

To become a qualified veterinarian in Australia, you must complete a minimum number of clinical training weeks, as required by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) as shown in table 1. Completing WIL ensures that you meet the Day One Competencies needed for professional registration.

3. Gain Exposure to Different Veterinary Fields

Your placements will take place in a variety of settings, such as small animal clinics, large animal hospitals, farms, zoos, wildlife centres, and government agencies. These experiences help you explore different career paths and develop a well-rounded skill set.

4. Improve Soft Skills & Professionalism

Working alongside veterinarians, nurses, and clients will help you build essential skills in communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. You will also gain experience in handling difficult conversations, delivering diagnoses, and making ethical decisions under real-world conditions.

5. Build Professional Networks & Job Opportunities

Your placements provide a great opportunity to connect with industry professionals who may later offer internships, mentorships, or even job opportunities. Many students secure employment through the relationships they build during WIL.

6. Understand Workplace Realities

You will experience the real demands of veterinary practice, including long hours, emergency care, and the emotional challenges of treating sick or injured animals. This hands-on exposure will help you develop the resilience and adaptability needed to succeed in the profession.

By completing your WIL placements, you will graduate with the practical skills, confidence, and industry connections necessary to launch your veterinary career.

Costs related to WIL placement:

Costs to undertake WIL include travel, accommodation, living expenses and any additional activities you undertake whilst on WIL. For more information, please see the additional cost information sheet.

To reduce costs, you can look to undertake WIL in centres where you have friends or relatives. If these farms or practices do not currently have a placement agreement with SCU, please discuss with the placements team well ahead of your placement time.

Animal Husbandry WIL (AHWIL-1, AHWIL-2a and AHWIL-2b)

Total requirement: 10 weeks

Scheduling: From the end of year 1 (after successful completion of your animal handling safety and competency checks) until the beginning of year 3.

Administration: SCU placement will provide administrative assistance in the selection and timing of your placements. Students are responsible for arrange their own transport and accommodation (unless the farm has accommodation available). If you wish to undertake placement at a farm that does not currently have a placement agreement with SCU, please liaise with the placements team PRIOR to arranging any activities on the farm, as you will not have appropriate insurances in place.

Advanced standing: If you have extensive experience in a production system, you may apply for advanced standing in ONE area of animal husbandry WIL (max 2 weeks).

Preclinical WIL (PCWIL)

Total requirement: 4 weeks (2 weeks mixed practice and 2 weeks of discretionary practice in any type of veterinary practice.

Scheduling: From end of T2 in year 3 until end of study year for year 3 – recommended in Term 3.

Administration: SCU placement will provide administrative assistance in the selection and timing of your placements. Students are responsible for arranging their own transport and accommodation for WILIF you wish to undertake placement at a clinic that does not currently have a placement agreement with SCU, please liaise with the placements team PRIOR to arranging any activities at the clinic. You will not be covered by insurance or contractual support and thus the placement is void.

Advanced standing of ONE WEEK is available for students with relevant experience.

Clinical Extramural WIL (CWIL-1, CWIL-2, VMED4003 and VMED4005)

Total requirement: 12 weeks

Scheduling: From completion of Pre-clinical WIL (aka end of the year when third year studies are undertaken) until the end of the year when year 4 studies are undertaken (recommend summer term and term 3 in year 4), AND 6 weeks that are scheduled in year 5

Administration: SCU placement will provide administrative assistance in the selection and timing of your placements. Students are responsible for arranging their own travel and accommodation. If you wish to undertake placement at a clinic that does not currently have a placement agreement with SCU, please liaise with the placements team PRIOR to arranging any activities at the clinic. You will not be covered by insurance or contractual support and thus the placement is void.

Advanced standing is NOT available for clinical WIL.

Clinical Intramural WIL (VMED4001 and VMED4002)

Total requirement: 30 weeks

Scheduling: Scheduled as core teaching forming year 5 clinical study units across different species and speciality areas.

Administration: SCU placement will provide administrative assistance in the selection and timing of your placements. The university is responsible for the logistics and administrations of accommodations. These placements are core educational units forming the year 5 clinical program forming the core of students' clinical capstone experience. Clinical intramural WIL may include some structured learning activities (e.g. tutorials, case discussions, rounds) and assessments set by the VEE as part of the curriculum. The majority of this experience directly involves students in actively contributing to the management of real cases or problems, including practical aspects of history-taking, professional skills development, diagnosis and treatment, clinical reasoning and decision-making, financial and economic considerations, and client communication

Advanced standing is NOT available for clinical WIL.