

Student Elective Report

Name	Alice Lee
Medical School	Imperial College London
Email (optional)	

Country visited	Australia
City or town	Melbourne
Hospital/unit/clinic	Royal Children's Hospital, Plastic & Maxillofacial Surgery Department
Dates visited	15 th April 2019 to 1 st June 2019
Supervising doctor	Prof Tony Penington
Contact details of your host:	

Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)	During the placement my timetable was flexible, and I was encouraged to engage in all types of clinical activity including ward rounds, meetings, clinics and theatre sessions, according to what I found most useful. The team were friendly and welcoming, and encouraged me to interact with patients and assist in theatre by "scrubbing in". In total I observed more than 50 procedures, and a few of the most interesting cases included: cleft lip and/or palate repair, total cranial vault reconstruction, syndactyly release, excision of arteriovenous malformations, free flap reconstruction and cross-facial nerve re-innervation. During my time in theatre I was able to practice basic suturing and observed more complex techniques including microsurgery.
What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	Overall, this experience gave me excellent exposure to paediatric plastic surgery and insight into rare/syndromic conditions in children that only the most specialist centres see. I was also able to shadow leading experts in the field, including Clinical Professors who helped to pioneer surgical techniques in craniofacial surgery, particularly for craniosynostosis. The ad hoc teaching that I received from these clinicians during our theatre sessions was insightful and inspiring. I also met overseas doctors working as Fellows at RCH, who provided an insight into this role (something I would now strongly consider having done my elective here!).
What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)	The Unit is welcoming, but very busy. I wanted to observe paediatric plastics, but if you wanted exposure to adult plastics this obviously wouldn't accommodate your interests. I don't think the Unit would be able to support research projects for students.
What	No accommodation was provided by the hospital/university. I stayed in

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accommodation was provided?	an Airbnb in central Melbourne in good walking distance to the hospital. This was convenient but quite expensive.
Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)	Yes. If you are interested in paediatric plastic surgery it's a fantastic place to visit and one of the leading centres in the country/world for craniofacial surgery. The team were also very welcoming and keen to get me involved, which helped.
Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?	Yes.